

LinkedIn: One website used in many professions

BY: ELLA BARRY / ON: APRIL 10, 2024 / IN: FEATURES

LinkedIn is the online professional networking site constantly recommended by professors, peer coaches and advisors, but is it possible that one site could benefit students in any major?

Earlier this year we published another [how-to on all things LinkedIn](#), but here I'm following up with how the platform is used in different fields.

In an attempt find out the unique ways each discipline uses LinkedIn, I've conducted Q&As with professors from three vastly different fields: computer science, VAPA and business.

Q&A with Dana Wortman – assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science:

How should computer science students use LinkedIn to find a job?

Start by creating a few saved job searches that will give you a list of relevant jobs every day/week. Search for a broad range of jobs and don't limit yourself to only jobs that you are "perfectly" qualified for.

If you meet 60% or more of the required qualifications, go ahead and apply. If there is a company that you really want to work for, but they aren't advertising for a position you satisfy, apply for their "best fit" position – one that is closest to the one you want.

How important is it for computer science students to include a headshot in their LinkedIn profile?

Very important – companies want to know that applicants are real people, so you need to have an active account, be posting things, be commenting on other people's posts, etc.

Note: find a guide on professional headshots [here](#)

What sort of past projects would be relevant for computer science students to add to their profile?

[Employers] want to see how you've solved unique and challenging problems. They want to see how you've effectively worked in a team to develop a large-scale project. They want to see how you've used tools like GitHub to collaborate with others and solve a real-world problem. Having a small collection of these projects showcased on your LinkedIn profile or described on a Portfolio website that you link to your LinkedIn profile is a great start.

What advice do you have for computer science students using LinkedIn?

[Connect] with all of your classmates, professors, parents, relatives and former employers – you never know what one or more of these will be an intermediary for you getting a job. Once you've connected with these people, ask them to endorse

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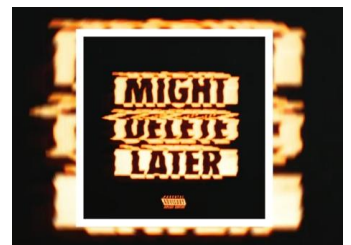
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your skills (endorse theirs back!). Ask for written recommendations from these people as well [using] the Recommendations portion of the profile.

Q&A with Yvonne Wu – professor in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts:

How important is it for VAPA students to include a headshot in their LinkedIn profile?

As with any public internet account, each individual should stay within the boundaries they set for themselves, but it does seem like profiles with photos get more attention. Readers are more likely to feel connected to you and not to consider you an anonymous internet entity.

An individual can use the same headshot for multiple internet accounts, so they don't have to worry about multiple photos floating around the internet.

What can VAPA students do to make their LinkedIn profile stand out?

The “bullets” on your resume really matter. Use active verbs and show how you went above and beyond the job description, not merely that you were competent at it. And show how this connects to the job that you want or the skills that are transferrable.

I think the attention to detail in formatting and in logical, consistent wording is extremely important to looking professional. If each bullet begins with a verb (which it should), don't have others begin with adjectives or nouns.

What sort of projects/research/publications/accomplishments would be relevant for VAPA students to add to their profile?

For musicians, maybe it's impractical to list every single performance, but at least they can bullet the places they have performed along with brief descriptions of what they did and what the events were. They should highlight the pieces under their belt in a section called “Selected Repertoire.”

Visual artists should definitely list each exhibit [that has featured their work]. Dancers and actors should list every show they've been in along with their roles.

Q&A with Todd Endres – instructor in the College of Business:

How can business students use LinkedIn to connect with other professionals in their field?

Some students may initially hold a false belief that they don't have many people to connect with. They need to remember that they have former bosses, co-workers, peers, alumni, faculty, family members and friends, etc. Those people also have connections, and you can leverage them to build your network.

How should business students use LinkedIn to find a job?

If you're fortunate enough to get an interview, LinkedIn is a great way to learn a little about the individuals you may be speaking with. It helps you learn about their background, interests and accomplishments. Plus, it helps you find some common ground that you could use to develop rapport during the interview process.

Since many students may be light on experience, it's important to research and join a variety of networking groups and communities of interest.

What can business students do to make their LinkedIn profile stand out?

Students need to understand that their LinkedIn profile is an extension of their “personal brand.” It quickly creates an impression of who you are, your interests, experience and professional commitment.

[The summary section] needs to be interesting, compelling and distinguish you from other candidates. Employers can see your work experience in your profile. The summary section helps them connect the dots that they may not be able to guess from the rest of your profile.

Don't forget your education. In addition to your degree path, you can also include courses that demonstrate your knowledge of your field of interest.

A student logs in to LinkedIn. Photo illustration by Megan Moen.



Breaking down the 'Big Three' rap beef of 'Might Delete Later'



Meet the baristas of Big Cat Coffee

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