



Creating a Customized Invitation to Connect on LinkedIn

If you are used to just clicking “Connect” when scrolling through lists of LinkedIn profiles, it’s time to re-think your strategy. Many professionals are more likely to accept a request when it comes with a note.

Step One: Look at the profile

Look at the person’s profile. Really look at it. How many connections do they have? Are they a UO alum? Look at their headline to get a sense of their professional brand, the About section to find out how they introduce themselves on the platform, the Experience section so that you can trace their career path, and the Education section to see if you have any academic pursuits or activities in common.

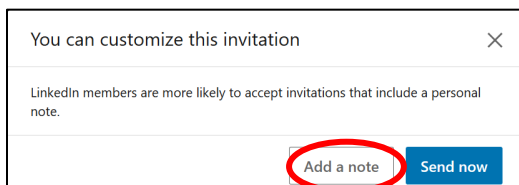
Step Two: Prepare to connect

Once you have reviewed the profile and decided to reach out, look at the buttons below the profile photo and headline. If you see a button that says “Connect”—click on it. If you do not see a “Connect” button, look for a button that says “More” or the “...” symbol. Typically, either of those will trigger a drop-down menu that includes a “Connect” option—in which case, select “Connect” and prepare to add a note.*

***Note: If you have a free LinkedIn account**, you are allowed to send up to five personalized Customized Invitations to connect per month, containing up to 200 characters each.

Step Three: Add a note

When you click connect while you are on the individual profile page, this box will pop up:



Click on “Add a note.” You have 200 characters. You need to:

- Introduce yourself
- Point out what you have in common (could be: UO, interest in sustainability, etc.)
- Tell them **why** you want to connect

SAMPLE—note the specific area of related interest:

Hi Name:

I am a junior studying marketing at the University of Oregon, interested in learning more about brand marketing in the outdoor space. I would love to connect with a fellow Duck!

Best,
Name

(Including spaces, that is 195 characters, within the 200-character limit)



If you have LinkedIn Premium (there is a charge for this service, so you will need to decide whether it is worth the cost—Lundquist *graduate students* may apply for LinkedIn Premium funding through Mohr Career Services), you may send an unlimited number of Customized Invitations each month, containing up to 300 characters each.

SAMPLE—Here, you might add a call to action—let them know what you would like to connect about:

Hi Name!

As a finance student at the UO—Go Ducks!—I'm interested in the financial models used by private equity firms, and SUPER interested in your experience with [company].

Would you have 20 minutes to chat about your work and any advice you might offer an aspiring financial analyst?

Thanks!
Name

(Including spaces, that is 298 characters, just under the 300-character limit)

What happens next?

If the person accepts your request, you will see a notification in your email. Then you can “Message” them through LinkedIn, using the “Messaging” tab on the lower right side of the screen.

What should you say in a follow up message?

- If your original note just asked for a connection, be sure to pull up the Messaging tab (located on the lower right side of your LI home page) and thank your contact for connecting. Then, either pose a question or two to your new connection about their job/company/industry or request an informational interview and let your contact know that you are hoping to hear about their journey from being a student to their current professional role.
- Already requested an informational interview through your initial invitation to connect? Great! Then use the Messaging tab to thank your new contact for agreeing to an informational interview and suggest several days and times over the next two weeks for that conversation. Make it easy for your contact to say yes!

After you have an informational interview, then what?

- Keep building your professional relationship by following up occasionally.
- If your contact gave you advice and you took it, circle back and let them know the outcome in a quick message!



- If you read an article or LinkedIn post related to what your contact does, the company they work for, or what you talked about, send it to your contact and ask their thoughts.
- If you have a follow up question you didn't think to ask during your conversation, or a question that comes up in your studies or your career research, reach out and ask!