

## **LinkedIn: What Do I Do Now?**

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When first creating a LinkedIn account, the program will prompt you to fill in certain parts of your profile to “complete” it. Completed profiles are 40 times more likely to find positions on LinkedIn than incomplete profiles, so if you are using LinkedIn for job searching, it would be advantageous to fill out as much of the profile as you can.

### **Features of LinkedIn:**

*Summary:* This section can be written much like a cover letter, describing your current position, a short summary of your past work and education experience, and an explanation of goals. If you are seeking a position, listing the types of positions you are seeking can be advantageous for employers looking at your profile.

*Experience:* If you uploaded your résumé into the system, this section would have been filled in for you. Make sure that this section highlights the skills you’ve gained through your past work experiences, citing examples of the utilization of theories learned in the classroom into practical applications. For example a student with teaching experience may list “utilized behavioral modification and reward techniques to manage classroom behavior.”

There are several sections that you can choose to add into your profile. A few examples consist of “*Honors & Awards*,” where you can list membership in the Honors College or an honors fraternity, any scholarships you’ve won, or any national awards obtained such as the Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Gold Award. “*Publications*” is a great section, especially for students in the hard science disciplines or anyone who has published in a journal. Links can be added into those sections so that employers can have an example of some of the research you’ve conducted. The “*Organizations*” section allows you to list any clubs on campus that you’ve been a part of and gives you a chance to highlight leadership experience. If you have a student membership with any national organizations or professional associations (which we highly recommend) you can list this here too.

There also is a section for you to list courses that you have taken, and you can choose to list just a few related courses or anything you have taken that may enhance your candidacy for a job.

### **Endorsements versus recommendations**

Recently a new feature has been introduced on LinkedIn called “*Endorsements*.” It is a one-click stop for anyone to endorse that another person possesses a skill in some area, be it “organized,” “data driven,” or “Facebook.” You can have up to 50 different skills or expertise listed on your page, and individuals basically give you an electronic thumbs-up when choosing to endorse you.

Additionally, recommendations can be written on your site by employers, past colleagues, or classmates. It takes time for someone to craft a recommendation, so it is very impressive to collect them on your site.

### **Requesting to join someone’s network**

The default message that is sent when you request for someone to join your professional network is “I’d like to add you to my professional network” and your name. When you are trying to add someone into your professional network, especially someone that you do not know personally, make sure that you personalize the message, indicating why you desire to make a connection with this individual.

Understand that you are making a professional request, so remember to stay courteous (even if the individual for some reason chooses not to accept your request), and it is very important to use proper spelling and grammar.

### **Personalize your URL**

On LinkedIn, you are given the opportunity to customize the URL of your website. We recommend using your first and last name with no spaces. This places your LinkedIn profile higher on the search results when someone searches for your name. It will end up looking like [www.linkedin.com/in/\\_\\_\(your name\)\\_\\_\\_](http://www.linkedin.com/in/__(your name)___). This makes it easier for you to reference your URL in your email signature (being so much shorter), which is one effective way of creating contacts on the website.

LinkedIn, along with any other social media outlet available today, is constantly changing and requires the social media savvy to keep aware of the changes. Currently, LinkedIn is one of the foremost social media outlets for professional connection, but could at any time be overshadowed by emerging trends and software. The information listed in this article is current and relevant at the moment, but explore this and other websites for yourself, familiarizing yourself with what each site has to offer.

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