Since its creation in May 2003, LinkedIn has changed the shape of recruiting. 92% of recruiters reported successfully hiring someone on LinkedIn in 2013. LinkedIn search results come from scanning the user’s 1st, 2nd and 3rd degree connections for the search query. Recruiters often use trending, industry-specific keywords and phrases in their queries, incorporating industry-specific keywords and phrases into your profile can increase your visibility. This is called Search Engine Optimization (SEO). As you build your LinkedIn presence, remember that SEO is a major contributor to LinkedIn success.

Check out even more helpful tips at www.University.LinkedIn.com.

Profile Basics

**PROFILE PHOTO**

- Aim for:
  - Professional attire
  - Clarity (in focus, high-res)
  - Good lighting
  - Headshot

- Avoid:
  - Noisy, distracting backgrounds
  - Selfies and vacation photos
  - Group photos
  - Extreme closeup or full-body shot

**SUMMARY**

Support your headline with a personal and professional look into your experience and goals.

*Who Am I?*

This comes through in your words and your tone. Rather than saying you are passionate and leaving it at that, show your passion through your word choice and examples of engagement.

*Are you witty? Are you a huge comic book fan? Do you have a theme song? Sprinkling in a bit of what makes you unique gives recruiters a better idea of who their coworkers will be working with if they hire you. However, this should be used in moderation and not at the expense of your professional image.*

*What Do I Want to Do?*

What are your professional goals? How have you already started reaching for them? Discuss your experience and expertise, then state exactly what you want to do in your future workplace. It’s good to know what you want and this will help recruiters determine if they are the right fit for you.

*What Do I Bring to the Table?*

Experience, personality and skills. Work them through your summary and reinforce them at the end using keywords popular in your field. Remember to incorporate Search Engine Optimization. By the end of your summary, a recruiter should have a feel for who you are, your level of experience, your ideal focus and your future goals.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Tap into your network for powerful testimonials.

Ask for recommendations from those who really know you—such as supervisors, professors, teammates or those you’ve led—who will highlight what working with you is like and how you contributed to the organization or experience. Requests should be personalized, polite and gracious. Include a few words outlining accomplishments or qualities they might mention about you and ALWAYS send a thank-you afterward.

*How to Ask for an Introduction*

Send InMail to the person that will introduce you and clarify why you’re asking for an introduction. The person you want to be introduced to might see this message if the InMail is forwarded on.

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**EXPERIENCE, PROJECTS, ETC.**

**HEADLINE**

**John Smith**

**Worker’s rights advocate seeking non-profit opportunities in D.C. | Graduating 2018**

**Washington D.C. Metro Area | Philanthropy**

**Current**

University of Maryland

**Previous**

Global Organizing Institute, University of Maryland

**Education**

University of Maryland College Park

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**Summary**

I went into college with sights on a Criminal Justice degree. By spring semester my sophomore year, I was staying up late planning meetings and holding discussions with fellow members of the student organization Justice at Maryland (JAM). By my junior year, I was elected JAM’s President. My interest expanded from campus to the surrounding area and onto a national level. This past summer I was involved with the United Auto Workers Union, helping broadcast social media messages and spreading awareness of auto workers’ rights issues in five major cities.

After graduation I want to dedicate my time to an opportunity that understands the value of public image and social media in their fight for quality working conditions for our nation’s workforce.

I have spoken with hundreds of workers and employers from varying backgrounds in D.C., Baltimore, MD, Miami, FL, Canton, MS, and Atlanta, GA. During my Presidency in JAM, I also spoke with decision-makers on multiple levels, both local and national media outlets, and rooms of 100+ engaged community members and activists.

I think Big. I keep calm in the face of a dozen microphones (or those who disagree). I’m all about the group activists at the University of Maryland. He took project ideas and transformed them into amazing events that made a real difference in our campus community. It was a great honor to know and work with John and I can only imagine what his next move will be!

**Specialties:** Event planning, policy, social media, grassroots marketing, Spanish.

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**Recommendations**

- **Ariel La**
  - HR Specialist at National Institutes of Health
  - “John was one of the most passionate and well-organized student leaders I encountered during my time asking student activists at the University of Maryland. He took project ideas and transformed them into amazing events that made a real difference in our campus community. It was a great honor to know and work with John and I can only imagine what his next move will be!”

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**Connects**

- **133 connections**

**LinkedIn:**

- Reinforce your brand with a succinct, memorable professional slogan.
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
  - No matter what, include keywords/phrases that describe your skill sets/goals in terms that your field’s recruiters will search for. Your field’s trending topics can fluctuate, so look over the field’s job postings for ideas of what to use.
- Suggested Formulas
  - Seeking (*Industry*) position.
  - ex. “Currently seeking social media position.”
  - [Major] major seeking opportunities in (*location/industry*) | Graduating from (*University*) in (*Year*).
  - ex. “Criminal Justice major seeking opportunities in Washington, D.C | Graduating from University of Maryland in 2018.”
  - [Student affiliation] seeking (*industry*) position. ex. “Honors student seeking human resources position.”

**Build your professional network.**

To start, you can sync your email contacts with LinkedIn to create a list of “Suggested” connections. Only connect with those you’re comfortable associating with professionally. Some great additions would be friends and coworkers of your parents, those you’ve worked with, classmates and professors.

**Etiquette**

When requesting a connection, do NOT send the generic LinkedIn message. It leaves the requestee with little to no context and may cause them to think you’re just fishing for superficial connections.

If someone hasn’t accepted after a few weeks, it’s okay to send an email to say you’ve reached out and would like to connect. If that doesn’t work, move on to more interested, responsive LinkedIn users.

**Groups**

Active memberships in relevant groups shows your serious interest in the field. It also gives you a place to discuss relevant topics and expand your network.

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**Experience, Projects, etc.**

Format experience and project sections the same way that you present them on your hand-crafted resume. Include portfolios, photos and/or videos if you feel they enhance the viewer’s understanding.

**Honors & Awards**

Include 1-2 sentences explaining criterion and how/why you were selected.

**Skills & Endorsements**

Choose self-descriptive keywords used by professionals in your interest field. Example: For PR/Marketing, you could use “event planning,” “social media” and “public speaking.”