10 Steps to Build a Great Student Profile

LinkedIn is the perfect venue to showcase your unique interests and experiences to employers.

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, the George Washington University” or “Recent honors grad seeking teaching position.” Check out the profiles of students and recent alums you admire for ideas and inspiration.

2. Pick an appropriate photo
LinkedIn is not Facebook. Select a picture of you alone, dressed professionally. Your profile is 7x more likely to be viewed if you use a high-quality photo. That means no party photos, iPhone pictures, cartoon avatars, or cute pics of your puppy.

3. Show off your education
Include information about all institutions you’ve attended. Include your field of study and concentration 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 any honors or awards you’ve won.

4. Develop a professional summary
Your summary statement should resemble the first paragraph or two of your best-written cover letter — concise and confident about your goals and qualifications. The summary section is an opportunity to communicate your brand to potential employers. Present your summary statement in one to two short blocks of text for easy reading.

5. Update your status weekly
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 phone call.
6. Fill "Skills & Endorsements” with keywords

"Skills & Endorsements” is the place to include 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 profiles of people who currently hold the kinds of positions you want.

7. Show your connectedness

Joining Groups and displaying the group badges on your profile are perfect ways to fill out the professionalism of your profile and show your desire to connect to people in your field. You should start by joining the GSEHD and GWU Alumni groups, and check to see if your program has its own group. Search for larger groups in your field to demonstrate an interest in engaging in professional communities and learning the lingo.

8. Collect diverse recommendations

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.

9. Claim your unique LinkedIn URL

To increase 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.

10. Share your work

You can also add actual examples of your writing, design work, or other accomplishments on your profile, where you can share rich media or documents. What better way to sell your skills than to show employers exactly what you can produce?


GSEHD Office of Career Services

The team in the Office of Career Services is eager to help you with cover letters, resumes, interview skills, and career planning. Please call or schedule an appointment so we can help you define your brand, recognize employer requirements, make a strong first impression, share your brand, and land the perfect job.

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