



# LinkedIn 101: A Guide for Getting the Most Out of the Platform

## Why use LinkedIn?

- Think of your profile as a public, search-engine-friendly CV. Policymakers and professional groups can find the public version of your profile to check out your credentials and see if you might be someone for them to contact.
- You can “connect with” past, present & future colleagues, contacts & employers. Connection to a person doesn’t imply “friendship,” just a professional relationship. Connections can write recommendations about you (and vice versa) and can endorse you for your skills/knowledge.
- You can follow news and updates shared by your connections, and by institutions, organizations, and companies. Just like on Facebook or X, the posts flow in the main “well” at the center of your landing page. LinkedIn also curates what you see and suggests stories to you.
- You can share links to items you find interesting and that you think your connections will.
- You can join or create groups of people with similar professional interests for discussion and sharing of best practices. Groups can be closed so conversations are only seen by members.
- You can write first-person posts - giving you a blog-like platform without having to build a blog site! When you go to LinkedIn, at the top of your news feed will be a box where you can “Start a Post.” You can post a link and write a brief comment right in that box. Or, to create a standalone “article,” click “Write Article” and it will start a new page. More info at: [www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a525301](http://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a525301).
- You can post slides you’ve created about your work, using the Slideshare feature. Go to [slideshare.net](http://slideshare.net) and use your LinkedIn account to log in.

## Improve your profile:

- The space immediately under your name should be a short “ad” for you:
  - Do not just enter your current title (people can see that further down). Instead, write a punchy description of your professional journey.
  - In the “Summary” area, you can describe your professional interests and current projects. Using key terms and buzzwords may help you be visible in search.
- In employment history & education, use full company/institution names. LinkedIn will likely recognize them automatically and make it easier for people to connect with you.
- Use a professional-looking photo. Add links to your projects, papers, and websites. Enter specific skills you possess as well as professional/volunteer activities. You can even add additional information about how best to contact you, made visible only to those whom you’re connected to.

## Start exploring!

- Many institutions have pages and groups on LinkedIn for their current and past employees and alumni. The same goes for professional societies that you might belong to. If you choose to follow/join these, you’ll see their updates in the news feed.
- Government agencies, advocacy groups, and institutes/centers also have LinkedIn presences. Follow those that interest you most.