

## A CSUN Student's LinkedIn Success Story

As many of you know, I am passionate about LinkedIn and the numerous short-term and long-term benefits that LinkedIn members can derive from having a professional and active presence on this largest, and still rapidly growing, business networking site.

I have been a member of LinkedIn since 2006, facilitated dozens of LinkedIn workshops to groups of students, job seekers and businesses, and coached hundreds of clients since 2008. Over this time, I have developed a network of more than 4300 connections, written more than 20 career and LinkedIn related blogs on LinkedIn and attracted much coaching business throughout these years. I combine and apply 20 years of recruiting and 15+ years of coaching experience to my approach and use of LinkedIn for job seekers, sales professionals, small business owners and networkers in general.

Each semester, I present several LinkedIn workshops to CSUN Accounting and IS students to show them (directly on the site) how to develop their LinkedIn presence, grow a quality network, and search for / find CSUN alumni who work at public accounting firms and corporations with whom they can connect and network to learn more about the Accounting and IS professions and their respective employers. I emphasize that even if they already have secured an internship or full-time position, it is going to be of great benefit long-term if they complete their LinkedIn profile and connect with students, professionals and others while they are still attending CSUN. CSUN students have the opportunity to build a network of hundreds of quality connections now. In the future, they may seek another position, want to learn about another career path, need to tap into their network for technical resources and advice, utilize LinkedIn to recruit for open positions at their company / in their department or leverage their connections for introductions to potential new clients / customers.

*\*\* Recently, a CSUN student came into the EY Center and shared his LinkedIn success story:*

In the Spring 2016, this student was a junior and had already worked hard in building his LinkedIn presence including a complete profile and a network of more than 500 connections. A partner with a mid-tier accounting firm saw his profile on LinkedIn, clicked on it and was so impressed that he messaged the student directly and asked him to meet for lunch. This partner is a CSUN alum, but he does not actively participate in recruiting at CSUN.

Remember that the partner initiated the contact based on his very positive impression of the student's LinkedIn profile; in other words, he was impressed with the student's background, credentials and overall presentation and presence on LinkedIn.

The student and the partner soon met for lunch; the partner commented at the outset that he only had one hour to spend as he had another meeting scheduled following their lunch. They began an engaging conversation, and as they neared the initial one hour, the partner commented (with emphasis) that he would postpone his other meeting, and the two of them continued to

converse for another two hours, for a total of three hours. Now, keep in mind the billing rate for a partner (~\$500 - \$700 or more), so this was a very “expensive” lunch meeting!

At the end of lunch, the partner strongly urged the student to apply for a full-time position with the firm, so in the Fall 2016, the student applied, interviewed and received a full-time offer with that firm, and he will start his new career with them this coming Summer 2017 (upon graduating in May)!

So, the moral of the story is that you never know who and when someone will find you on LinkedIn, reach out to you directly, and offer you an opportunity that would not have come your way otherwise. If you are not on LinkedIn or have an overall professional presence on LinkedIn, you are not considered “relevant” or “connected”, and you are, therefore, less likely to be found and considered. By having a complete and professionally presented profile, and by building a quality network, you will increase the opportunity to connect with others, and enhance your visibility to others that may bring you unexpected benefits now or in the future.

P.S. If you do not have a LinkedIn profile or do not know how to use LinkedIn effectively (to develop your presence, build a quality network, and find and connect with professionals who can help you explore and learn more about career paths, companies and firms, and connect you with other professionals), please come to the EY Center for Careers - JH 2224 - or call for an appointment 818.677.2979, and I will be glad to meet with you and help you up your game with LinkedIn!

Stuart Fried  
Director, EY Center for Careers  
stuart.fried@csun.edu