**Tips for students to build a professional LinkedIn profile**

***Your LinkedIn profile is a summary of your professional experience, interests, and capabilities that is designed to attract the attention of important people who are searching for you online — recruiters, networking contacts, and admissions officers. A strong profile is a key differentiator in the job market. Here’s how LinkedIn can help you kick-start your career.***

1. **Craft an informative profile headline**

**Your profile headline gives people a short, memorable way to understand who you are in a professional context. Think of the headline as the slogan for your professional brand, such as “Student, National University” or “Recent honors graduate seeking marketing position.” Check out the profiles of students and recent alumni you admire for ideas and inspiration.**

1. **Display an appropriate photo**

**Choose a professional, high-quality headshot of you alone. Party photos, cartoon avatars, and cute pictures of your puppy don’t fit in the professional environment of LinkedIn.**

1. **Show off your education**

**Be sure to include information about all schools you’ve attended. Include your major and minor, if you have one, as well as highlights of your activities. It’s also appropriate to include study abroad programs and summer institutes. Don’t be shy — your LinkedIn profile is an appropriate place to show off your honors or awards you’ve won.**

1. **Develop a professional summary statement**

**Your summary statement should resemble the first few paragraphs of your best-written cover letter — concise and confident about your goals and qualifications. Remember to include relevant internships, volunteer work, and extracurricular activities. Present your summary statement in short blocks of text for easy reading. Bullet points are great, too.**

1. **Include keywords in your profile**

**Sprinkle your profile with key words and phrases that a recruiter or hiring manager might type into a search engine to find a person like you. The best place to find relevant keywords is in the job listings that appeal to you and the LinkedIn profiles of people who currently hold the kinds of positions you want.**

1. **Update your status regularly**

**A great way to stay on other people’s radar screens and enhance your professional image is to update your status at least once a week. Tell people about events you’re attending, major projects you’ve completed, professional books you’re reading, or any other news that you would tell someone at a networking reception or on a quick catch-up call.**

1. **Show your connectedness with LinkedIn Group badges**

**Joining Groups and displaying the group badges on your profile are perfect ways to professionalize your profile and show your desire to connect to people with whom you have something in common. Most students start by joining their university’s LinkedIn group as well as the larger industry groups related to the career they want to pursue.**

1. **Collect diverse recommendations**

**Nothing builds credibility like third-party endorsements. The most impressive LinkedIn profiles have at least one recommendation associated with each position a person has held. Think about soliciting recommendations from professors, internship coordinators and colleagues, employers, and professional mentors.**

1. **Claim your unique LinkedIn URL**

**To elevate the professional results that appear when people type your name into a search engine, set your LinkedIn profile to “public” and claim a unique URL for your profile (for example: www.linkedin.com/in/yourname). This also makes it easier to include your LinkedIn URL in your email signature, which is a great way to demonstrate your professionalism.**

1. **Share your work**

**A final way to enhance your LinkedIn profile is to add examples of your writing, design work, or other accomplishments by displaying URLs or adding LinkedIn Applications. By including URLs, you can direct people to your website, blog, or Twitter feed. Through Applications, you can share your digital portfolio, Google Docs and PowerPoint presentations.**