



## How to Build a Professional Student LinkedIn Profile

Think of your LinkedIn profile as an interactive business card. It's a summary of your professional experience, interests, and capabilities that is designed to attract the attention of important people who are searching for you online — recruiters, networking contacts, and grad school admissions officers. A strong profile is a key differentiator in the job market. So let's get started...

Go to <https://www.linkedin.com/> and begin creating your account using the following steps:

### Step 1. Photo: Include a professional headshot and background image

1. **Headshot Photo** = Add a professional photo, with only you in the picture
2. **Background Image (Optional)** = This image can illustrate more personality than your headshot photo. Your LinkedIn background photo should reinforce who you are and visually support the written portions of your profile. Communicate your value, skills and professional identity.

### Step 2. Write a Headline: Create a unique headline

1. **This is a short, memorable professional 'slogan.'** It's the one thing you want a recruiter, hiring manager, or future co-worker to know about you. Tell them what you're excited about now – and if you can say it succinctly – the great stuff you want to do in the future.

Note: The default setting for LinkedIn has your headline as "Student at the University of Mississippi" or your current position title. Edit this to make it more memorable.

#### Examples:

- Honors Marketing Communication Student – Student Leader – PR Internship Experience
- Student at University of Mississippi, News Reporter and Show Host, Technology and Politics Blogger
- Music Devotee. Marketing & PR Student. Internet Wizard.
- Accounting Student | Auditor | Big 4 Accounting Firm Internship Experience
- Economics Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst
- College Senior interested in Business Consulting/Coaching
- Finance Student with interests in Investment Banking
- Aspiring Human Resource Specialist studying Management
- Marketing & Communications Student ✓ Co- Founder of Innovative Children's Program

### Step 3. About: Include a concise professional summary about you

1. **This section is the main place for you to stand out; it colors in and adds a 'story' element to your experience and your aspirations.** Concisely share your passions, motivations, goals and what makes you unique as a professional.
  - For example, you could start with: I've always loved numbers. My strong interest in math was triggered in high school when I shadowed the Chief Financial Officer at a local company in my hometown.



- How would your colleagues and friends describe you and your work? Include those words.
- Write how you speak. If you're enthusiastic and witty, be enthusiastic and witty.
- And you want to use keywords and phrases that recruiters might search for. Go with terms that are well known (e.g., 'product management,' 'graphic design,' 'data analysis') but if you have a very specific skill set, don't be afraid to mention it here.

## Sample Summary:

### Example:

I have devoted my studies to \_\_\_\_\_, and am seeking employment in the following areas: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. My work as a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ complemented my academic coursework at the University of Mississippi and allowed me to develop an in-depth understanding of \_\_\_\_\_. I am excited to apply my strengths in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to the field of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Step 4. Create a unique URL: Create a unique, professional URL

1. **Search engine optimize...yourself!** Create a customized professional URL. The default setting for LinkedIn has your name with numbers/letters in your URL. You can edit this so that it is clear, concise and optimized for Google search. Also, it makes it more concise so you can add to your resume, signature line, and business card.

### Steps to customize URL:

- View profile
- Edit public profile & URL
- Edit URL

### Note the differences between a default URL and a customized one:

- Default Setting: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wesleydickensXS5Ya12345>.
- Customized LinkedIn URL: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wesleydickens/>

## Step 5. Add Intro: Job Preferences

This helps direct your profile to the appropriate jobs/internship by showing what opportunities you're open to.

### Job Title, Location, Job Types

- Put where you are seeking opportunities.
- If planning to move/relocate, put that location
- Put job titles and job types

## Step 6. Add Background and Accomplishment Information

1. List the jobs or volunteer positions you've held and a brief description of what you were responsible for and what you accomplished. can even add work projects, photos, or videos to specific jobs you list. How can you explain job experience in more engaging way?



- Get away from tasks and responsibilities. Use STAR Stories (Situation or Task, Actions, Results) to describe your experience.
- It's ok to use personal pronouns and be detailed.
- What you learned, how you developed skills/experience, how this position clarified your career aspirations, how this position is relevant to where you are headed in your career
- What makes you distinct: what you did, how you did it

**Note you can add projects, coursework, and portfolios. This is a good way to show proof of your work product to the employer.**

- This helps make your profile more visual and interesting, while demonstrating your value as an up-and-coming professional. And what better way to sell your skills to possible future employers than to actually *show* proof of how you think and what you can produce?
- You can share projects you've worked on (if they're public), blog posts, videos about your team or organization, and even papers you wrote in college.
- Especially if you're in fields like design, multimedia production, the visual arts, journalism, or writing/editing, this is a must.
- Or if you have an idea or learned something neat you want to share, you can now write your own blog post on LinkedIn, which will be disseminated to your network and possibly beyond. It's a great way to get discovered and give people more insight into what you care about and how you think. These posts will live on your profile for anyone to see anytime.

**Step 7. Education: Use the correct University/School name to connect with LinkedIn Alumni Network; Put official degree/specialization and years**



Official Degree: Bachelor of Business Administration in.....

Major: Ex. Managerial Finance

- Add School: University of Mississippi
- Official Degree
- Years of Attendance
- **Grade (GPA)**
- Activities and Societies if applicable
- Description of Degree Program. Can find this from school website.

**Step 8. Skills & Endorsements (Add at least 5 skills)**

Find **relevant keywords for your industry** by browsing job listings that appeal to you and profiles of people who have the kinds of roles you might want. Employers search profiles by these keywords.

- Sample Skills: Leadership, Microsoft Excel, Financial Reporting, Social Media Marketing



## Step 9. Get connected: Join at least 1 university group/Follow at least 1 company

Start by joining Ole Miss Business School Group, Ole Miss Alumni Group, and professional organizations associated with your industry.

## Step 10. Other Tips/Strategies for LinkedIn

### ✓ How to find student jobs/internships?

<https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/search/>

Step 1: Filter "Experience Level" to appropriate skill level.

### ✓ How to find alumni on LinkedIn?

Step 1: Search for "University of Mississippi"

Step 2: Click on "See Alumni"

Step 3: Filter by "Where they Live; Where the Work; What they Do"

Step 4: Scroll to the bottom to see alumni that fit your search queries

### ✓ Sample ways to reach out to contacts on LinkedIn:

#### Sample Message

Mr. Smith –

I came across your profile on LinkedIn. I'm a freshman marketing major at Ole Miss. One of the career options that interests me is becoming a marketing research analyst. Would you be open to having a 10-15-minute phone conversation so I can learn more about what I can be doing as an undergraduate student to prepare me for that career field? Feel free to contact me at myname@isp.com or 662-111-2222.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Steve Student