

How to Utilize LinkedIn in Your Job Search

Recruiting with social media is no longer new – it's the norm. A 2013 nationwide survey of 1800+ employment recruiters by online marketing firm, Bullhorn, found that over 97% of recruiters use LinkedIn as one of the primary sources of talent recruitment. Students in the process of a job search should utilize this tool to build a professional brand online, network with other professionals in your career field, and search for career opportunities. The development of a strong LinkedIn profile will shape your online presence to highlight your professional knowledge and interests that will, if utilized correctly, draw interest and appeal to employers searching for the right candidate.

1. Create your LinkedIn profile

- Keep in mind that your LinkedIn profile serves as a non-traditional résumé and shapes employers' impressions of you as a job candidate.
- Post a complete and appropriately crafted profile – posting a profile that is incomplete or poorly-crafted is worse than not posting one at all.
- Request assistance or guidance from one of the many consultants at the Center for Career Development for a LinkedIn profile that is appropriate and appealing.
- See Contents of Your LinkedIn Profile, found on the next page, for specifications and helpful hints in completing each section of your LinkedIn profile.

2. Research employers for potential career opportunities or to find more information

- Use the search function in LinkedIn to help identify companies or employers (private sector, non-profit, and government agencies) within networks.
- Learn about current news and open positions at specific companies or with employers; additional options include viewing the profiles of previous employees of those companies.
- “Follow” companies that appeal to or interest you – doing so provides updates of those companies to your LinkedIn start page.

3. View UConn alumni career paths

- Visit www.linkedin.com/edu to access the interactive search tool and search the 76,000+ UConn alumni found on LinkedIn.
- Learn more about the success of those with a UConn degree, and identify potential employers and career paths.
- Refine your search by location, industry, and graduation date.

4. Join professional groups on LinkedIn

- Subscribe to emails from groups that are focused on specific industries, interests, and affiliations.
- Ask and respond to questions from others in the group.
- Identify groups such as University of Connecticut Alumni Networking Group and UConn College of Liberal Arts & Sciences by searching both terms, “UConn” and “University of Connecticut”.
- Search for industry-specific groups such as Society for Human Resource Management, Event Planning & Event Management, or even skill-related groups such as Adobe Dreamweaver Group as they apply to you.

5. Provide and receive “recommendations” and “endorsements”

- Solicit recommendations from professors, internship coordinators, colleagues, employers, and professional mentors.
- Endorse the skills of your connections list on their profiles; they may endorse you on key job-related skills as well.

6. Build your network

- Make and track “connections” by starting with friends, family, and colleagues; branch out and “connect” or “get introduced” to new connections.
- Personalize your note to prospective connections by explaining how you know them and why you seek to connect with them.
- Keep in touch with your networking contacts by posting discussions or links to articles in groups or your own “status”; comment and “like” on others’ posts as well. Keeping in touch with your contacts ensures you are receptive to a big break when it comes around.
- Meet with a representative from the Center for Career Development for further tips and information on professional networking.
- *Remember, LinkedIn is merely a networking tool and is not meant to be a substitute for making real, live, face-to-face professional connections.*

7. Search for jobs or internships on LinkedIn

- View opportunities geared toward college students on www.linkedin.com/studentjobs – they have presorted entry-level and internship positions.
- Use LinkedIn to identify recruiters or other contacts at the organizations to which you’ve applied. Connect with these people to learn more about the employer or to even help get an internal referral!

Contents of Your LinkedIn Profile

- **Name.** Use the name by which you wish to be known professionally.
- **Headline.** Identify yourself as a UConn student or develop an aspirational headline naming your career ambition.
- **Location.** Use the zip code/major metro area closest to your home or to the UConn campus.
- **Industry.** Name an industry related to your major or career aspiration.
- **Photo.** Not required, but make sure it is professional if you elect to post one.
- **URL.** Claim your “vanity” URL as a substitute for the automatically-generated one under “Your public profile URL”; you can then include this LinkedIn URL on your résumé and in your email signature.
- **Contact Information.** Use your @uconn.edu email address or a professional alternate; do not list personal or private information such as your address, telephone number, or non-professional Facebook or Twitter accounts.
- **Summary.** Think of your LinkedIn Summary as an online version of your “elevator pitch” you use when meeting an employer at a career fair. It may be written in the first- or third-person, and should highlight your background, skills, and interests; use keywords or industry-specific language for your target employers when appropriate.
- **Experience.** Include experiences that are relevant to your career goals as you would on your résumé; list the organization name, your role or title, dates of employment, and a summary of your achievements and responsibilities. You can include activities and student/community leadership roles in this section or in a separate “activities” section.
- **Education.** List University of Connecticut, your major and minor (if declared), and expected date of graduation. You may list supporting information here or in subsequent sections.
- **Additional Sections.** You may add additional sections to your profile or incorporate the following information to your education, experience, or summary sections: language spoken, volunteer experiences, courses, certifications, publications, honors & awards, personal website, groups and associations, interests, skills, and expertise. A “Projects” section can be particularly useful to highlight skills you’ve demonstrated through your coursework or labs, especially if you don’t have extensive experience outside the classroom.
- **Applications.** LinkedIn Applications enable you to add content to your profile; this is especially useful as a virtual portfolio of your creative work.