
**Rotman
Commerce**

Creating your LinkedIn story

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LinkedIn is a leading online platform for business professionals. Creating a profile allows you to easily make networking connections and introductions to key players, such as recruiters, executives, HR directors, and influencers from all areas of the business world. This is also a great tool to conduct target research and learn about corporate cultures and values. We encourage all Rotman Commerce students to create a LinkedIn profile and we have workshops and experts on staff to help you.

LinkedIn is a vital and user-friendly tool in your job search, as it offers several communication options and search parameters.

Personal URL

- Change your default, generic profile URL to something more personal; remove the random numbers and use your first and last name.
- Use this URL on other self-marketing documents like your resume, email signature, or business cards.
- Sample: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/janeright/>

Profile photo

- Have a Headshot (shoulders up). It is important to have a photo because it is a networking site.
- Research and make it industry appropriate. Showcase a photo that is similar to how you would show up at an in person networking event.
- Ensure your background is not distracting.
- Make sure your picture is front-facing and only you should be in the photo.
- Use LinkedIn's photo editing tool.

Background branding photo

- Use a background photo to “brand” your page -- make it your own (include pictures, text, important information).
- Try free photo editing tools like [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) or [Picmonkey.com](https://www.picmonkey.com) for design purposes and [pixabay.com](https://www.pixabay.com) and [Unsplash.com](https://www.unsplash.com) to find pictures that give you the right to use.
- Having both a customized background photo, and a profile photo, increases views by 21x.

Headline/Tagline/Branding statement

- Think of it as a mini summary of you: showcase your strengths, experience, skills, and attributes.
- Showcase what you do instead of what role you have (i.e. the unique customer service approach you use in your role as a Barista at Starbucks).
- Important to use functional/searchable words.
- Use this space to differentiate yourself.
- Make it memorable and compelling.
- Use special characters to break up words/ideas.

Examples:

- Your next Digital Marketing Right Hand | Customer Experience | Market Research | Analytics | Design Thinking | Social Media Marketing
- Incoming Financial Analyst at General Mills ♦ Goodman Graduate 2021 ♦ Analysis ♦ Strategy ♦ CPA Candidate
- Youth Editor | LinkedIn Learning Champion | Business Development | Event Manager | Blogger: YASUCAN | Aspiring Digital Marketer
- Public Accounting Specialist | Senior Intern Analyst | Finance, Analytics & Risk - CPP Investment Board | Aspiring CPA

Location, Industry, and Contact Information

- Use only your name (use the name you use regularly) in the name field.
- Consider including a professional email address.
- Do not include a physical address (meant for business owners).
- Do not connect to your Twitter if that account is for personal use.

- Create anchor links (customized websites) that relate to you. This can help to add credibility to your profile.
- Choose the “other” option.
- Enter the name of the website and add the URL.
- Use a postal code to connect you to where you want to work (i.e. If you are applying to a position downtown Toronto, use a postal code that is connected to a specific area downtown).
- Make sure to include your industry - choose the closest option available.

About section

- Very important for the LinkedIn search algorithm.
- Use as much of the space as possible: More is MORE (currently 2600 characters).
- Let [Grammarly.com](https://www.grammarly.com) help you with spelling and grammar.
- Don't cut and paste from your resume, tell a story.
- Quickly and clearly tell people who you are and what you have to offer.
- The first few lines in your introduction should be compelling and catchy. The goal is to have viewers click “read more”.
- Highlight 3 or 4 key career accomplishments that demonstrate your qualifications.
- Use a friendly and casual tone.
- Write in small paragraphs, use bullets and special characters so your story is easier to read.
- Ask yourself if your “about” section is effectively showcasing your professional journey, how you are unique, your career goals and aspirations, and what you offer in terms of skills, strengths, and attributes.
- Think of including a call to action (CTA = next steps for contacting you or learning more about you).
- Include visuals if appropriate. Use the new featured section to make your “about section” more robust.
- Include a specialist section (keywords people will use to search specific profiles).
- Write in first-person.
- Write as if you're talking to your ideal target audience.
- Show your personality.
- Write it on a word document first.

Experience

- Connect your profile with the company page (do this only if you officially worked there).
- Showcase current and past positions (paid, unpaid, and co-curricular-not projects).
- Start with a summary to put the experience into context (What stood out for you in the role? What did you do differently? What made you stand out? What contributions did you make?).
- Frontload your top accomplishments, add wins/recognitions, and detail roles and responsibilities.
- Use keywords (think SEO) in content and in job titles (job postings can help with ideas).
- Include a snippet of a reference or testimonial you received in relation to that position.
- Give a brief bio on the company/organization and what they are best known for if it is not well-known.
- Add rich media: videos, documents, publications, pictures, links to a website, portfolio, blog, or featured articles, links of great content you have shared on LinkedIn, and certifications.

Education

- Include formal and informal education.
- Add degrees, workshops, technical training, special training (i.e. ASIST, CPA Candidate).
- Add all the degrees you have earned; connect them with the institution's page.
- Include incomplete degrees and studies as well as those in progress with an anticipated graduation or completion date (if applicable).
- Add extracurricular activities: sports, volunteer positions, awards, associations, etc.
- Use rich media: videos, documents, publications, pictures, links to a website, portfolio, blog, or featured articles, links of great content you have shared on LinkedIn, and certifications

Skills and Endorsements

- