



Second Work Term (APSC 210) – Advanced LinkedIn Profile OR Informational Interview

Advanced LinkedIn Profile & Self-Reflection Assignment (Option 1)

Objective

Love it or loath it, LinkedIn is currently the top online site for professional, social, and career networking. LinkedIn has more than half a billion members, including executives from all of the Fortune 500 companies. When used correctly, LinkedIn can be extremely advantageous for your career development and progression. As part of this assignment, you will implement some advanced LinkedIn strategies as well as reflect on your social media and online presence and how it may impact your future job search.

How to Begin

For the purposes of this assignment, it is assumed that you already have an active LinkedIn account. If you don't already have a LinkedIn account, visit www.linkedin.com/start/join to create a free account and enter the necessary information. You are not required nor expected to pay for a membership with LinkedIn. According to LinkedIn's statistics, LinkedIn Members with complete profiles are 40 times more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn so ensure you take some time to prepare as complete a profile as possible.

Scams

LinkedIn, like most major sites, has issues with scammers. If you receive requests for information or unexpected job offers, be sure to do your due diligence before responding or speak with your coordinator.

Part 1: Advanced LinkedIn Techniques

LinkedIn is a fairly user friendly site and as such, step-by-step instructions for these advanced techniques are not provided. You can research online how to complete any of these steps if you need assistance.

Customize your URL

(<https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-31-best-linkedin-profile-tips-for-job-seekers>)

It's likely you'll want to share your LinkedIn profile, either via your resume, business cards, personal website, etc. and it helps to have a customized URL (ideally linkedin.com/firstnamelastname). Customize your URL.

Brand Yourself

(https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-to-use-linkedin-like_b_14743188)

It's well known that recruiters for many of the Fortune 500 companies scour LinkedIn searching for top talent, but many smaller companies and hiring staff are also known to look up potential candidates online as well. Take some time to reflect on what your own personal 'brand' is, and whether or not your LinkedIn profile reflects it. Be professional, but add interesting and fun things about yourself as well. Use the different sections of the LinkedIn profile, such as the introduction section, to add these things. Read this recent article about personal branding if you need some tips: <https://www.mentionlytics.com/blog/5-personal-branding-tips-for-job-seekers/>

Highlight your Achievements

(<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/is-linkedin-a-waste-of-time-2062320>)

Recruiters look for concrete achievements. Include action words, accomplishments, and specifics such as times when you've been promoted, or hand-picked for projects. Be creative and specific about your skills and experiences and include measurable examples to support each one.



Join Groups

(<https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-31-best-linkedin-profile-tips-for-job-seekers>)

LinkedIn Groups are a great place to connect with people with similar interests or in a similar industry to share content, find answers and make contacts. Look for groups that align with your interests in industries that appeal to you and join a minimum of five groups.

Endorse Friends

(<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/287993>)

Endorsing your peers accomplishes two things: First, you're doing a good deed, and the other person receives a notification from you to reciprocate. The more endorsements you get for specific skills, the better. This will make your profile more visible and attractive to recruiting agents searching for people with specific skills. It will also give you more authority when you interact in groups. Endorse five peers on LinkedIn.

Add Multimedia

(<https://blog.linkedin.com/2013/05/01/visually-enhance-your-professional-story-on-your-linkedin-profile>)

LinkedIn lets you add photos, videos, and slideshow presentations to your profile summary. You can include project photos from school, examples of your work, or you can share presentations. Ensure that you have permission to share photos or projects from past or current employers before adding to your profile. Add at least one relevant, well-produced multimedia element to your profile.

Use Key Words

(<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-linkedin-tips-2018-jeff-manning>)

Review job descriptions of the positions you're seeking and scan them for common key words or skills. Those words are likely what recruiters are searching for when they're looking for people like you. Use those words and phrases throughout your summary and experience.

Have Connections

Having 50 or fewer connections on LinkedIn can send recruiters the wrong message. Aim to have at least 50-100 connections as a target within 3 months of creating your LinkedIn account.

Send Personalized Messages

(<https://www.themuse.com/advice/7-expert-linkedin-tips-a-lot-of-people-dont-really-know-about>)

It is a well-known best practice for LinkedIn to use personalized messages when asking to connect with others. Connection requests with customized requests are more likely to be accepted. Don't connect solely to get a job; include someone if you met them at a networking event, initiate the connection based on things you have in common or pick something from their profile to talk about in your message to break the ice. Then segue into your purpose for reaching out. Remember, you only have 300 characters so be concise! Send ten personalized connection requests.

