EY Center for Careers
## Build your LinkedIn Presence

1. *What is LinkedIn?*
   - Largest Professional Networking Site (500+ million members) - for Networking and Job Search
   - Searchable Database with People Profiles, Company Profiles, and Job Postings
   - You can use LinkedIn to network with CSUN students and alumni in positions and with employers of interest

2. *Develop your LinkedIn Profile*
   Fill in your profile - it is your online resume. Others will search for you when they meet you and/or when you apply to their company; they will look at your profile when you send them an invitation to connect. You can add Profile sections.
   - What impression does your profile make? You only get one chance to make a good first impression!
   - Will they recognize you as someone they know or may want to know?
   - Will they want to connect with you?
   - Does your profile look real or fake, based on the amount of detail?
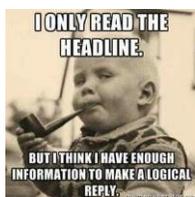
Use a descriptive and appropriate Headline (based on your current status and career goals), for example:
   - "Accounting Student at" - or - "Graduate of" - "California State University, Northridge"
   - "Information Systems (IS) Student at" - or - "Graduate of" - "California State University, Northridge"
   - "Information Technology (IT) Student at" -or - "Graduate of" - "California State University, Northridge"
   - "Master of Professional Accountancy Student at" - or - "Graduate of" - "California State University, Northridge"
   - "Master of Taxation Student at" - or - "Graduate of" - "California State University, Northridge"

Add a Photo ("Professional" style headshot)
   - Good lighting, face the camera, smile, dress appropriately
   - Professionals want to know what you look like, and they will remember you
   - The lack of a photo is obvious, and likely decreases the interest level of the person viewing the profile
   - Check the photo to see how it looks after uploading

Write a Summary (About Section) that introduces you to the reader - include:
   - your education (degree, major, and school) and GPA (if 3.0 or above)
   - expected grad date
   - CPA eligibility (if relevant)
   - career goals and interests
   - technical and language skills
   - anything else that is relevant and you would like to share

Include Work experience only (include volunteer experience only if it resembles work experience)
   - use the content from your resume, and copy and paste into the Experience section
   - include all recent jobs - they do not have to be related to your major and career goals
   - later, remove part-time / temporary jobs during college, unless directly relevant
   - do not include student organization involvement in this section

Include your current and prior Education
   - the full name of the college/university (California State University, Northridge) and select the logo
   - degree (Associates, Bachelors, Masters)
   - major(s), minor(s)
   - dates (start and expected or actual graduation)
   - GPAs - overall, major - if 3.0 or above

<u>Organizations</u> - include student & other organizations (<u>do not put in Experience section</u>)
- Include leadership and other active roles

<u>Volunteer Activities</u> (VITA, non-profits, religious organizations, fundraising, and related)
- Include leadership and other active roles

<u>Skills</u>
- work-related skills (audit, tax, data analysis, information security, systems administration, financial reporting, financial consulting, web development, application development, forensics, bookkeeping, etc.
- hardware, software, network, security, programming, database, etc.
- **do not include soft skills** (communication, leadership, team work, customer service, problem solving, etc.)

<u>Language</u> - you can include multiple languages and your level of fluency with each
- reading, writing, speaking
- do not exaggerate as you may be tested in a conversation or interview

<u>Certification</u> - include certifications and licenses (include the abbreviation and full title)

<u>Honors & Awards</u> - include school and work-related awards, scholarships, and relevant achievements (provide a brief explanation as to why you earned the award, if not obvious)

<u>Personal Details</u>
- **do not include your birthday** - it is not relevant for LinkedIn and increases risk of identity theft
- ** **only include what you want EVERYONE to know about you** - do <u>not</u> share private information!

