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**OPTIMIZE YOUR**

**LINKEDIN**

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# Why Optimizing Your LinkedIn Profile Should Be One of Your Top Priorities

- 138 million users are on LinkedIn in the United States.
- 44,000 job applications are submitted daily through LinkedIn.
- 74% of recruiters source job candidates from LinkedIn.
- 94% of recruiters use LinkedIn to vet job candidates.

Recruiters pay thousands of dollars for powerful LinkedIn search tools that highlight candidates based on hyper-specific keywords and algorithms. Hiring managers vet candidates based on their LinkedIn profiles. Whether you're using LinkedIn to attract recruiters or supplement your resume in your job search, your profile can only make a positive impact if it's complete, professional, and tailored to the jobs you want with targeted keywords and search engine optimized profile sections.

## WHAT WE'LL COVER:

- Crafting a strong Headline and About Section
- Other Important Features such as Open to Work
- Checklist of all things to tackle to land that job

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## LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

### YOUR LINKEDIN HEADLINE

Your LinkedIn headline is the most seen section of your LinkedIn profile. It appears alongside your profile picture and your name. It gives recruiters and others a snapshot of who you are and why they should learn more about you by viewing your whole profile.

By default, LinkedIn sets your LinkedIn headline is Student at University of St. Thomas.

### WHAT ARE KEYWORDS AND WHY DO THEY MATTER?

Getting people to click through to your full profile is only one reason why it's important to have a great LinkedIn headline. The second reason is so important: a good LinkedIn headline means you will show up higher in search results. LinkedIn searches profiles for the search terms, or 'keywords', (i.e. 'Tableau' or 'Accounting'). If you didn't have these keywords in your headline as the recruiter's search query, LinkedIn won't show your profile to the recruiter. This is because your profile appears less relevant than someone who does have those keywords in their profile.

### WHAT MAKES A GREAT LINKEDIN HEADLINE?

As a student or recent graduated, be specific about the roles you want in your headline. It's a wasted opportunity to say, "Student from XYZ University", since recruiters and hiring managers are not searching for those terms. Instead, they're searching for terms such as "entry-level finance". You want to be sure you end up in search results when they search for those terms.

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# YOUR LINKEDIN HEADLINE

PICK OUT 2-3 ITEMS FROM THIS LIST THAT YOU'D LIKE TO USE:

- Experience or an achievement you're proud of
- 1-2 hard skills you have
- Desired industry
- Kind of role you want
- A passion or value that drives you

## YOUR TURN - BRAINSTORM

Experiences or achievements you're proud of:

Hard skills you have:

Desired industries:

Kind of roles you want:

Passions or values that drives you:

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## LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

From there, you'll need decide how to pull those points together.

You have a few options:

- Simply list them as bullet points (without the bullets), separated by vertical bars.
  - Example: "SEO Consultant | Top-Tier Content Writer | Website Owner"
- Weave your points into a sentence or tagline that conveys everything.
  - Example: "Creates organic traffic out of nothing with SEO, content, and editorial partnerships."
- Combine approaches #1 and #2, leading with a punchy headline and adding your third point on the end (in case it just doesn't fit with the rest of the headline).
  - Example: "Creates website traffic engines for small and medium businesses | Website owner"

## YOUR TURN - WRITE AN EXAMPLE HEADLINE OF EACH STYLE

List separated by vertical bars

|

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One sentence that conveys a point

Combined approach

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## LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

### YOUR LINKEDIN ABOUT SECTION

Your LinkedIn About section appears right underneath your photo and headline on your profile. The goal of your summary is to present a concise, yet compelling, snapshot of your professional identity.

With its 2,600 character limit, the summary gives you approximately 370 words to explain who you are, what you do, and what makes you unique.

#### KEYWORDS - AGAIN!

Your LinkedIn About section is a great way to set yourself apart from everyone else. It allows you to inject a little personality into your profile. It's where you can truly express yourself and tell your story.

And...it's another section that LinkedIn scans for keywords that recruiters use to find candidates. Having these keywords in your summary strengthens the searchability of your profile, giving you a leg up on the competition.

