

# LinkedIn For Students

How to get Started and Stay Connected

- ✓ Build It
- ✓ Connect It

## Office of Career Services

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# LinkedIn

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LinkedIn is a professional networking site that students can use to connect with all types of professionals, especially those in their desired career fields. LinkedIn is used to connect with others and network, or ‘talk’, in order to make connections in their career field or to get more information about a particular company, and apply for jobs. LinkedIn now has [almost 740 million members](#) with over 55 million registered companies.

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## WHY YOU NEED LINKEDIN

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- ✓ **85%** of jobs are found through **NETWORKING!** (LinkedIn can help!)
- ✓ A whopping **87% of recruiters** find LinkedIn to be the *most effective when vetting candidates during the hiring process – especially those under 45 (90%)*.
- ✓ A positive professional online presence is a **MUST!** **Resumes** aren’t enough
- ✓ **89%** of companies are using social networks for recruiting
- ✓ Creates opportunities to connect with professionals that Facebook, Google +, Indeed and other online job boards cannot

(Statistics reference: [www.jobvite.com](http://www.jobvite.com))

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## WHAT CAN LINKEDIN HELP ME WITH?

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**Network:** Connect with experts in your desired career field to get information, get questions answered and **build relationships**.

**Explore Company Pages:** Many companies have LinkedIn pages and current employees are listed. Here you can see what these people have done in the past in order to gain their current positions. Add your unique LinkedIn URL to your Handshake profile. You can also use this tool to research companies in order to prepare for a job interview.

**Find Jobs & Internships:** LinkedIn is not advertised as a job board, but companies are posting openings to get the word out. After you customize your profile, LinkedIn will send you updates on jobs that you may be interested in.

**Build a Professional Brand:** Start creating your professional brand that others can see. Advertise your strengths and interests and continually enhance your brand by adding experience or projects you are working on. Be Consistent.

**Explore Your Passion:** Start browsing LinkedIn by searching for careers you are interested in. View other LinkedIn users pages that have your “dream job” and find out what they did to get there. This is an excellent way to develop your long-term and short-term goals.

\*Adapted from UT-Austin Career Design Center

**Education on Industry Trends:** LinkedIn has great news feeds that you can use to get recent news, trends and updates on your interests or desired industry statistics to keep you on your path to success.

**Turn Relationships into Opportunities:** Once you start connecting with others, be creative in your approach of turning these relationships into job opportunities. Keep in contact with professionals or companies you are interested in so that when they are hiring, they will turn to those they know (You!) first.

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## GET STARTED – 3 STEPS!

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### 1 Build your profile

(For a step by step video guide for student users: Visit <http://learn.linkedin.com/students/step-1/>)

This is the first step in creating your professional brand. Think of your LinkedIn profile as the first impression you will make to the online world. The goal is to complete your profile 100% and LinkedIn will prompt you with tasks that you can do to enhance and grow your profile each time you log on. Here are some sections of your LinkedIn profile:

- **Customize your URL:** When editing your profile, make sure to customize your LinkedIn URL to your name.  
Place this URL in your email signatures, future business cards and resume.
- **Email Address:** Get a professional email address, preferably to include your name.  
(CarliCardinal@student.uiwtx.edu)
- **Photo:** Choose one that is only of you and is professional in nature. *(Ask a Career Advisor if unsure)*
- **Headline:** Capture the attention of those you want to connect with by using words related to your career goals.  
Ex. “University of the Incarnate Word Education Major, Research Assistant” or “Recent graduate in Fashion Merchandising seeking Styling Internships”
- **Summary:** Use keywords that someone might use to search you and your career interests. This gives other users a snapshot of your experience and interests. Be concise and specific and give the reader a glimpse of your personality. Some things you may include in your summary: where you attend(ed) school, your major, career interests, brief description of your experience, any specialties you have or are interested in and specific skills you have.
- **Additional Choices for Students:** Courses, Honors/Awards, Languages, Student Organizations, Projects, Publications, Skills, Test Scores, Volunteer Experience

- **Experience:** Expand on any experiences you have in a resume type format. LinkedIn will allow you to enter specific information to include company, position, dates and location then you can put more descriptors of specific job accomplishments to give the reader a **detailed** picture of your experience.
- **Education:** Include school name and major/minor, expected graduation date and your student activities/organizations.

## 2 Connect!

After you have created your profile, it's time to start making connections. The only way to find networking opportunities is to **make more connections**.

### □ Connect with people you know!

- ✓ LinkedIn encourages connecting with those that you know, then building your connections through those people. Start with friends, co-workers, classmates and UIW alumni. Start the foundation here and build connections from browsing their connections.
- ✓ Send a personalized message that is offered when you "connect". Give a reminder of who you are and how you know the other person.
- ✓ If you do not personally know a connection, give them background information on you and your interests and explain why you want to connect.

### □ Join Groups!

- ✓ Look for groups to connect with experts in your desired career field.
- ✓ Participate with group discussions and easily connect with others that you may not know directly. These connections will be more willing to connect with you since you share a common interest or goal.
- ✓ Gain knowledge of current trends in your industry and explore the pages of other group members.

### □ Get Recommendations

- ✓ Recommendations on LinkedIn are similar to a recommendation letter a professor or supervisor may give you. Asking for recommendations is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT! Aim for 3+ recommendations.
- ✓ Many employers are now only accepting 'references' or 'recommendations' from your LinkedIn profile. Start asking for recommendations **ASAP**.
- ✓ Ask Faculty, Past/Present Employers, and Internship connections for recommendations.

### □ Don't Forget Alumni

- ✓ You can search for any alumni that attended UIW by clicking on your college's name under the "Contacts" tab.
- ✓ Sort by the year someone graduated, view companies that alumni work for, search by geographic location where alumni live, and also search by what they do.

## 3 Put Your Profile to Use

- **Log on EVERY DAY:** Spend 15 minutes a day to improve your profile and find connections. LinkedIn can only work for you if you learn how to work it!

- **Research Companies/Jobs:** Continually search for companies you are interested in, learn about their brand and find out what their current employers were doing before they got there. Spend time looking at job descriptions to find out what you should be doing while you are in school to get that desired experience.
- **Continually Get Recommendations:** Remember that your professional brand can only grow when you have others who are backing you up and providing evidence that you are as great as you say you are. You can never have too many recommendations.
- **Create an online PDF resume using your LinkedIn account:** After completing your profile, use LinkedIn to create a resume with the click of a button!
- **Make connections from LinkedIn to your Cardinal Careers Profile:** See your connections and utilize your network to connect with the employers for the jobs you are applying to on Cardinal Careers. This is a crucial step to take and allows you to work your network and land that job!

**Is your LinkedIn profile promoting your professional brand? Make an appointment with a Career Advisor to review your profile and talk about strategies to improve it so you can make the most of LinkedIn!**

**Call (210) 829-3931 or Email [careers@uiwtx.edu](mailto:careers@uiwtx.edu)**

*Information in the packet has been retrieved from <http://learn.linkedin.com/students/step-1/>*

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