



CLC & Capstone

A lot of students are active on social media sites such as Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook, but a great deal of what's posted should stay with your private audience, such as friends and family, and not with your professional audience, such as school recruiters and hiring managers! Founded in 2002, **LinkedIn** was formed as a way to separate the personal from the professional.

Put simply, LinkedIn is a social network for professionals. Whether you're a marketing executive at a major company, a business owner who runs a small local shop or even a student looking to explore future career options, LinkedIn is for anybody who is interested in taking their professional life more seriously by looking for opportunities to grow their careers and to connect with other professionals.

LinkedIn is similar to going to a traditional networking event and meeting others in person, except it's online. On LinkedIn, you add "connections" similar to how you would add a friend on Facebook and communicate through private messages. All of your professional experience and achievements are neatly organized to show off to the people in your network. Although LinkedIn uses a similar layout to Facebook in terms of its features and options, LinkedIn is a bit more specialized because they cater to professionals.

A lot of students don't think that they should be using LinkedIn yet, as their experience and education is limited, however, this is not true! There are many benefits to starting a LinkedIn account sooner rather than later. Considering all of the benefits that LinkedIn brings in connecting with professionals, this social media platform shouldn't be ignored. Many students regret not spending as much time developing their LinkedIn profile as they do their Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook.

How can LinkedIn benefit you as you graduate?

There are many ways that having a LinkedIn profile can help establish and build your professional network:

You can get back in touch, or stay in touch with old (or current) colleagues: use the "My Network" section to find old colleagues, teachers, people you went to school with and anyone else you might think is worth having in your professional network. Just enter or connect your email to sync your contacts with LinkedIn.

You can use your profile as your resume: your LinkedIn profile basically represents a more complete (and interactive) resume. You can include it as a link perhaps in an email or your cover letter when you apply to jobs. Some websites that allow you to apply to jobs will even allow you to connect to your LinkedIn profile to import all your information.

Find and apply to jobs: LinkedIn is one of the best places to look for job postings online. You'll always get email alerts from LinkedIn about jobs you may be interested in,

but you can always use the search bar to look for specific positions too. You can also see the notifications on your homepage as soon as you log into your account.

Find and connect with new people in your network: it's great to be in touch and connect with friends, co-workers, current or past colleagues, or classmates who may also be on LinkedIn, but what's even better is that you have the opportunity to discover new professionals that may be able to help out with your professional endeavors.

Conducting company research: one of the biggest benefits LinkedIn offers students and jobseekers is that they can check out the pages of their targeted employers. By visiting the company pages, you can conduct a research on the whereabouts of the company, the hiring process and what people have to say about that organization.

Getting recommendations: LinkedIn offers a feature where you can get other people to recommend you. People with recommendations have a greater chance of attracting the employers' attention. Students should try to get as many recommendations as possible to increase their employability.

Letting companies find you: today, a large number of organizations look for talented candidates on social networking platforms like LinkedIn. If you have created a good, detailed profile, chances are you will attract employer's attention.

Participate in relevant groups: join groups based on your interests or current profession and start participating. Other group members may like what they see and want to connect with you.

Blog about what you know: LinkedIn's very own publishing platform allows users to publish blog posts and gain the opportunity to have their content read by thousands. Published posts will also show up on your profile, which will increase your credibility in related fields that are relevant to your experience.

*Adapted from: <https://www.lifewire.com/what-is-linkedin-3486382> and <https://theundercoverrecruiter.com/7-ways-college-students-can-benefit-linkedin/>

LinkedIn has produced a couple short videos on what they're all about, and how a LinkedIn profile can help students. Watch them below, then continue on to your LinkedIn assignment:

Video 1 – What is LinkedIn? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVIUwwgOfKw>

Video 2 – Start Your Career – LinkedIn for Students - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWp6AN00D_c