

how **2**  
guide:

# Using LinkedIn®

LinkedIn is the world's largest site for **professional networking**. While in some ways it has functionality that is similar to Facebook, its purpose is different. Facebook is a social networking site for people to connect and share their personal life. The content and relationships that people share on **LinkedIn** is professional. Check out the site at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com).) LinkedIn can be used to enhance your networking efforts during the job search. Here is a short tutorial that gives you an overview of how it can be used – <http://learn.linkedin.com/students/>

If you are interested in using LinkedIn, below are some steps for getting started:

## 1 – CREATE YOUR PROFILE

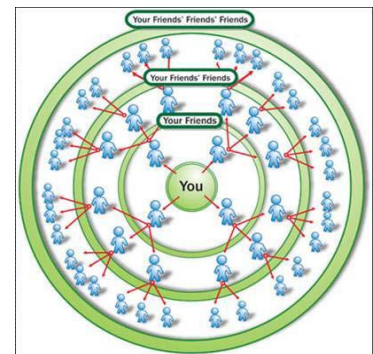
- Upload a professional photo (of you alone) for your profile picture
- In the “Summary” section, write a 3-4 sentence summary of your background. Make sure it is “keyword-rich” toward the field you are pursuing. For example:

*Recent Management graduate with concentration in Human Resources. Over three years of supervisory experience in the retail and hospitality fields. Knowledge of recruitment strategies, employment law, and hiring practices. Organized, professional, and highly motivated.*

- Use the “Specialties” section further describe your qualifications
- The “Experience” and “Education” sections should be consistent with the content of your resume.
- Use the “LinkedIn Groups” feature to establish new business relationships by joining alumni, industry, or professional and other relevant groups.
- Add additional information about yourself in your profile as applicable. All the content in your profile should use proper grammar and spelling. No txt msg speak. LOL!
- Once you get your profile established, start building it up by asking colleagues, clients, and supervisors for references.

## 2 – BUILD CONNECTIONS

The purpose of the site is to enable registered users to maintain a list of people they know and trust in business. The people in the list are called *Connections*. Users can invite anyone to become a connection. If you have limited work experience, your initial set of connections may be current/former classmates. The beauty of LinkedIn is that for each direct connection you establish, you are then linked to the connections of each of their connections (termed *second-degree connections*) and also the connections of second-degree connections (termed *third-degree connections*). As you can see from the image to the right, you can use LinkedIn to build a robust network of “warm connections,” or people that you share a common link with. (The “gated-access approach” (where contact with any professional requires either a preexisting relationship, or the intervention of a contact of theirs) is intended to build trust among the service's users.)



- When you send a connection request, you will be asked to identify your “relevance” to that person. Also, the default connection request verbiage is “I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn.” If you are sending one to someone you haven't interacted with in a while, it is best to customize your invitation to more personally re-establish the connection.
- Respond to all connection requests and messages within one week.

### 3 – LEVERAGE YOUR CONNECTIONS IN THE JOB SEARCH

If you were talking to someone you knew, you probably wouldn't straight-out ask them for a job. Likewise, it would seem inappropriate to do it through a networking site. But you can use LinkedIn to stay in touch with your connections so they can let you know if they hear of any jobs, as well as have your closer connections serve as referrals for opportunities you are pursuing. To demonstrate this, we will use a fictional FGCU grad and show how he can use LinkedIn in his job search. Meet John Smith. He is a recently graduated FGCU student looking for an entry-level job in human resources.

#### Scenario #1

He sees that one of his former FGCU classmate and LinkedIn connections, Sally Jones, is an HR Generalist at a resort in Orlando. The goal for John is to touch base with Sally and let her know his situation.

*Hi Sally,*

*I hope all is well in Orlando. Congratulations on your position at \_\_\_ resort. I am still actively looking for HR opportunities in SW Florida, but am expanding my search to other Florida cities, including Orlando. If you happen to hear about any HR opportunities, feel free to let me know. I will call you next time I am in the area and hopefully we can meet for lunch. I would really be interested in learning how you were able to break into the field. Thanks for your help!*

*John*

#### Scenario #2

John sees that one of his second-degree connections is the Director of Human Resources for a company he would like to work for. John can contact his first-degree connection, a friend and former colleague, to ask for assistance in facilitating an introduction.

*Hi Bill,*

*I hope you and your family are well. I noticed on LinkedIn that you are an acquaintance of Mr. Mike Brown, who is the Director of Human Resources at ABC, Inc. I recently applied for a position in their HR department. If you feel comfortable with it, would you be willing to facilitate an introduction between us, or perhaps put a good word in for me so that my resume gets noticed?*

*I truly appreciate any assistance you can provide and I look forward to a time that I can return the favor.*

*John*

### 4 – CONDUCTING RESEARCH

LinkedIn may be especially helpful if you are considering relocating to another city or state. Using the "Advanced" Search located on the upper right of the home page, you can look for people, jobs and companies in specific geographic areas. For instance, if you are focused on accounting positions in Seattle you might:

- Use *People* Advanced Search to find Seattle-based members of the LinkedIn professional accounting group
- Use *Jobs* Advanced Search to find accounting jobs by title and zip code
- Use *Company* Advanced Search: to find accounting companies of a specific size or in a specific zip code

With these results, you can begin to connect to people to start to build your new local network.

**Final Note:** New technologies are emerging almost daily. We encourage students to explore any technological tool or resource that may enhance their job search and career development efforts. It is important, however, to balance those efforts with "old-fashioned" in-person networking. Use web-based systems to *enhance* in-person relationship building, not replace them. Most people tend to have a deeper sense of connection and trust with those that they know personally rather than virtually.