

---

## Using LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is a social network for career and business professionals. At half a billion users and counting from just about any industry and any part of the world you can think of, it is a powerful resource for developing your professional network. LinkedIn is a professional – not social – network and as such, is more dependent on the quality of your contacts, rather than the quantity.

It is a relatively easy to use platform where professionals often post industry-related news and information as opposed to personal information posted on other social media sites. Think of it as an expanded form of a business card and/or resume.

If you are job hunting, LinkedIn allows you to set job posting alerts. Companies and organizations must pay to list jobs, which helps to eliminate fraudulent postings. Many of those job postings allow you to apply right on LinkedIn. You can also research companies or organizations you may be interested in.

### Create Your Profile

If you are ready to create your profile or are searching for some tips to strengthen your existing profile, read on.

1. **Create your LinkedIn login.** Using the free option is perfectly adequate but there are other paid levels of subscription that may be beneficial to use at different times in your career.
2. **Invest in a professional headshot.** Employers will look you up when you apply and a quality headshot shows you are polished and professional. Avoid selfies or any photo that is too casual.
3. **Complete your profile to highlight your skills, experience, education, and certifications.** You may also add volunteer work, publications, honors, and awards. Rather than just listing your accomplishments, LinkedIn gives you the ability to expand upon those if you like, and to share projects and presentations you are particularly proud of.
4. **Once you have created your profile, look for others you know and would like to connect with.** Take note of other profiles to see how you can customize and add to yours
5. **You may want to join LinkedIn groups.** There are groups for just about every region and industry but you may want to start with your alumni network. In addition to a general alumni network, there are often regional alumni networks that have LinkedIn groups.
6. **Update frequently!** We see this issue often. People make changes in their lives and move, change positions, or transition to different careers. To get the most out of LinkedIn, update your information and refresh your profile from time to time.