

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.

- 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 (or Graduate) at California State University, Northridge
- Information Systems (IS) Student (or Graduate) at California State University, Northridge
- Information Technology (IT) Student (or Graduate) at California State University, Northridge
- Master of Professional Accountancy Student (or Graduate) at California State University, Northridge
- Master of Taxation Student (or Graduate) at 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** 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)
- dates
- GPAs - overall, major - if 3.0 or above

Organizations - include student & other organizations (do not put in Experience section)

- Include leadership and other active roles

Volunteer Activities (VITA, non-profits, religious organizations, fundraising, and related)

- Include leadership and other active roles

Skills

- 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.)

Language - 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

Certification - include certifications and licenses (include the abbreviation and full title)

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

Personal Details - 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 not share private information!

Settings & Privacy: 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 (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.

- a. **** The Basic Account (which is free) has a monthly limit for Advanced Searches ****
- b. Use the Search box (top left of the page) to search for People, Companies, Jobs, Groups, other
- c. *To find CSUN alumni at companies of interest, use **Company Search** (start with CSUN alumni as they may be more likely to respond, but do not limit to only CSUN alumni)*
 - i. Put the Company's name in Search, select the Company page, click "See all ---- employees"
 - 1. **** You can use this process to determine the approximate number of employees at an employer if you are interested in estimating their overall size (and filter by Location for local office(s)).**
 - ii. Click "All Filters", and filter the list by Location (i.e., Greater Los Angeles area) and School (California State University Northridge) - add the Location and School if they are not already in the list
 - iii. Review the search results list (do not click on any profiles), and then in a separate Excel spreadsheet, 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 keep track of your searches, and you will soon exhaust your free monthly search limit**
 - 2. **** Use the Excel list, 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)**
- d. **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 email structure (e.g., 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 -----”) - include how you found them (LinkedIn), 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)
- c. **** Do not attach your resume for Networking.**
- 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. 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 above to narrow your search for Location, Company, Date Posted, Job Function, Industry ...
- c. Setup (“Create search alert”) to save a job search, and manage Job Alerts

7. **NewsFeed & Posting**

- a. Only post business-related content (on Home Page & in Groups) - info that will 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; 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 post PDFs, JPGs or write a brief post, including a link to an article located elsewhere on the internet
- f. You can post blogs on LinkedIn - do so if you are a good writer, understand the unique characteristics with 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 most 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 search features as described above
- d. To edit your Profile, either click on your photo or name on the left, or click on "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 this!)
- f. Premium Services - costly and unnecessary unless you are a recruiter or sales person who performs a lot of searches each month; you can get one free month only