

How students can make the most out of LinkedIn

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Building skills and networks from early on gives one a head start in fast-paced environments. Most professionals and experts recommend being on LinkedIn early on for better professional navigation for students.



LinkedIn exposes students to networking or guidance opportunities, relevant knowledge about their fields, resources, and career options for the future. Here's how students can get the most out of the social platform:

Building your professional network

It is good to start building a network with people both in and out of your career path. Students can start by connecting with their classmates and seniors from their university. The seniors become prospectus business referrals when they graduate. Those who have not started working or don't have colleagues can connect with university professors.

Get professors to write recommendations for you on LinkedIn. This way, you build up a growth mindset being driven to improve by the feedback you receive. Connecting with university faculty members also allows you to stay connected and learn from them, even after you have graduated.

Freshman students often join various student clubs to enhance their extracurricular activities. These clubs host webinars with industry experts, business competitions and knowledge sharing events where they invite professionals/experts to be a part of it.

Samuel Mursalin, Lecturer, Department of Management at North South University, shares an instance from his experience as a faculty advisor of the NSU Young Entrepreneurship Society (YES) club. "When young club members reach out to corporate professionals for different events, professionals expect these interactions to be done professionally and through

the right channels. LinkedIn is the ideal platform for carrying out the process of reaching out to them effectively."

He also believes that students learn the basics of professional etiquette and can build their skills around it on LinkedIn. "Students understand how professionals set up their profiles on LinkedIn, and take inspiration for highlighting the right skills and experiences. Moreover, LinkedIn products like LinkedIn Sales Navigator, Recruiter, LinkedIn Learning, etc. provide resources for them to work on their professional and personal growth. LinkedIn Blogs are also a good addition for students to read from experts and write more thoughtfully," he added.

Joining resource/knowledge sharing groups

LinkedIn shows its users some groups they might be interested in joining. Industry experts and professionals share knowledge on specific industries and share insights here. Joining these groups and following their posts helps students gather knowledge about the fields they are interested in.

They can also discover people/experts they can potentially connect with for guidance/advice they require for their professional growth.

One other activity that makes students' experience more educational is posting thoughtful comments or questions on posts by experts. This initiates a tendency to network with experts and have a productive relationship with them.

Extending the resume

Many companies require a one-pager CV -- which isn't a lot of room to fit in every

skill and experience. LinkedIn makes it possible to include more in-depth information about experiences where students may highlight the challenges they could overcome or the skills they acquired in the process. Putting one's LinkedIn profile URL on a resume is a great idea in job applications. This allows recruiters to have a look at your profile and figure out further information about you.

Apart from adding experiences on LinkedIn, students require some etiquette to pursue connections here too.

"As a lecturer, I have come across students from multiple academic disciplines who think being on LinkedIn isn't necessary at their age or for their major. Students from Pharmacy departments or students in their 1st or 2nd semester would even argue on this. Something they need to understand is that LinkedIn isn't a place where only job/resource seekers gather. It is a platform where people nurture professional relationships and hone their networking skills," says Mohammed Abdul Mumin Evan, Lecturer, Department of Marketing and Int'l Business, North South University.

"Sending a note along with a connection request to someone unfamiliar, not posting irrelevant photos on your LinkedIn profile, and not writing informal comments on formal posts are some crucial manners students can learn from being on the platform," he adds.

Sharing updates with others

LinkedIn has a feature of sharing your professional updates with your network. If you have joined a new university club

or received a certification from an online course, LinkedIn notifies your connections about your update. This helps students enter the pipeline of talent hunters/potential recruiters. This also makes your network aware of the skills you are building, areas of your interests and continuous progress.

Check out the career path

Students who want to land a job in their preferred position can find people on LinkedIn who are already employed in that role. Going over their LinkedIn profiles can help students get an idea about what skills and experiences are required of them, or how they climbed up the ladder. Incorporating something from their career path to yours is one step forward towards your dream job.

This is also applicable for students who want to get lucrative scholarships in their post-grad degrees. Finding alumni from your desired university and taking inspiration from them about documenting their journey from Undergrad to Post-grad can work as a lead for you to craft your application.

Landing internships/jobs while in university

Companies usually post job/internship updates on LinkedIn and some even accept applications through LinkedIn as well. If you come across job/internship opportunities where you see yourself fitting in, you can start applying and build a portfolio with experiences from early on. More importantly, if you are into exploring, LinkedIn can help you to discover.



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