

# LINKEDIN



Hampshire College Career Options Resource Center

## **Why LinkedIn?**

A better question to ask is: Why *not* LinkedIn? Did you know that 6,264 Hampshire students and alumni have LinkedIn profiles? That's a lot of networking. And, according to Jobvite's 2013 Social Recruiting Survey, 92% of employers currently use some form of social networking to find strong candidates, and 86% of employers research candidates' LinkedIn profiles before or after interviews.

Having an outstanding profile allows friends, classmates, and potential employers to see prior and recent highlights of your education, experience, skills, and projects. It's also a great way to see what other people are doing, participate in discussions in groups of interest to you, and discover organizations and activities you may not have known about.

## **Photo**

- Choose a professional-looking headshot, rather than something more casual
- Remember, LinkedIn is focused on your work life, not your personal life

## **Headline**

- LinkedIn will automatically list your current title
- You may want to customize your headline to be a broader statement about yourself
- Examples: *Artist & Educator, Anything with Words, Community Organizing & Social Justice, Aspiring Neuropsychologist*

## **Summary**

- Write your summary in the first person
- Share something about your professional identity, what you're looking for, and what's unique about your skills and abilities
- Include contact information to make it easier for people to contact you
- Use action verbs and strong, clear language

## **Recommendations**

- Only people with LinkedIn profiles can be recommenders
- Personalize your request when asking connections for recommendations
- Start with current or previous faculty, advisors, and supervisors/bosses
- In turn, offer to write recommendations for others

## **Connections**

- When you're getting started, connect with people you actually know
- When possible, write a brief, personal message with your request to connect
- Begin with family and friends, classmates, co-workers and supervisors from current or previous internships, jobs, and volunteer positions, and teachers and professors from Hampshire and anywhere else you've studied

## **Public Profile URL**

- Make your LinkedIn URL more personal and user-friendly
- Next to the URL, click "Edit," then click on "Edit public profile url" on the lower right hand side of the page
- Change the profile to your name, e.g. *www.linkedin.com/in/yournamehere*

## **Experience**

- If possible, include current and at least two previous positions
- Focus on including your related experience, just as you would on a resume
- Include 2-3 details (bullet points or sentences) describing your role for each, using strong verbs and descriptive, detailed language
- You may include volunteer and extracurricular positions here, as well as in the Volunteering and Causes section

## **Education**

- List your degree(s) as well as any relevant honors, awards, coursework, and projects (think Div 3!)
- Recommendations from faculty and committee members will appear in this section

## **Skills & Expertise**

- Start with at least five
- *Examples:* Digital Photography; Conflict Resolution; Creative Writing; Microsoft Office; Early Childhood Education; Research; Community Organizing

## **Groups & Associations**

- Join groups representing your professional interests to expand your network and help you connect with like-minded people
- Start with the Hampshire College Alumni Network Group and the Hampshire College Community Group
- Consider professional associations, such as American Writers & Artists, Inc. or LGBT Network

## **Interests**

- Include professional interests here
- Personal interests, if you do include them, should stand out in some way

## **Other Optional Sections**

- **Courses:** Especially useful for current students and more recent grads
- **Test Scores:** Include if you are in a professional field, such as law, medicine, or teaching, if they represent you well
- **Honors and Awards:** Include all
- **Languages:** Include foreign languages along with your level of proficiency (*“Beginner-level Spanish,” “Proficient in written and spoken German,” “Fluent in Cantonese,” or “Bilingual, English/French”*)
- **Projects:** Don’t forget your Div work, as well as any other significant projects you’ve contributed to or led
- **Organizations:** Include relevant on- and off-campus groups you are/were active in
- **Publications:** Ranging from research to creative writing
- **Certifications:** e.g. EMT, Red Cross, TESL
- **Volunteering and Causes:** What do you care about or spend time helping with outside of your work?

## **Best Practices**

LinkedIn is ever-changing. To get the most benefit from your free membership, visit frequently—once a day, or at least several times a week. You only need to spend 15 minutes a day to get real value from your presence here. Take some time to read your connections’ updates, leave comments, scan group discussions, connect with new people (set a goal of 3-5/week), write recommendations for friends and co-workers, search for job opportunities, and keep your profile current and interesting.

## **A Note on Privacy Settings**

By default, your entire LinkedIn profile is public. According to LinkedIn expert Wayne Breitbarth, this kind of transparency—allowing your connections to see who your other connections are—is actually a valuable step in the networking process. However, you can always go to *Profile Settings* to uncheck any profile features you’d prefer not be visible to non-connections.