Networking with LinkedIn
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Introduction
LinkedIn is the world’s largest professional network. LinkedIn connects you to your trusted contacts and helps you exchange knowledge, ideas, and opportunities with a broader network of professionals.

The presentation that accompanies this guide may be found at: http://bit.ly/VAPLDclasses in the LinkedIn folder.

What can I do with LinkedIn?

Establish a professional profile online. LinkedIn profiles often show up first when performing a Google search for a name. Creating a profile will help you control your online identity by showing potential employers your qualifications when they search for you online.

Stay in touch with colleagues and organizations. Don’t lose contacts over a job change. Members keep their LinkedIn profiles up-to-date, meaning that you’ll have an easier time finding colleagues and collaborating with them. Keep up with professional organizations by following their LinkedIn pages.

Find experts and ideas. A tool called Groups lets you locate and interact with experts through trusted introductions. Search and locate the information you’re looking for.

Explore Opportunities. A powerful networking engine, LinkedIn is the place to look for career opportunities, new clients and acts as a great place to develop a reputation. Get connected with jobs, sales leads and business partners.

Use LinkedIn as your own personal marketing tool. Attach your custom URL to your resume, upload a photo and build your online presence.

In this guide we will cover:
1. Creating an Account
2. LinkedIn Interface
3. Creating a Profile
   - Profile Sections
4. Making Connections
   - Following an Organization
   - Connecting with Other Professionals
   - Adding Email Contacts
   - Adding Alumni
5. Skills Endorsements and Recommendations
6. Groups
1. Creating an Account

To create your LinkedIn account:

Start by typing www.linkedin.com into your web browser.

On the LinkedIn homepage, you should see a signup form.

Fill in your first name, last name, email address, and a challenging password. Use your real name, since this step will help fill out your profile. Once you have filled these in, click Join Now. Clicking Join Now means you agree to LinkedIn’s User Agreement. If you would like to read the agreement before signing up, click User Agreement & Privacy Policy above the Join Now button.

Enter your information in the next form.

Include your status of Employed, Job Seeker or Student. There is also a space to mark if you are self-employed. Click Create my profile when finished.
In the next step, you can import your email contacts to see if you know anyone on LinkedIn. For now, choose to skip this step.

Next you will have the option to sign in with Google. If you do not have a Google account, or would not like to link your account, click Send a confirmation email instead.

Check your email for a confirmation. It’s ok to leave this page. You will be redirected back once you confirm your email address.

Now you will have to locate the confirmation in your email. It should look like this:

Click on the Confirm your email address link.

Enter your email address and password. Click Sign In.
LinkedIn asks if you would like to import your e-mail contacts. Skip this step by clicking the **Skip** option in the lower right corner.

Click **Skip** for now.

The Add Interests page will suggest issues you may find interesting based on the information you entered. Do not worry about this area right now. Instead, click **See your new Homepage**.
2. LinkedIn Interface

Your LinkedIn homepage works like a feed relating the latest news from your connections and organizations that you follow. From here there are also a variety of ways to manage your profile. Let’s take a quick tour.

1. **Homepage Button**: Click on the LinkedIn logo or the Home button to return to your homepage from anywhere on the LinkedIn website.

2. **Profile**: Click the Profile button to edit your profile or to see who has viewed your profile.

3. **My Network**: Click the My Network button to view your connections, add contacts from email, discover people you may know, and locate alumni.

4. **Jobs**: Click the Jobs button to search for and view job ads that match the information you’ve provided LinkedIn.

5. **Interests**: Click here to view updates from the companies you follow, your groups, relevant slideshows, video tutorials from Lynda.com, and search for freelancers.

6. **Search Bar**: Search for other professionals, organizations, and groups on LinkedIn.

7. **Messages**: Click here to access LinkedIn’s messaging tool. A red circle displays here when you have a message.

8. **Notifications**: The Notifications button displays a red circle with you have pending notifications. You are notified when one of your Connections updates their profile.

9. **Connections Button**: The Connections button displays a red circle when someone adds you to their Connections.

10. **Profile Picture**: Click on your Profile Picture to view your LinkedIn profile and access account settings.

11. **LinkedIn Feed**: Stories and news about your Connections, followed organizations, and interests displays here.

12. **Status Bar**: Use this area to contribute content to the LinkedIn Feed for your connections to view. Remember to keep contributed content professional and relevant.
3. Creating a Profile

Your profile contains your contact information, work history, and professional accomplishments. All of this information is organized into sections to form your public face on LinkedIn.

To edit your profile from the homepage:

1. Hover over the Profile option with your mouse.
2. From the dropdown, click on Edit Profile.

In this section we will cover the essentials, but your profile is made of many sections. All of these sections are listed below. Essential sections are bolded.

- Headline
- Language
- **Volunteering**
- Test Scores
- Patents
- Causes You Care About
- Supported Organizations
- Publications
- Certifications
- Interests
- Personal Details
- Posts
- Summary
- Experience
- Projects
- Organizations
- Education
- Skills & Endorsements
- Recommendations
- Groups
- Following

To add a section to your profile:

1. Click View More at the bottom of the default sections.
2. Select your desired section.
3. Fill out your desired fields.
4. Click Save.
3. Making Connections

At some point, most of us will be looking for a new job and recruiters mine social media for information on candidates. Build your network before you need it!

To connect with another professional:

1. Type their name in the Search box and click on the Search button.
2. Click on the Connect button that appears under their picture.

