

## Graduate Guide to LinkedIn

LinkedIn is widely used by thousands of professionals for networking. It is not Facebook for grown ups - it's more formal so it's important to approach this social networking site differently.

LinkedIn is a network based around skills, experience and professional progression, which can be a highly useful tool for a recent graduate on the hunt for graduate employment.

### GRB's graduate LinkedIn profile guide

Setting up an account and adding your details is very easy. Remember to use a professional sounding email address and make sure your summary is an insightful look into your professional position and achievements. This is a great opportunity to sell yourself if you want people to hire you. Your profile should become a real-time **graduate CV**, so treat it as such and keep it up to date and relevant.

When adding a company you have previously worked for, make sure you select the name, where available, from the drop down box so that you have a tab for that company on your profile.

In the next section, make sure everything makes sense chronologically and there are no gaps. Remember to add a professional looking picture, selecting one you would consider using for a business card rather than one which looks more like a Facebook profile picture. You can also personalise your URL so it's more memorable to pass onto any people you meet face to face and will fit easily on a CV or business card.

### Import Your CV

A really useful feature of LinkedIn is that you can add your CV so obviously make sure this tallies with the information given elsewhere on your profile. To bring it to life you can link to people who are prepared to give you references or any websites that show evidence of work completed or significant achievements.

### Begin linking in

Now you need to tap into the huge number of other people on LinkedIn who can help you get a job. One nifty app is the one for Microsoft Outlook which automatically shows you a list of existing email contacts who already have a LinkedIn profile. This is a quick and easy way to build your contacts.

Now it's time to start **networking to find graduate jobs**. Start looking for recruitment contacts within companies you would like to work for and recruitment agents that specialise in your sector. Following a company on LinkedIn is a very useful way of finding out about new initiatives within the company, and will give you plenty of information to use in an interview with them if you get to that stage. Their page should also help you find out who current employees with LinkedIn have worked for previously. You can then apply for jobs or **student internships** with these other firms with the goal of working for the company of your choice in the future.

A word of warning though - if you make too many requests to people who don't know you, LinkedIn will at some point demand that in future you need to enter an email address of the person you wish to connect with.

### **Ask for recommendations**

Recommendations are not only a great way to get noticed as a valued professional but they are also essential for completing your profile. Ask your past employers and colleagues to recommend you and if you feel there is anyone that you have had a great experience working with recommend them too.

### **Expand your profile**

Apart from discovering decision makers who look for graduates, LinkedIn provides an excellent way to share information, keep up to date on industry news, surveys and further your learning about best practice. Join relevant groups like your University Alumni or specific forums for graduate job seekers. Don't stand on the sidelines either - get involved with discussions and ask for opinions, as this is a great way to build credibility, expertise and ensure you get noticed. When contributing to forums or discussions be aware that your tone and the language you use must be professional - remember that it could be viewed by potential employers so think carefully about spelling, grammar and content.

### **Finally**

It's not the number of connections that will benefit you but the quality of your network. Always be on the look out for useful people to connect with. Maintain your reputation by actively participating in forums and discussions and use it to create opportunities to meet people face to face. Your LinkedIn profile should act as a living CV and reflect accurately the image of yourself which you want to be projected to potential employers and colleagues.