LINKEDIN GUIDE

St. Mary's College of Maryland
CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

WHY SHOULD I HAVE A LINKEDIN?

Show others who you are and where you come from

People who know you can endorse your skills and write recommendations

Show off projects and other materials you are proud of

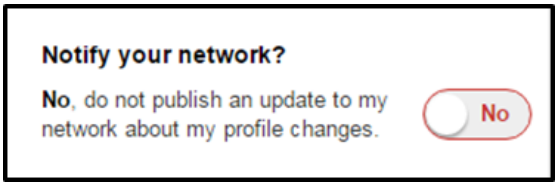
Connect with professionals in your field

Search for jobs, internships, or graduate schools

Research different companies and organizations to inform your career decisions

QUICK TIPS

TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS TO YOUR NETWORK WHILE BUILDING YOUR PROFILE. You can turn this back on once you are comfortable with your profile.



MANAGE YOUR PRIVACY SETTINGS. Only include information you are comfortable sharing on the internet

DO NOT IMPORT YOUR ADDRESS LIBRARY FROM YOUR EMAIL. This option will send a generic invitation to your entire address book. You will be able to find people you know through other features that will allow you to send a personalized message with your invitation.

CREATE A PERSONALIZED URL. Create your URL by clicking "Edit your public profile" under the "Privacy and Settings" tool. This URL should be professional and include your first and last name. For example, www.linkedin.com/in/johnsmith would be appropriate. You can also add your LinkedIn profile link to your resume.

BUILDING YOUR PROFILE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

USE YOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME AS IT APPEARS ON YOUR RESUME. Many employers will search your name on the internet upon setting up an interview, and you want to direct them to your professional profile first.

USE A PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ADDRESS. Your contact information will be displayed on your LinkedIn. A professional email should have your first and last name in some combination and should include no more than two numbers.

Examples of Professional Email Addresses:

- jsmith@smcm.edu ● John.smith@gmail.com ● Jsmith35@yahoo.com

SHARE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION. You want to have the most up to date information so a potential employer can contact you. **Note: Only include information you are comfortable sharing on the internet. Consider editing your privacy settings.**

PROFILE PICTURE

UPLOAD A PROFESSIONAL PROFILE PICTURE. Uploading a profile picture increases the likelihood that someone, including a potential employer, will look at your profile.

Your photo should be a headshot (from your shoulders up) where you are dressed professionally, smiling, and in front of a nice background. This could be a plain wall, a building on campus, a garden, etc.

The Career Development Center is happy to help you take this photo.

YOUR EXPERIENCE

ADD YOUR EXPERIENCE. Fill in the appropriate information just like you would on your resume. Include the company or employer's name, job title, start and end dates, etc. When describing your experience, use bullet points.

Unlike on your resume. You have unlimited space to work with, so be complete.

ADDING SECTIONS. You can add sections that describe you and your experiences. These sections help to boost your profile, showcase the work you have done, and summarize your interests. Be sure to fully describe these experiences as you would on your resume.

REARRANGE SECTION ORDER. You can click and drag sections to place them in order of relevance.

ADD & ENDORSE SKILLS. Add degree specific skills you have gained through your coursework and experiences. People you have connected with can endorse these skills, and in turn, you can endorse others.

BUILDING YOUR PROFILE

SUMMARY

The summary is your chance to tell your story while creating a personal brand for yourself in 2,000 characters.

Answer these questions in your summary:

- Who are you?
- What are your major accomplishments, ambitions, and interests?
- How do these factors tie into your industry of interest?

Guidelines for your LinkedIn Summary:

- Keep it succinct and use short blocks of text to make it easier to read.
- Use keywords to draw attention to your skills and interests. **LinkedIn is searchable by keywords, and this is a great way to help employers to find your profile** (e.g., if you are looking for a job in athletics, include words like "coaching").

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

UPLOAD SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS. This can include your resume, research papers, publications, blogs, portfolios, or any other examples of previous work. Be sure to edit uploaded documents to exclude information that you do not want displayed on LinkedIn.

