

# How to make LinkedIn work for your career



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As of March 2011 LinkedIn has more than 135 million members worldwide. LinkedIn helps you make better use of your professional network.



A social media White Paper

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## Introduction

This whitepaper is aimed at students in the technical communication graduate certificate program at Seneca College. It is intended to help you further your career chances by maximising all the resource possibilities afforded to you through LinkedIn. Up to 50% of the students in the technical communication program 2011-2012 have not yet secured a co-op job as at December 2011. They need all the help they can get to boost their chances of landing a co-op job, and landing a full-time permanent job upon graduation. LinkedIn offers a solution by providing a wealth of professionals that people can network with, and more importantly a medium where talent and skills can be showcased and discovered so you can get a job! Job seekers are not using LinkedIn as fully as they should so this paper explains how to get the most out of LinkedIn so it can boost your career.

## What is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site mainly used for professional networking.

## Why Should you use LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is ahead of its competitors — Viadeo (35 million), and Xing (10 million). As of October 2011 LinkedIn has over 14 million students and college graduates as members. In total it has over 135 million members and a new member is added every second.<sup>1</sup>

**Fig 1 LinkedIn total number of members worldwide**



## How to use LinkedIn

LinkedIn has the decision makers; more than two million companies have LinkedIn company profiles. As of September 2011 LinkedIn counted executives from all Fortune 500 companies as members on LinkedIn.

With these numbers and obvious connection possibilities it is important for students and job seekers to capitalize on benefits that

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mashable.com/2010/11/17/linkedin-stats/>

## How to make LinkedIn work for your career

LinkedIn has to offer. Currently a lot of persons are not using LinkedIn fully. AMTM Consultant Ana Quinillan<sup>2</sup> has stated that more than 75% of people on LinkedIn are not using their profiles effectively. People put their resume' up and fail to utilise all or even most of the other features. Some job seekers have not even bothered creating LinkedIn accounts. This paper can help you change all that.

The first step is to sign up and create a brief profile. Type your profile as if it is an online resume; include your past job experiences, your education, and a photo of you dressed in a professional manner, preferably just a head shot. Also include any organizations you are a member of, any awards, interests, and skills; the typical things you would list on your resume. If you have professional blogs, and websites (including ones you have designed) share them on LinkedIn.

**Fig 2 LinkedIn Profile**



Take the advice of Steven Raz, managing partner of Cornerstone Search, a recruiting firm, who says “we are searching through tens of million people on LinkedIn so include the thing that makes you different and unique.”

### Connect

Try to connect with as many people as you can, but these connections must be with people you know. If you get an “I don’t

<sup>2</sup> Ana Quinillan is a well-known strategist and social media trainer and is the face of AMTM consulting. <http://www.amtmconsulting.com/5-simple-tips-for-telling-your-story-with-your-linkedin-summary/>

## How to make LinkedIn work for your career

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know this person” it works against you to the extent that you may end up not being able to invite any more persons unless you type in their email address. People with over twenty connections are thirty-five times more likely to be approached for a job opportunity than people with less than five.<sup>3</sup>

### *Connect on your mobile phone*

You have Facebook on your blackberry or iPhone; put LinkedIn on there as well.

### *Tips for widening your circle of connections*

If you know someone who can introduce you to influential people on LinkedIn then ask those persons to introduce you so you can then make the connection (do not go against LinkedIn protocols to connect with influential people).

Go through your list of connections and see if there are persons connected to your contacts with whom you can connect as well, and go ahead and reach out to them. Do this process at least once monthly and you will continuously widen your circle of connections.

### **Recommendations: Your online References**

A tip on getting recommendations is you can offer a recommendation for a friend or past colleague and as a trade-off have that person write a recommendation for you as well.

If you received emails where persons spoke glowingly about you ask those persons if they would be willing to echo those sentiments in a LinkedIn recommendation.