OR

1. Click on the drop-down menu next to the Send InMail button.
2. Click on the Connect button.
To follow an organization:

1. Type the organization name into the Search box and click the Search button.
2. Click on the organization name from the Search Results.
3. From the organization page, click Follow.
To add email contacts:

1. Hover over My Network.
2. From the dropdown, choose Add Contacts.
3. Type your email address and click Continue to import contacts.

Skills Endorsements and Recommendations

Skills Section

The skills section allows you to add keywords that capture your skills and expertise.

To add a Skill:

1. Click on the Add Skills button from your profile page.
2. Leave the boxes checked under Skills and Endorsement Settings.
3. Begin typing in an area of expertise. LinkedIn will make a series of suggestions based on what you are doing. These suggestions are called “tags.” Click on the tag that best matches your skill.

4. Build a list of skills. If you want to get rid of a skill, click the X to the right of the tag. When you have finished adding your skill set, click Save.

Skills Endorsements and Recommendations

A little social proof goes a long way. Get recommendations and endorsements from colleagues, employers, and customers who can speak to your abilities and contributions. Having personal advocates will give you even more credibility and help catch the eye of potential business contacts.

What are skills endorsements and what are their benefits?

Skill endorsements are a great way to recognize your 1st-degree connections’ skills. They also let your connections validate the strengths found on your own profile.

Receiving endorsements:

Scroll down to the Skills & Endorsements section on your own profile to see endorsements you’ve received. You can add any skill to this section. Accumulating a high number of endorsements for a skill adds credibility to your profile, and shows that your professional network recognizes you have that skill.

Note: You don’t need to ask for a skill endorsement to receive one. You’ll also be notified by email when you receive an endorsement.

Giving endorsements:

Endorsing others is a great way to recognize your colleagues for the skills you’ve seen them demonstrate.

To give an endorsement:

1. Navigate to a connection’s profile.
2. Scroll down the Skills section of the profile.
3. Click the “+” button to the right of the skill you would like to endorse.
What are recommendations and what are their benefits?

A recommendation is a comment written by a LinkedIn member to recognize or commend a colleague, business partner, or student. Viewers of your profile often view the recommendations you've received on your profile to see what others have to say about your work.

To request a recommendation:

1. Move your cursor over your photo in the top right of your homepage and select **Privacy & Settings**. You may be prompted to sign in.
2. Under the **Helpful Links** section, select **Manage your recommendations**.
3. Click the **Ask for recommendations** tab at the top of the page.
4. Follow the prompts to request the recommendation.
5. Click **Send**.

**Note:** You can request a recommendation from up to 3 connections at once. There's no limit to the total number of recommendations you can request or receive.

Accepting and Displaying Recommendations

**How do I accept a recommendation and display it on my profile?**

When someone recommends you, you'll be sent an email to the email address associated with your LinkedIn account. You'll also receive a notification on the Manage Recommendations page.

**To accept the recommendation from your email:**

1. Log in to the email account you have associated with LinkedIn.
2. Locate the recommendation email and open it. The message will be titled “[Your name], I've recommended you”.
3. Click **Add to Profile**.

**Note:** You can also select **Ask for changes** if you want the sender to make any changes before adding it to your profile.

**To accept the recommendation from the Manage Recommendations page:**

1. Go to your profile.
2. Scroll to the **Recommendations** section toward the bottom of the page and click the **Manage** link.
3. In the **Pending Recommendation** section, move your cursor over the recommendation and click **Add to Profile**.
4. Select **Ask for Changes** if you want the sender to make any changes before adding it to your profile.
5. The recommendation will appear in the **Recommendations** section of your profile and an update will go out to your network.
Groups

LinkedIn Groups provide a place for professionals in the same industry or with similar interests to share content, find answers, post and view jobs, make business contacts, and establish themselves as industry experts.

To discover relevant groups:

1. Click on the Interests option with your mouse. From the drop down, click on Groups.
2. From the Groups page, click on Discover Groups. Suggested groups are listed.
3. Click Ask to join to request access to a group.

To search for a specific group:

1. Type the group name into the Search box.
2. From the search results, click the name of your desired group.
3. Click the Ask to join button.

Helpful Tips

- Keep your information current. Update work and contact information and add jobs and skills as necessary.
- Make sure to include a professional looking photo in your profile. Use high quality, not casual, photos to get noticed.
- Look for contacts, people you work with, people you used to work with, old classmates and supervisors. Build a strong network of contacts.
- When your profile is established, solicit colleagues and friends for recommendations. Make your own recommendations by writing how you truly feel about an individual in the nicest terms possible. Don’t oversell someone you don’t recommend, it could damage your credibility.
- If you don’t have an email address that includes your last name, sign up for one. Gmail and Outlook are very popular at the moment. Use a professional sounding address like jsmith@gmail.com. A professional sounding email address is helpful in all aspects of business.
- You can also add your email address after your professional headline in your LinkedIn profile if you want people to be able to email you directly.

Additional Resources

Lynda.com offers over 100,000 courses at all skill levels covering everything from computer programming languages to design software. Access Lynda.com with your library card number by visiting www.vapld.info \(\Rightarrow\) Research \(\Rightarrow\) Lynda.com.

Book an individual help session for 45 minutes with a librarian by calling (847) 634-3650.

Works Consulted

Gail’s Toolkit: LinkedIn Basics: http://www.gailstoolkit.com/#/linkedin/e3c5s