ENHANCING YOUR PROFILE

SELECT YOUR INTERESTS. This will allow LinkedIn to suggest people with similar interests to connect with, potential groups for you to join, and show employers what you are passionate about. **Note: Think critically about the interests you endorse. Certain interest areas and groups may be controversial and could be used to screen you out for a position.**

CHOOSE AN INDUSTRY. Choosing the industry that you wish to work in can help LinkedIn filter jobs and posts that will appear on your homepage. This also helps future employers search for candidates interested in a specific industry.

FOLLOW COMPANIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND SCHOOLS OF INTEREST. This will allow you to keep up to date with the organization and see any job openings. The organizations you are following will appear on your homepage.

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR PROFILE STRENGTH. As you build your profile, you will see this icon indicating your progress. However, LinkedIn is not looking at the strength of your content, but at the completeness of your profile.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

WHO SHOULD I CONNECT WITH?

Friends, family, employers, professors, supervisors, coaches, and alumni are all great examples of important people who can help you on your career journey. These individuals can provide advice on navigating their career field, and may provide you with contacts from their own network that can aid in your job search.

ADD CONNECTIONS. Make sure that your profile is complete and ready to be viewed by others before establishing connections. When you send a connection request, include a personal message to indicate why you want to connect.

Early on, it is okay to have a quality set of connections rather than a large quantity. Start by connecting with your classmates, professors, employers or supervisors, family, friends. **Note: Only connect with people you trust and have something professional in common with you.**

CONNECTING WITH ALUMNI

FIND ALUMNI. When researching a particular field or company, it is helpful to reach out to alumni. Using the "Find Alumni" tool under the "Connections" tab, you can search for alumni, filtering results by the years they attended, where they work, what they do, what they studied, etc.

JOINING GROUPS

Join a Group. There are several methods for joining a group including the Groups Directory, the LinkedIn search bar, Suggested Groups, as well as looking into groups that your connections are a part of.

Evaluate the Group before joining. Consider the following when evaluating a group:

Is the group public or private? This can inform what you and others might say in the group, if promotional materials might be shared within the group, and who you might connect with later on.

Group membership

- See if any of your connections are in the group.
- Are the members in the group in positions or fields that interest you?

Size and activity of the group:

- Large groups open up more opportunities for future networking and have more frequent, broad discussions.
- Look at the most recent posts, this will give you an idea of how active the group is.

Participate in a Group.

- Observe at first to see how the group operates – take note of the comments that speak to the group.
- Slowly become more active by liking and commenting on top discussions.
- Start sharing things that will be valuable to the group – over time, people may respond, share, or like the post.
- Connect with other active members in the group.

LIFE AFTER SMCM

JOB SEARCH

JOB SEARCH. You can search for positions using a keyword or a location, or you can search based on LinkedIn's recommendations for you and filter results based on location, company size, or industry. Additionally, you can set up email alerts for positions that would fit your search criteria.

USING YOUR CONNECTIONS. In the event that one of your connections works for that organization, LinkedIn will give you the opportunity to message that individual for a referral or learn more about the organization. Additionally, you can "Discover Jobs in your Network", which will allow you to see where your connections are working.

APPLY USING LINKEDIN. Some companies will allow you to apply directly through LinkedIn. If you find yourself not quite ready to apply, but you do not want to lose track of the job posting, you can save it to appear on the main "Jobs" page later.

GRADUATE SCHOOL SEARCH

LinkedIn has compiled school rankings broken down by different career options, allowing you to see top ranked schools in a specific career area.

You can also use the "Recommendations" tab for each institution and see what alumni and current students say about the school. This will give you great student insight into the school. You can also use this to connect with students who currently attend or have attended the university.

"University Finder" allows you to set search parameters that help you find graduate schools that meet your criteria. You can use criteria such as what you want to study and location.

The "Field of Study Explorer" allows you to search for people by degree title. This can help you make connections with people in your field and allow you to see where those people earned their graduate degree.

To help you organize your thoughts about choosing a graduate school, LinkedIn allows you to create a decision board where you can add a university and note all the reasons why you like or dislike different universities you are considering for a side-by-side comparison.