### **Stay active on LinkedIn**

Stay active by regularly putting updates on what is going on with you, as these updates get published and re-published to your connections. If you received any awards recently or any other kinds of big “wins” announce them on LinkedIn as this will show you off in a very positive way.

You can also stay active by joining groups on LinkedIn. (See Fig 3 below). This is a way for you to be part of the conversation; have a voice!

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<sup>3</sup> Dawn Mena. Leveraging Your LinkedIn Account for Maximum Benefits. June 2011. <http://ezinearticles.com/?Leveraging-Your-LinkedIn-Account-for-Maximum-Benefit&id=6355729>. Dawn Mena has over 20 years experience as a professional writer and editor at top media organizations.

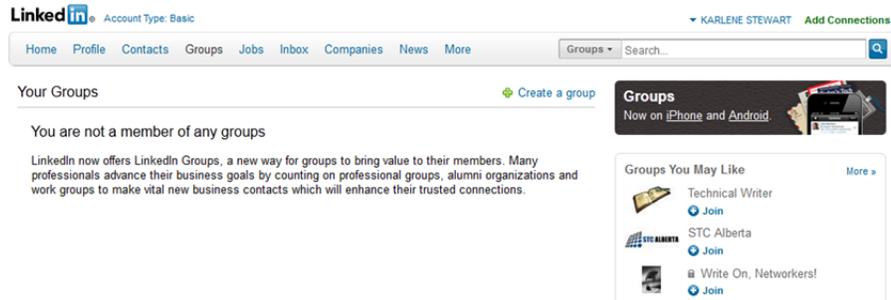
Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/6355729>

# How to make LinkedIn work for your career

There is also a Q&A<sup>4</sup> section where you can answer questions and thereby showcase your level of knowledge!

Keep in touch with your connections, especially for those of you hoping to eventually move on to freelance opportunities. Let your contacts know you are available and what projects you are available to take on.

**Fig 3 Groups feature on LinkedIn**



## Linking (literally)

Use BlogLink and WordPress LinkedIn to link your blog sites on LinkedIn. Your pages will be put in front of your contacts whenever your updates get sent to their email account.

**Fig 4 BlogLink and WordPress**



Include your LinkedIn URL on your business card, in your email signature, and on your websites including your Facebook page.

## Follow Companies

Company follows allow you to keep track of what is happening with specific companies including who is hiring, for what positions, and even what it is like to work for a particular employee.

## How to search for jobs on LinkedIn

You can search geographically for human resources personnel in a company. At the top right-hand corner of the screen you will see the word **Advanced**, click that and you will be taken to an Advanced

<sup>4</sup> Question and Answer

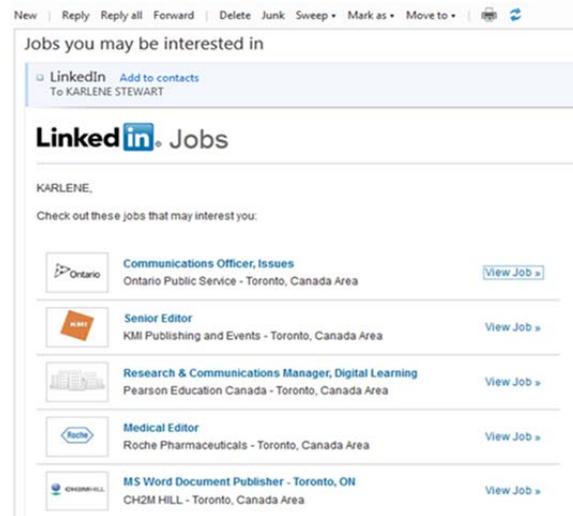
# How to make LinkedIn work for your career

People Search. Once there, in the right-hand side of the **Title** box type “HR” or “human resources”. Choose **Current** from the drop-down menu just below the **Title** box. You then narrow your search by location on the left-hand side of the screen. You can use recruiter, or the name of a specific company in place of HR or human resources also when doing this search. Depending on how wide your connections are you may get connected to someone you know who has the power to make decisions.

