

Description

LinkedIn is a professional social network where users can post their resumes and accomplishments to find work. Networking to find career opportunities is vital for academic professionals, especially PhD graduates and postdoctoral researchers. LinkedIn also allows users to connect their social profiles and showcase their raw skills and personalities. With this combination, users can find a job that fits their various needs. It is easy to create an eye-catching and interesting profile by using the right strategies!

Making Connections

When starting out in the professional world, most PhD graduates do not have many professional contacts. This is quite normal, early in a graduate's career. However, it can seem overwhelming if someone doesn't know how to network. The best way for a new graduate to build a network on LinkedIn is to connect with people they know. Academic contacts from school are the obvious choice, but connecting with family can also be helpful. Millions of people use LinkedIn, and people may be connected in unexpected ways.

Finding a job on LinkedIn sometimes depends on small things. It may not be obvious who could help a PhD graduate the most. New graduates should reach out as much as they can when trying to make connections. LinkedIn has many groups where people with similar education and interests can find a common ground for a good connection. Some of these groups, like alumni groups, may contain even more contacts than a student already knows. These contacts may have new leads of their own, and those new people may take notice.

In today's modern and interconnected world, CVs alone are not enough to get a job, no matter how impressive they are. Sending a resume to a job posting does not help many graduates, because there are so many people who do the same thing. Therefore, it is difficult for one resume to get noticed in a large group. Personal connections make a graduate seem more interesting, and encourage others to take another look.

Building a Profile

A LinkedIn profile has a different style than a CV. Many graduates upload their CVs to LinkedIn and assume that it will function the same way. However, this is a common mistake. Graduates should make

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sure their profile is 100% complete as a complete profile contains things not found on a CV. An effective LinkedIn profile contains a profile picture and a catchy summary. It often includes pictures as well, to emphasize a graduate's experience.

Because LinkedIn is not like a CV, graduates can add many different things to their profiles. Links to accomplishments, portfolios, or social media are often useful. This can add to a reader's positive perception of the graduate by proving that the person is hard-working, or has contributed to something significant. These unique pieces of a profile are usually free of buzzwords and jargon to help the reader get to know the graduate.

LinkedIn profiles can do more than highlight professional accomplishments. They can showcase personal successes, and these can be just as important. Sometimes, highlighting unique skills in a graduate's personal life can grab a reader's attention. Things that may not seem directly applicable to the professional world might be an asset in some careers. Showing one's unique personality through personal accomplishments can help a graduate stand out.

Be Social and Proactive

When making connections on LinkedIn, it is important that a graduate be social and proactive. Writing personalized requests for connections on the platform can spark someone's interest, and could lead to more connections. Recommendations are another important part of being on LinkedIn. It is helpful to gain recommendations for skills from connections, but giving recommendations to others can open the door for new connections as well.

To get connections from others, a graduate must be ready to reach out when necessary. LinkedIn is not like other casual forms of social media. It is a network of professionals, so accepting connections from people a graduate does not know involves very little risk. In fact, connecting with new people gives the graduate a much better chance of being noticed and finding a job. It is still important to ensure that new connections are trustworthy and this is easy to do by looking at their profiles and connections.

Because LinkedIn is a social network, users have the ability to share whatever they wish. However, graduates should remember that LinkedIn is a professional and not a casual environment. This means that anything the user shares could reflect on them professionally. Joke posts, politics, or other controversial topics are not appropriate for a LinkedIn profile. Being proactive means telling the world about oneself, but this should be done in a professional and neutral way.

Keep It Simple to Stand Out

Knowing all the capabilities of LinkedIn, graduates may be tempted to create a long profile, containing minute details of their work. However, most readers do not go through long profiles and it is best to keep them simple. No reader wants to sit through a long, specialized summary when carefully chosen words and a few pictures could do the same job. This can apply to any area of a graduate's profile. Too much detail can bore readers, instead of enticing them.

The best way to avoid making a profile too complicated is to give information in small chunks. Small pieces of information are easy to read and understand. Carefully wording these small pieces can tie

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together a graduate's profile while giving the reader essential information. A LinkedIn profile is not just a list of accomplishments, it is also a marketing tool.

A LinkedIn profile should not only give the reader enough information to generate curiosity about the graduate, but also leave them wanting to know more. If readers want to know more, they will contact the graduate. The new contact could be a passive connection, but they will still expand the graduate's network. If the new contact decides to contact the graduate for a job, the LinkedIn profile is then at its peak effectiveness, doing exactly what it was meant to do.

For more details, the following links may be helpful: Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3.

Have you created your own LinkedIn profile? What steps did you follow to create your profile? Share your thoughts with us in the comments section below!

Category

1. Promoting Research
2. Using Social Networks

Date Created
2018/03/28
Author
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