#### WHAT MAKES A GREAT LINKEDIN ABOUT SECTION?

- Your story matters - this is less about rehashing your resume, and more about crafting an overview of who you are, what you're passionate about, skills you have, etc.
- Writing in first person - using I pronouns makes your About section feel more personable.
- Show your personality - include personal details about your interests that helps others understand you.
- Emphasize your first three lines - visitors only see your first three lines before they have to click more. Your opening should convey the number one thing you want your readers to know about you. What sets you apart from everyone else? What combinations of skills help you achieve results? Why do you love your work? What outstanding accomplishments do you have?
- Include a call to action - having a call to action at the end of your About section gives visitors a reason to connect deeper with you.

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## LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

### EXAMPLES OF ABOUT SECTIONS

"I am currently a third-year finance major at NYU who hopes to attend the NYU Stern School of Business next year. After interning at JetBlue Airways Corporation over the past two summers, I have shifted my educational focus to financial analysis and real-world business solutions. I excel when working in collaborative groups to solve financial problems.

New York is my favorite place in the world. I am originally from Albany and always loved taking trips down to NYC. I always knew I'd study finance at NYU, the best place to study finance in the country. My five-year plan includes becoming a financial advisor for high-profile clients on Wall Street. My education at NYU has prepared me for a long career helping people manage their money successfully."

"Ever since I taught my little brother how to tie his shoes, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. There's nothing like that "light bulb" moment when a child understands something they didn't know just a few minutes before.

Between helping my high school teachers after school, volunteering in the Tutor Center at UCLA, and the 15 years of my own education, I've spent thousands of hours in the classroom. I especially love working with younger children as they develop important skills.

Now that I am finishing my senior year at UCLA, I am applying to several M.Ed programs to learn more about child development and classroom best practices. I hope to be an elementary teacher who inspires my students and leaves them feeling great about themselves!"

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## YOUR LINKEDIN ABOUT SECTION

### Let's Write

LinkedIn shortens your About section to 130 or 330 characters depending on if they are on mobile or desktop. This is one to three sentences before you are cut off.

So your first couple of sentences should describe you and what drives you:

Next you'll want to include three impactful, relevant experiences that show you have a passion and experience for the roles you are aiming for.

Third, you'll want to pack plenty of keywords in a specialties section. Use a current job description for a job you are interested to find keywords to add.

Lastly, what is going to be your call to action?



## OTHER IMPORTANT FEATURES


### LOCATION


Another important component that feeds into recruiter searches on LinkedIn is location. Candidate searches typically are tied to a location along with keywords. It is important to set your location to where you aspire to work, not necessarily where you currently work.

### OPEN TO WORK

One of the newer features you can toggle on is the Open to Work tag. This photo frame and tag shows recruiters you are open to connecting about open positions.

Job preferences ×



**Morgan Knutzen, MPNA**  
is open to work 

**Job titles**  
Project Manager · Program Manager · Senior Program Manager · Product Manager · Program Officer

**Workplaces**  
On-site · Hybrid · Remote

**Job locations (On-site)**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States · Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area · Duluth, Minnesota, United States · St Peter, Minnesota, United States

**Job locations (Remote)**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States

**Start date**  
Immediately, I'm actively applying

## OPEN TO WORK - CONT.

When you set Open to Work, you'll share your preferences for job titles, work locations, functions, and start date.

The second consideration is whether to toggle Open to Work on for all of your LinkedIn connections to see - adds the open to work photo frame to your profile picture - or if you only want recruiters to see you are open to work. If you have a current boss who you would prefer not to know you are searching for a new position, only toggle Open to Work on for recruiters.

## COMPANY CONNECTIONS

A recruiter can also see how many employees you are connected to at the organization. As you build your network, you'll want to make sure to have informational interviews with people at your target companies that you are interested in.

## FOLLOW THE COMPANY

Recruiters can also see whether you are following their company or not. Thus, it is important for you to follow many companies on LinkedIn that are in your industry you would like to work in.

You can now also show an interest working for the company without applying for specific roles. Navigate to an organization's about section and click the I'm Interested button.

Home **About** Posts Jobs Life People Ev



### Interested in working with us in the future?

Not ready to apply or don't see a relevant open role? Privately share your profile with our recruiters – you'll be noted as expressing interest in our job openings for up to a year. [Learn more](#)

[I'm interested](#)

# CHECKLIST

## Ready to get started?

Now that we've walked through how to optimize your LinkedIn profile, let's get down to business. Below are checklists for you to start to use LinkedIn to its fullest. If you feel like you are stuck, hop on to Handshake to request a Networking Strategies and Tools appointment.

