LinkedIn

LinkedIn is an important tool to build your professional network and should be a part of your job searching strategy.

Did you know?

87% of recruiters use LinkedIn to find candidates.

94% of recruiters use LinkedIn to vet candidates.

You should use LinkedIn to:

- Job Search
- Network
- Research Career Paths
- Learn the skills needed for your dream job

Step One: Your Profile

A complete profile gets an "All Star" rating on LinkedIn and you are 40 times more likely to be contacted by a company looking to fill a position than if your profile is left incomplete.

Headshot

- A picture makes your profile 14x more likely to be viewed so you want it to be a good one!
- Make sure your picture is professional and high quality.
- Choose a plain background.
- Have good lighting; natural is better than studio or indoor lighting.
- Dress professionally.
- Remember to smile and look directly at the camera.
- You can always come to a Headshot Event hosted by Career Services, or have a friend take your picture.

Headline

- Quick introduction of who you are. It is visible in a search, without clicking on your page so it is important that you change this to reflect YOU.
- Go beyond the system default of your current job title or "student at Oklahoma State."
- Use phrases, not complete sentences. Could include job title and your focus, or components of your work, or a combination of your experience and where your career is headed next.
- Think about keywords for your industry, top skills you have, or words that describe you.

Summary

- Think of this as your written 30-second elevator pitch.
- Use first person language, including personal pronouns and complete sentences.
- Include things like your career goals, what you are passionate about, your story of getting into the industry/ field, and your strengths.
- Don't forget to use keywords for your industry.
- The first 2 sentences (120 characters) of your summary are all that initially appear – so make those count!

Step One: Your Profile (continued)

Education

- Include your degree, major, minor or emphasis, and your graduation year.
- If you choose to incorporate coursework, be selective and only include courses that will set you apart from other candidates.
- Don't forget to include any unique educational experiences you have had, such as international travel or study abroad experiences.

Experience

- Follow LinkedIn prompts for specifying the company, your title, dates, and location.
- Always include a description of your task, responsibilities, and outcomes.
- Make sure you include keywords and phrases for your industry.

Skills

- List transferable skills and keyword skills that you might have that align with your career goals.
- The first 3 skills will be listed and then the "view more" button will appear, so make those first 3 count!

Additional Sections:

- Professional Organizations
- Leaderships Positions in Campus Organizations
- Academic Projects
- Campus Involvement
- Volunteer Experiences
- Certificates
- Publications
- Awards, Honors, and Recognitions

Step Two: Build Your Network

The goal of building your network should be making true, genuine connections and not just a numbers game.

Grow your network by sending a personalized LinkedIn connection to everyone you already know:

- Friends
- Family
- Neighbors
- Instructors
- Colleagues
- Classmates
- Contacts from professional associations and conferences
- Alumni from your program and your previous universities

Also connect with people you want to know:

- Who holds the type of job or positions that you aspire to be in?
- Who is in your dream job?

Ask your network for help

- Once connected, send a personal message (no mass emails!) asking them for advice on:
  - Job hunting
  - Informational Interviews

Step Three: Job Search

Use a Boolean Search Method

- AND – search for all words (ex: Water AND Resources AND Conservation).
- OR – either item (ex: Jets OR Airplanes).
- "Anything Here" – exact phrase (ex: "Biomedical Engineering").
- NOT – eliminate that term from the search (ex: Power AND Motor NOT Plant).

Use the Alumni Feature on LinkedIn

- Add the name of the school "Oklahoma State University" in the top search bar, once on OSU's page select "Alumni" on the menu on the right side of the page.
- Use the filters such as company name, location, job title, college major, skills, etc.
- Look for top connections and review their profile and learn from them.

Consider Joining "Groups"

- A lot of industry professionals are in these groups and sometimes the HR recruiters are in these groups also.
- Make connections with those interested/involved in your same field.

Search for Connections at a Target Employer

- Search the companies name on the top search bar, once on the company's page, look for common connections, also look for alumni at that company/employer.

Use the Job Alert Function

- You get notified every time a job is posted that matches your search criteria.

Additional Steps:

1. Keywords are important, so make sure your profile has them in abundance. Find examples of keywords and phrases from job descriptions you are interested in, or use profiles of people who have the jobs you want. Pepper keywords throughout the Headline, Summary, Skills, and Experience sections of your profile.

2. Use the Jobs Tab to do a profile check. Without putting in any filters, see if the jobs which the LinkedIn algorithm pulls for you are of interest. If not, your profile doesn't have the right keywords integrated.

3. ALWAYS - Utilize the option to send a personal message when sending a connection request.

4. Stay an active user. Post and share articles, like and comment on content, send congrats messages.

5. Follow groups, companies, and industry leaders. You want to showcase your passion and interest in your given field.

6. Customize your LinkedIn URL. You can include this customized URL on your resume, your business card, and your email signature.

7. Update your settings so recruiters can find you – under job seeking preferences.