<u>Settings & Privacy</u>: click the *Me* icon in the LinkedIn menu to select / review your settings periodically

3. ***Grow your LinkedIn Network***
   Your LinkedIn network will provide benefits to you throughout your career - job leads, client referrals, client research, networking to learn and share ideas and best practices, hiring, and more. Make the investment NOW while you are a student, and continue to grow your network as a professional.
   a. LinkedIn Network Structure: 1st = Direct Connection | 2nd = Connection of your #1's | 3rd = Connection of your #2's
   b. Build a quality LinkedIn network:
      i. Connect with people you know (students, professionals, professors, co-workers, friends, family, neighbors, other)
      ii. Ask before inviting professionals, professors and others if you are not sure they will accept
      iii. To invite, go to their profile, click "Connect", and "Add a Note" to personalize the invitation
      iv. Maintain a high level of acceptance (when you send invitations - LinkedIn will monitor your track record which is important if you need to request the ability to send additional invitations)
   c. ** **You do not need to accept invitations from people you don't know, especially if their profiles look suspicious**
      i. Suspicious profiles are lacking specifics, and it is hard to confirm their identity
      ii. Do not assume a profile is real because you know others who have already connected with them (not everyone is selective in accepting invitations) - check with them to see if they actually know the person
      iii. If it does appear to be an authentic profile, consider the potential benefit of connecting (it is a subjective decision, so it will vary for each of you)
      iv. If you do not want to accept, click "Ignore". If the profile appears to be fake, also click "I don't know this person". After several, LinkedIn will warn them or restrict their ability to send unsolicited invitations.
   d. ** **Don't send invitations to people so you can sell them services or products**
      i. If several people decline your invitations and click that they do not know you, LinkedIn may restrict your ability to send invitations
      ii. If you annoy other LinkedIn members, they can report you for spamming them

4. *People Search for Networking*

Searching for others on LinkedIn is a key benefit as you can look for professionals in a specific field, role or company, look for people who attended a specific college/university or other training course/program, and look for those who have experience with certain software applications, programming languages, and other technical tools. If you are seeking professional services, you can also search LinkedIn, i.e. for business, marketing, sales, and IS consultants, printers, graphic designers, copywriters, web developers, real estate, mortgage, financial services and insurance brokers/agents, etc.

** **The Basic (Free) Account has a monthly limit for Advanced Searches, so follow the instructions below** **

   a. Use the Search box (top left of the page) to search for People, Companies, Jobs, Groups, other
   b. *To find CSUN alumni at companies of interest* (it is beneficial to start with CSUN alumni as they may be more likely to respond, but do not limit to only CSUN alumni as needed)
       i. Put the Company's name in the Search box, find and select the Company page (it will show "Company" next to the Company's name), and on the Company page, click "See all ---- employees"
           1. ** You can use this process to estimate the number of employees at an employer if you are interested in determining the company's overall size (and you can filter by Location to estimate the number of employees in a geographical area such as Greater Los Angeles).
           2. Not all employees have LinkedIn profiles or have updated them (to show current employment at the company, or having left the company and working elsewhere)
       ii. Click "All Filters", and filter the list (click the boxes) by Location (i.e., Greater Los Angeles area) and by School (i.e., California State University Northridge) - add the Location and/or School in the open box(es) if they are not already in the drop-down list - this process filters the employee list to those who live in the Greater Los Angeles area and attend (or have attended) California State University Northridge
       iii. Review the search results list for profiles of interest (**do not click on any profiles directly** - see below) - create a separate **Excel spreadsheet** and make a list of those with whom you may want to contact (include: company, name, and position
           1. ** **Do not click on profiles directly** from your search list as LinkedIn will think you are a power user, such as a recruiter or sales person, LinkedIn will keep track of your searches, and you will soon exhaust your free monthly search limit (the search results list will blur out until the start of the next month)
           2. ** Use the Excel list, sort names by order of interest, and then in LinkedIn, **search by name** using the Search box at the top, and click on the correct profile (LinkedIn will assume that you know the person when you search by name)
           3. Track your contact history in the Excel spreadsheet (emails, phone calls, coffee chats, etc.)
           4. **Do not pay for Premium Services as it is not necessary**
   c. General People Search: Use the Search box at the top of the page
       i. Search by first and last name, and use filters (on the top) to narrow your search if necessary
       ii. You can filter by Location, Current Company, and School - use "+Add" to add a selection not in the list
       iii. Start with a wide search (with less filters) - you can add more filters to Search Results at any time
       iv. As you add filters, the Search Results will change according to your selection - you can also undo a filter
       v. Look at profiles based on Title and Relationship (level of connection - 1st, 2nd, 3rd) - 1st level, you are already connected | 2nd level, look at the Shared Connections (opportunity to request introduction)| 3rd level, you do not share any common connections (you cannot request a direct introduction)