## Get Focused – Exploring

Explore the career paths of alumni from St. Thomas. Try applying the following filters to home in on alumni whose careers excite you:

- Location
- Employer
- Major
- Skills you want to build

For every career path that interests you, reach out to five alumni – yielding at least three conversations – who are in, or have done, the jobs you are most interested in. For each informational interview, make sure to:

- Ask great questions that give you a sense of what it is like to be in their shoes
- Follow up with a thank you note that lets alumni know their time was useful.

Use these paths and informational interviews to assess your level of fit and narrow down your preferred next step

## Think Like a Recruiter - Position Yourself for Success

- Put your desired job title in your Headline
- Change your location to where you want to be next (regardless of where you are today)
- Turn on your Open to Work signal
- Import all of your contacts from your emails and phone contacts
- Follow every company you are excited about
- Upload a profile photo that nails the three important criteria:
  - Appropriate attire
  - A genuine Duchenne smile
  - Cropped tightly around your head and shoulders
- Add a photo background that speaks to your functional or geographical interests
- Flesh out the About section with content for both recruiters and the algorithm
  - Two introductory sentences that clearly identifies the job titles, locations, and skills you're passionate about
  - Three career/school highlights that include important keywords and impact
  - A list of skills drawn straight from job descriptions you've found
  - Your email address for when recruiters are out of InMails for the month
- Update your Experience sections to include the following:
  - Your existing resume bullets
  - Both keywords and impact for every bullet
  - Your volunteer work
  - Visuals where appropriate (ppts from projects, youtube videos, etc)
- Optimize your LinkedIn profile for search engines by:
  - Make your profile public
  - Claim a custom URL
  - Consider adding your area of expertise to your URL if you have a common name
- Add schools to your Education section
- Add skills that are relevant to the job you want to be found for and consider trying out LinkedIn Skills Assessments to display on your profile
- Get at least two recommendations:
  - From someone who has credibility with recruiters – boss, professor, classmate
  - Focused on the key attributes you're looking to portray – accounting skills from a project
  - Search for the people who already have the job you want and check out their profiles to make sure you've optimized your own in the same way

## It's not just what you know, it's who you know - Networking

For any job you are serious about, get a referral by pursuing these options in order:

1. Search for a 1st degree connection at the employer and ask this connection for a referral
2. Search for a 2nd degree connection, ask your mutual connection for an introduction.
3. To make it easy for your connection to say yes, draft an initial reach out message for them to send on your behalf.
4. Create a separate resume for each job you are pursuing
5. Search for the jobs you want based on industry, function, title, location and type – and set up alerts for each search so you can see the newest postings each day
6. Try to apply within the first 96 hours to every job to maximize your chances
7. Apply for jobs where you match at least 50% of the job description

### Template request for a networking informational interview

HI [INSERT NAME OF PERSON HERE],

I'm an Augsburg University student working on networking to create more connections within the \_\_\_\_\_ industry. I came across your profile and wanted to connect with you.

Would you be open to meeting with me to tell me about your career journey? I'd like to ask you questions about your experience as a [INSERT THEIR CURRENT JOB TITLE], and how you transitioned from Augsburg (OR THEIR COLLEGE IF NOT AUGSBURG) to the working world.

Hope to connect soon,  
[YOUR NAME]

## What to ask once you land a networking informational interview

Possible Questions to Ask:

- What is a typical work day like for you?
- How did you find this field?
- When did you know you wanted to work in this field for the long term?
- What experiences, skills and educational background are necessary for a person who wants to do a job like yours?
- How prepared did you feel after college going into the work you're doing?
- What do you like the most about your position (or employer)? The least?
- What are some of the pressures, problems and challenges for a person entering this type of career?
- What types of people are more likely to succeed in this career/at this company?
- What are some of the emerging trends in this field?
- Do you belong to any professional associations? Are there any you would recommend I join?
- Would you say you've had a typical educational/career path?
- Is there anything you wish you would've known, or done differently to get to where you are today?
- What types of things would you recommend I do right now to prepare for a career like yours?
- Can you think of anything else I should really know about this field or company?

## After the interview

- Express your gratitude for the time they took to talk with you and reiterate some of the important things you learned from your conversation with them.
- Ask them to recommend and introduce you to two people they think you should know.