



LinkedIn – Successful networking

Tips for job search and application

Contact

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Foreword

LinkedIn is an online platform where young and experienced professionals from a variety of fields meet for job and internship opportunities, collaboration and networking. Many small and large companies, start-ups, NGOs and scientific institutions can now be found on LinkedIn. The platform is therefore an easy and effective way to get in touch with potential employers and expand your network.

LinkedIn is helpful as

- a place to find jobs and internships
- a tool to establish and strengthen professional relationships
- a way to keep up to date with companies you are interested in and get in touch with different organisations
- an opportunity to document your own work history
- and a chance to be found (for a job).

LinkedIn also carries risks

Think in advance about which of your data you want to enter. The more elaborate your profile is, the more attention you will receive from other members and companies. You have some options to customise your privacy settings, but you cannot fully control how your data is processed and shared.

LinkedIn collects a lot of data about its users (for example, their professional interests, skills, contacts, activities and locations).

- This data is used for various purposes (e.g. for personalised advertising, analysis, research and service improvement).
- LinkedIn also shares some data with third parties, such as advertising partners, service providers, authorities or other users.

Therefore, you should always pay attention to how you set your privacy settings, who you network with or what you share on LinkedIn.

Checklist for your LinkedIn profile

To help you make a good impression on LinkedIn, we have put together a few tips.

Language settings

You can create your profile in German or English (or any other language). You can also create it in several languages.

- If you create your profile in one language, it will be displayed to all visitors in that language.
- If you create your profile in multiple languages, visitors will see your profile in the language they use on LinkedIn. Please note that they will not necessarily see it in the language in which you created your main profile. Make sure you maintain the profiles in all the languages you have created.

Profile photo and background photo

- Be sure to add a profile photo. It's best to wear an outfit that matches the profession you're interested in. Choose a photo with a neutral background, look into the camera and smile.
- Also add a background photo. Tests have shown that profiles with background photos are visited more often than those without. If you don't have a suitable photo, your favourite colour can also be used as a background image. Or you can create your own image on a website like Canva.
- If you don't feel comfortable posting a photo of yourself, you can alternatively use a photo programme to apply an art or drawing filter to your image or use an image from a free image database that matches the theme of your profile (e.g. a microscope for a biologist).

Profile slogan

The profile slogan appears directly under your name. Whatever you write there will be read by all visitors. And the LinkedIn search also accesses the information in your headline. Recruiters usually search for keywords to find possible candidates.

That means for you:

- Use important keywords in your profile slogan. These are more likely to be found in the search than your degree programme (which can still also be part of your slogan).
- You can find keywords by analysing relevant job advertisements.
- Additional tip: You can copy several job advertisements into a wordcloud programme to identify common keywords.

Contact info

- Use a professional e-mail address. (Attention: The university email address will be switched off a few weeks after you graduate. So it's better to use a private email address).
- Make sure that contacts can see your email address if you want to allow recruiters to contact you by email. You can select who can see your e-mail address in the privacy settings.
- Change the URL of your LinkedIn profile. Remove the digits and personalise it. You can do this in the profile settings.

“Open to”

Here you can set what kind of job offers you are open to and whether this information should be visible to all LinkedIn members or only to recruiters.

You can also specify here which locations you are looking for, whether hybrid/remote or on-site and in which type of employment (full-time/part-time/internship/permanent/temporary) you would like to work. If you get the impression that you are being offered rather unsuitable positions, it is worth making some adjustments here in the settings.

About

In this section you can tell a little bit more about yourself with a short profile. For example, you can write about these things:

- Write a short pitch about yourself and your skills. You should be as specific as possible: What makes you – and only you – stand out?
- Use important keywords.
- Specify what kind of jobs or collaborations you are looking for.
- Indicate your availability and/or preferred method of contact.

Featured

Here you can upload LinkedIn posts, links to other websites and media files. So use this field to point out a few highlights, for example:

- Achievements you have posted about on LinkedIn,
- websites of projects you've worked on,
- first publications.

Experience

LinkedIn is a business network – so it's clear that your work experience is important there.

- Add internships, student assistant jobs and part-time jobs.
- Make sure the job title is meaningful. So don't write “Internship”, but “Internship in Risk Advisory & Assurance”.
- Describe your activities with a few key points or sentences. Again, use important keywords.

Education

Here you write about your studies.

- In addition to the university and subject, you can optionally enter the specialisation, the title of the thesis and the grade.

Other profile sections

- Volunteering: List your specific activities in addition to organisation and time period.
- Skills: Link your skills to the appropriate stages in your professional experience and training. Have your skills confirmed or test yourself on LinkedIn. Make sure that the most important skills are at the top of the list, because only the first three are directly visible in the profile. By the way, LinkedIn will suggest jobs based on your skills.
- Certifications and awards: Certificates, scholarships, etc. can be listed here.
- Recommendations: Professional contacts, for example professors, superiors, colleagues, can make a recommendation here.

Interests

- Follow interesting companies to find out what topics are currently important in relevant industries. Many companies keep their LinkedIn profile more up-to-date than their own website!
- Make contact with alumni of your degree programme or the University of Konstanz.
- Use groups to network with contacts in a specific industry or in your field of interest.

A bit of LinkedIn etiquette

- When sending contact requests, it is more personal and more likely to succeed if you write a short message about why you would like to connect.
- Be sure to use a friendly, respectful tone. And also make sure your spelling is correct.
- Most people feel pressured when you ask for a job out of the blue. However, many people are happy to answer questions about everyday working life, important skills, possible entry paths in certain sectors if you ask nicely.
- If you post something on LinkedIn yourself, you can draw the attention of potential employers and interesting contacts to you. Before you post something, however, you should consider whether you want to be associated with the content in a professional context. This applies, for example, to information from your private life, political positions, leisure interests etc.

One last tip ...

We are happy to look at your profile and give you suggestions for improvement.

Just write an email with a link to your profile to:

cs.beratung@uni-konstanz.de