LinkedIn [1] Develop your Profile

Creating your profile online at LinkedIn.com

A LinkedIn profile is like your online professional introduction. Think about what you want people to know about you, your career goals, qualifications and your experience. This tipsheet is for strategies to help you put your best foot forward.

GETTING STARTED

- Create a login at www.linkedin.com. Ignore requests to access your email contacts for now and create a shell profile
- Set your privacy settings: select the photo placeholder, likely empty, in the upper right hand corner. Hover over and select the following sequence of options: Privacy & Settings > Privacy > Profile Viewing Options > Select what others see when you’ve viewed their profile > Private Mode (Anonymous LinkedIn Member). When your profile is ready, you can reset your privacy settings to a more public level.

MAIN PRINCIPLES

Rather than get hooked into “completing your profile”, focus on creating an effective profile. Use the headline, summary, your education, experience and skills to convey a cohesive message about the direction you are headed in, the industries or roles that interest you and the experience that is relevant.

PHOTO

The pros and cons of using a photo
- May increase the likelihood of your profile being noticed
- May allow bias in recruiting
Remember that you always have a choice

Tips for photos (if including one)
- Corporate wear (suit) is not essential
- Do ensure that your photo is professionally appropriate
- Avoid cropped photos or backgrounds that are distracting
- Avoid cartoon figures as substitutes for photos

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Tips for Headline
- A headline that describes your goals or career interests helps you interact with people
- If left empty, the headline defaults to your most recent role

Tips for Location and Industry
- Close to graduation choose location in which you hope to work
- Choose an industry that is the closest match

Tips for customizing your URL
- Shorter URLs helps people find your profile
- Consider including this in your email signature and resume

An example of professionally appropriate photos for a student at different stages (undergraduate vs graduate level)
SUMMARY

Tips for creating an effective summary
- Consider creating a video introduction (new feature)
- Treat like a cover letter
- Customize according to your needs
- Show who you are and what you want
- Highlight what you bring to the table
- Explain areas of interest (professionally)
- Convey what distinguishes you
- Include specialties
- Choose between paragraphs or bulleted lines
- Choose first- or third-person voice

EXPERIENCE

Tips for creating an effective summary
- Decide if the role is relevant to your goals
- Tailor to the work you want to do
- Decide what you are comfortable sharing online
- Consider going beyond tasks or responsibilities
- Avoid simply copying bulleted lines from your resume
- Consider a branded narrative format for your experience section (come to the workshop for examples)
- Use LinkedIn visual features to display examples of work, e.g., presentations, conference “poster”
- Choose between short paragraphs or bulleted lines
- Re-order experience sub-sections—this can reinforce your strengths and connections to the work

EDUCATION

Tips for creating an effective Education section
- Use the formal name of your degrees
- Somewhere in your profile also consider including an abbreviation for your degree (e.g., Ph.D.)
- Include your major, medials or minors
- Include relevant electives
- Clarify your stage of completion
- Decide whether to include GPA, and make appropriate adjustments (e.g., use Queen’s 4.3 scale or convert to 4.0 scale?)

Rico Garcia’s Summary (used with permission)

President and CEO
Main Campus Residents’ Council Incorporated
...The President manages all elected and hired student staff. This includes over 40 House Presidents, Residence Facilitators and Executives. The President functions as the administrative head of the Society, performing all management duties, overseeing a budget of over $400,000, enforcing the policies of the Society, and maintaining an extensive list of services. The President also represents the initiatives and vision of the Residence Society to all external bodies. As President of Main Campus Residents’ Council, Tuba worked to ensure that residents could enjoy a consistent residence experience with regards to advocacy, opportunities and services, irrespective of where they were placed. As such, Tuba worked to amalgamate the Main Campus Residents’ Council with the other Residence Council to form one joined society. This involved extensive lobbying, policy writing and consultation, and resulted in the Queen’s Residence Society.

Tuba Chishti (used with permission)
RECOMMENDATIONS

Tips for using recommendations effectively
- Reach out to people who know you and your work to ask for a customized recommendation
- Consider asking past supervisors, or volunteer coordinators who you think are supportive
- Approve and post (reviewing first for typos if necessary)

CERTIFICATIONS

- Add key skills learnt through experience or training
- Take Lynda.com courses (queensu.ca/Lynda) on relevant skills or competencies (LinkedIn will add the course badge to your Certifications upon completion, provided you used identical email when registering for LinkedIn and Lynda)

SKILLS

Tips for using Skills effectively:
- Identify and include skills or competencies that are relevant for your goals, because this list demonstrates that you understand skills and subskills important for the work you want to do. More skills (max 50) increases views.
- Re-order the sequence of skills according to relevance
- Consult descriptions of skills and competencies by accessing LinkedIn’s directory (e.g., https://www.linkedin.com/directory/topics-a/) and see relevant companies, people and information. Reflect on relevant skills by consulting: Queen’s learning outcomes, Innovation Skills Profile, Employability Skills Profile 2000°.

Tips for using Endorsements effectively:
- Accept endorsements from people connected to you in LinkedIn (optional)
- If you want to be endorsed, you may need to be proactive and reach out to people in your network

PROFILE SECTIONS IN LINKEDIN*

INTRO | ACTIVITY | BACKGROUND: Work Experience, Education, Volunteer Experience | SKILLS & ENDORSEMENTS | RECOMMENDATIONS | ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Publications, Certifications, Patents, Courses, Projects, Honors/Awards, Test Scores, Languages | ADDITIONAL INFO | INTERESTS: Influencers | Groups | Companies | * note that this list is subject to change
Career Services can help with decisions

- Wondering about creating an online 2 minute video introduction?
- Concerned that your profile appears too focused?
- Worried that your profile looks generic?
- Unsure how much to showcase accomplishments?
- Looking for strategies for conveying your value without compromising confidentiality of work?
- Have specific questions about crediting collaborative work in uploaded examples?

Profile Done?

Reset your privacy settings to your preferred level of visibility. Look at the next LinkedIn Tipsheet in the series.

LinkedIn [2] Developing a LinkedIn Strategy

Explore career paths of alumni (University “School” Page > Find Alumni) | Research types of work, roles and industries, and follow organizations (Companies) | Validate career decision-making and talk with others (Groups) | Gain insights on fields and industries | Review opportunities (Jobs & Volunteer) | Access helpful resources

Further Resources

- More information at http://careers.queensu.ca/LinkedIn
- Get your photo taken for LinkedIn— consult the Career Services website for information about the next Career Fair and possible opportunities
- Discuss strategies and good examples with others in our LinkedIn workshops
- Get 1-1 help with related career decisions (book a career consultation appointment)
- Benefit from strategizing about your resumes or cover letters (book a cover letter & resume review appointment)
- Discover the advantages of talking with alumni early in your degree. To learn more about Queen’s Connects Career Network for Students and Alumni LinkedIn Group, go to http://careers.queensu.ca/LinkedIn. To join Queen’s Connects go to http://LinkedIn.com/groups/8154377 and then ask to join.
- Drop-in into Career Advising (Mon-Thurs, 1:30 - 3:30 PM) for quick questions (no appointment necessary)

Notes

About CONNECTION REQUESTS.

Don’t rush to send a request “to connect”. Inviting people to connect is only intended for people that know you. Inviting strangers can generate complaints that may result in your account being frozen. The LinkedIn (2) tipsheet—Developing a LinkedIn Strategy will show more effective ways to reach out.