Edit

(<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-use-linkedin-2062597>)

Once you've updated your profile, ensure you view your public profile and give it a thorough review. Is it too cluttered? Does it provide enough information without being overwhelming? Edit as needed to ensure your profile matches your true 'brand'.

Optional Additional Content:

Recommendations

Building upon the endorsements you hopefully have received from your peers, recommendations can give extra credibility to your strengths and skills. A recommendation is a written statement of endorsement. Try to secure two or more recommendations from professors, previous or current managers, or co-workers.

Note: Co-op Coordinators cannot provide LinkedIn recommendations for co-op students



Job Search

If you are actively seeking your next co-op work term or post-grad employment, LinkedIn has a 'Jobs' section where you can create a customized search alert. Input your career interests, preference of location, industry, etc. and let recruiters know that you are actively seeking work. LinkedIn will notify you when any new opportunities that match your criteria are posted, as well as make your profile searchable to recruiters.

Part 2: Self-Reflection and Social Media Audit

After updating and advancing your LinkedIn profile, take some time to reflect on the experience as well as conduct an audit of all of your online presence and social media accounts for the assignment.

Instructions: Answer each of the following questions (max. 200 words per answer):

1. Have you utilized LinkedIn in the past as part of your job search strategy? Why or why not?
2. Discuss how you might use your LinkedIn profile, or LinkedIn in general, for your future job search.
3. If someone were to 'Google' you, what would they learn about you?
4. Describe your own personal 'brand'. Does your current online presence match this or are there things you need to address?
5. Are your social media accounts currently set to private or public? Why? Are you going to change this?
6. Does your current employer look at social media accounts when recruiting? Why or why not?

Part 3: LinkedIn Screenshots

Capture screenshots of your LinkedIn requirements using the below checklist and compile them into an orderly document with appropriate titles for each.

LinkedIn Checklist

- Customized URL
- Branding – ensure you circle or highlight the sections of your profile in which you clearly demonstrate your personal brand
- Groups – screenshot your membership in five or more groups
- Endorsements – screenshot of your endorsements of five peers
- Multimedia – screenshot one or more relevant multimedia element(s) on your profile
- 50+ Connections – screenshot your number of connections
- Personalized Messages – capture screenshots of your ten personalized connection requests

Part 4: Submission

Create a single document providing your responses to Part 2: Self-Reflection and Social Media Audit questions and the LinkedIn screenshots and submit via Canvas on or before the deadline outlined in the Work Term Checklist

(<https://coop.engineering.ubc.ca/current-students/undergraduate-checklist/>)



Grading

Your LinkedIn Profile and Social Media Audit Assignment will be assessed as follows:

Excellent	Articulate, interesting, and engaging responses that summarize and reflect on the experience to the reader in fully developed and easily read answers; free from any grammatical or spelling errors. LinkedIn profile exceeds all requirements.
Good	Well-written self-reflective answers; little to no grammatical or spelling errors. LinkedIn profile meets all requirements.
Satisfactory	Answers may contain a few grammar or spelling errors. May not read well or engage the reader, but still communicates necessary information. One or two LinkedIn requirements not met.
Unsatisfactory	Multiple grammar or spelling errors; unclear or unreadable; responses are not full sentences. Three or more LinkedIn requirements not met.



Informational Interview & Self-Reflection Assignment (Option 2)

Objective

The objective of the Informational Interview is to provide you with an opportunity to network and learn more about your industry from an active member of the engineering community. It is not a job interview, but simply a way for you to explore your industry, understand the career progression in your industry, and make connections that could lead to employment in the future. Many jobs are never formally posted and are secured from having strong industry connections. As part of this assignment, you will also reflect on the interview experience as well as your social media and online presence, and how it may impact your future job search.

Part 1: The Interview

How to Begin Your Interview

Use this opportunity to strategically target an engineer within a company or industry of interest to you. Criteria for the engineer you select is as follows:

- Must have graduated from an engineering degree program and be actively working in an engineering related field or recently retired within the last 3 years;

The interviewee cannot be:

- a UBC faculty member;
- your immediate supervisor; or
- related to you.