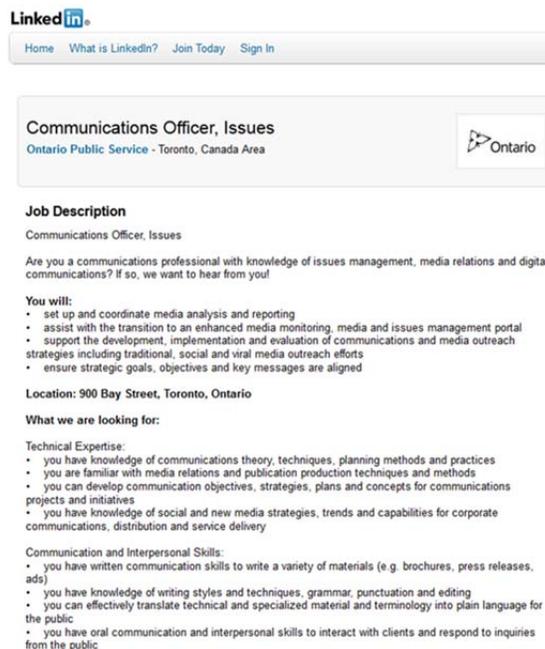
## Merge with Career site

Merge your LinkedIn account with a career site such as Experience and jobs that match your education and experience will be sent directly to your email address as seen in Figs 5 and 6 below.

**Fig 5 List of jobs from LinkedIn to your email account**



**Fig 6 View of a job sent from LinkedIn**



## Optimize your profile

The same you optimize your blogs and other websites optimize your profile with keywords that will get you picked up more often in searches. Use keywords specific to your industry, skills, and geographic location.

## Summary

Also make your profile public so you can be picked up by search engines. LinkedIn has a high rating on search engines<sup>5</sup>. Ensure the URL contains your correct name instead of the default name.

Also add a summary as this gives you 5% towards your portfolio completion and increases your ranking on Google search.

## Network Statistics

Keep track of how your account is doing by using Network Statistics. Click on the **Contacts** tab and then you'll see four more tabs – **Connections**, **Imported Contacts**, **Profile Organizer**, and **Network Statistics**.

*Fig 7 Getting to the Network Statistics tab*



*Fig 8 the Network Statistics tab*

Here you see statistics about your network, including how many users you can reach through your connections. Your network grows every time you add a connection — [Invite connections now](#).

### Your Network of Trusted Professionals

You are at the center of your network. Your connections can introduce you to 1,241,000+ professionals — here's how your network breaks down:

1	<b>Your Connections</b> Your trusted friends and colleagues	23
2	<b>Two degrees away</b> Friends of friends; each connected to one of your connections	11,000+
3	<b>Three degrees away</b> Reach these users through a friend and one of their friends	1,229,900+
<b>Total users you can contact through an Introduction</b>		<b>1,241,000+</b>

68,262 new people in your network since November 8

<sup>5</sup> Ana Quinillan. 5 Simple Tips for telling your story with your LinkedIn Summary. <http://www.amtmconsulting.com/5-simple-tips-for-telling-your-story-with-your-linkedin-summary/>

## LinkedIn Events

On the note of network statistics another way to expand your networking is to seek out events to attend on LinkedIn's latest tool named LinkedIn Events. If you have an event you can add it, but if not and you would like to attend an event then that is also fine.

**Fig 9 LinkedIn Events**



## Conclusion

LinkedIn has 135 million members worldwide, and these members include representatives from all Fortune 500 companies. Lots of other decision makers are on LinkedIn so job seekers, particularly those who are in the technical communication program who have not yet landed co-op jobs and are concerned about their job prospects upon graduation, should use LinkedIn in every way possible to increase your network, showcase your education, experience and skills, and ultimately land a job!

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