5. *Networking (Reach Out and Make Contact after Searching)*

One of the opportunities for finding people on LinkedIn is to set up a "coffee chat" (either in person or on the phone) - see the Coffee Chat Guide on the EY Center website for more detailed information about why and how.

a. **Use internet search to find a company's email structure**. Find the company website (xxx.com), then use "@xxx.com email" to search for the company's likely email structure (i.e., Firstname.Lastname@xxx.com; FirstinitialLastname@xxx.com; etc.)

b. Send an email to make contact (Subject: "CSUN Accounting/IS/IT Student - or Alumni - Interested in -----") - in the text of the email, include how you found them (LinkedIn) and your reason for making contact, and request to speak/meet "at their convenience". If you do not hear back, follow-up once by email 7-10 days later. (see the "Coffee Chat" guide on the EY Center website for more details)

c. **** Do not attach your resume for Networking (resume = job search)**

d. Keep track in your Excel list of all of your activity, including dates of emails, phone calls, coffee chats, etc.

e. **Be considerate**, **do not expect or demand anything**, **be patient**, and always **be clear as to your purpose**; also be patient as someone may be willing to meet with you, but they are very busy at this time

f. Always send a thank you for any response, coffee chat, referral, etc.

6. *Job Search*
LinkedIn is a very popular site for employers to post jobs, so it is useful as a job search site(in addition to Handshake, Indeed and other job sites). However, the job search function is based on using job title search, so you will probably have to try a variety of titles to find all of the jobs that match your interests.

a. Select Jobs in the top menu and enter a title for the job you are seeking (try different titles)

b. Use filters to narrow your search for Location, Company, Date Posted, Job Function, Industry …

c. You can turn on (or off) a Job Alert

7. *NewsFeed & Posting*

a. **Only post business-related content** - post information that may interest your network (articles, events, news)

b. **Don't post personal content** such as religious, political or other non-business related information

c. Don't post all the time - quality is much more valuable than quantity (a lot of social media "experts" think you should be posting all the time to be noticed; it is better to be noticed because you post something of value)

d. Don't waste a lot of time scrolling down the NewsFeed as it is endless

e. You can write a post and/or attach PDFs, JPGs or videos; you can include a link to an article (or website) located elsewhere on the internet

f. You can post blogs on LinkedIn - do so if you are a good writer, understand the unique characteristics of blogging and have something of value to share

g. You can sort your NewsFeed to show Top posts (have the most # of Likes and Comments) or Recent posts

8. *Miscellaneous*

a. Messaging - you can use free messaging to reach out to your 1st connections; however, if they do not receive notifications, check their email often, or log into LinkedIn, they may not read your message, and you may not get a response right away, if at all

b. Notifications - LinkedIn will let you know who viewed your profile, who changed jobs or got promoted, who's "celebrating a work anniversary", who followed you, who commented on or liked your post, etc.

c. Network - you can view new Invitations and also see your Connections (including how many connections you have) - you can search your own Connections using Filters as described above

d. To edit your Profile, click on your photo/ name on the left, or click "Me" in the top menu, and then "View Profile"

e. On the left, you can see how many people viewed your profile and read your posts (not sure how LinkedIn knows)

f. **Premium Services** - **costly and unnecessary**; you can get one free month only