The interviewee does not have to be a P.Eng. They can be an EIT or working engineer with no professional designation.

Network with colleagues, search LinkedIn and the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Member Directory, and network to identify a working engineer you would like to interview. Keep in mind that you may not be able to interview your desired engineer, so prepare a list of two to three engineers to contact.

Initiate Contact

Phone, email, LinkedIn message, or ask your network to introduce you to your prospective interviewee. Explain that you are an engineering co-op student looking to interview them as part of your professional development, and that you would like to learn more about their current role and career path to date. The interview may take approximately 20-30 minutes. You may need to follow-up to your initial contact in 3-5 business days; if they do not respond after two attempts, you should move on to the next engineer on your list. Remember to be courteous and respectful of your interviewee's time.

Where to Conduct your Informational Interview

Interviews can take place in person, over the phone, or via Skype/video chat. If you are meeting the interviewee in person, we recommend that you meet at a public location such as a coffee shop.

Research

Review the website of the interviewee's company or organization as well as a Google and LinkedIn search on the individual as well to be familiar with their background to assist in developing your questions and to be more focused in your interviewing

Prepare Questions

Have a list of questions prepared to ask your interviewee, but do not follow a script; allow the conversation to flow naturally.

Some sample questions you may wish to ask include:

- What does a typical work day/week look like for you in your current role?
- What advice would you give yourself when you were my age?
- What aspects of your background have been most relevant and useful in this role?
- What sacrifices have you had to make to succeed in this industry, and do you feel they were worth it?



- What are some of the biggest challenges or frustrations about your role?
- What aspect of your current position do you enjoy the most?
- How would you recommend someone of my level go about pursuing a career in this field?
- What are the most important technical skills that you use in your position?
- What are the most important soft skills that you use in your position?

Questions you ask should be relevant to the engineering profession. Avoid 'closed' questions that will result in single word or very short answers. Open questions generally begin with what, why, how, describe, and tell me.

Thank You

It is important and courteous to send a thank you card, email or LinkedIn message to your interviewee shortly following the interview, ideally within 24 hours. This helps to solidify your network connection with them and leaves them with a positive impression of your professionalism.

Part 2: Self-Reflection and Social Media Audit

After conducting your Informational Interview, take some time to reflect on the experience as well as conduct an audit of all of your online presence and social media accounts for the assignment.

Instructions

Answer each of the following questions (max. 200 words per answer):

Informational Interview

1. Who did you interview? (Name, job title and employer/organization) When and where was this interview conducted? (Date and format e.g. in-person, phone) How did you find and select this person?
2. Summarize your key reflections and takeaways from the interview.
3. Did any of the interviewee's answers surprise you? Why?
4. What did you learn that may affect your career plans after graduation?
5. Did the interview have an impact on the direction you see your education taking in terms of elective course selection, supplemental education (such as an MBA or Master's degree), or additional specialized training?
6. How will you maximize the networking opportunity gained from conducting this interview?

Your Social Media Presence

7. If someone were to 'Google' you, what would the results be?
8. Are your social media accounts currently set to private or public? Why? Are you going to change this?
9. Describe your own personal 'brand'. Does your current online presence match this or are there things you need to address? Read this recent article about personal branding if you need some tips:
<https://www.mentionlytics.com/blog/5-personal-branding-tips-for-job-seekers/>
10. Does your current employer look at social media accounts when recruiting? Why or why not?
11. Discuss how you might use LinkedIn or other social media or online content for your future job search.

Submission

Submit your responses in Canvas on or before the deadline outlined in the Work Term Checklist

(<https://coop.engineering.ubc.ca/current-students/undergraduate-checklist/>)



Grading

Your Informational Interview & Self-Reflection Assignment will be assessed as follows:

Excellent	Articulate, interesting, and engaging responses that summarize, reflect and analyse the experience in fully developed and easily read answers; high level of self-analysis of social media presence; free from any grammatical or spelling errors.
Good	Well-written answers summarizing and reflecting on your interview experience; good self-analysis of social media presence; little to no grammatical or spelling errors
Satisfactory	Answers may contain a few grammar or spelling errors. May not read well or engage the reader; low-level self-analysis of social media presence
Unsatisfactory	Multiple grammar or spelling errors; unclear or unreadable; responses are not full sentences; little to no self-analysis of social media presence