

Creating a LinkedIn Profile That Pops

You may have heard that having a LinkedIn profile is an important part of your professional online presence. However, the thought of creating a profile can be very overwhelming, especially if doing so from scratch. These tips are designed to guide you through the process of creating your profile, as well as how to take it to the next level.

The Must-Have Basics

A Photo

While you should look professional in the photo, you do not need to get a professional headshot taken. You can put on a collared shirt, stand in front of a blank wall, and have a friend, family member, or timer take a photo of you. Crop the photo so that it is focused on you from the shoulders up and voila! You've got your LinkedIn profile photo. Be sure that you are the only person in the photo. If you'd like to have a little fun with it, you can show yourself working in action such as a photo of you presenting at a conference, etc. Just be sure that the photo is cropped to focus on you.

Education

This section should include your school, degree, and field of study at minimum. Additional pieces of information you may also include are GPA, activities, societies, awards, and relevant courses.

Experience

This section should include your current position (if working now) and past jobs, internships, or volunteering roles. If you have a lot of jobs to list, you may consider listing your volunteer

experience in a separate “Volunteering & Causes” section. Now here is where you don’t have to reinvent the wheel. If you’ve already updated your resume and feel good about the bullet points listed there, simply copy and paste them into your LinkedIn profile!

Public Profile URL

Most of the time, the default URL for your LinkedIn profile contains a sequence of random numbers, letters, and/or symbols at the end of it. You may want to customize your personal URL to simplify it and make it cleaner on resumes, business cards, or email signatures. To do this, click “Edit public profile and URL” on the upper right of your LinkedIn page. Then enter your first name, last name, enter a dot or dash in between, or a number at the end of your name until you find a URL that has not been taken. You can now add your simplified LinkedIn URL to whatever professional materials you see fit!

Feeling good about the basics and ready to level-up your profile?

Consider adding these optional sections to take your profile to the next level:

Headline

The default setting will be your most recent job title, but did you know you can edit the headline to reflect a self-branding statement that will attract attention? Use keywords related to public health or your target job titles. For example, a headline for an epidemiologist might read as: “Healthcare Data Analyst | Research Associate | Maternal Health Advocate”

Summary

A summary can be thought of as an expanded version of your headline and should answer three questions. Who are you professionally? What do you do or want to do? What are your skills or areas of knowledge or expertise?

Skills and Endorsements

Use the smart search skills tool to add relevant skills (at least five). Read through job descriptions to help brainstorm skills the field is seeking and select those you feel you have. Your connections on LinkedIn can endorse your skills (meaning they are confirming that they know you possess a particular skill because they have worked or studied with you or are familiar with your professional background.) Following proper LinkedIn etiquette, if someone gives you a skills endorsement, you should then visit their profile and do the same for them. One way to generate endorsements on your own page, is to endorse skills of those in your network! The skills with the most endorsements will be listed first.

Volunteering and Causes

You can add a section with volunteer roles and descriptions of your work to your profile.

Groups and Associations

Joining or following professional and social groups highlights your interests and can also help you expand your contacts and learn about relevant events and opportunities. Start by following the American Public Health Association and if you are already an SPH alumni, join the CUNY SPH Alumni Network group on LinkedIn (alumni only).

Recommendations

You can ask former supervisors and colleagues to write a short summary of what working with you was like. A great practice when you are leaving an internship or job (if you've had a positive experience) is to ask your supervisor if they wouldn't mind writing you a LinkedIn recommendation. Keep in mind that the recommender does also have to have a LinkedIn account to do so.

Other sections

Listed under "Accomplishments" other sub-sections are available and include:

- Certifications
- Courses
- Honors and Awards
- Languages
- Patents
- Projects
- Publications
- Test Scores
- Organizations

Now that you have a profile that pops, check out our article on [informational interviewing](#) to learn about how to utilize the build relationships with professionals in your areas of interest.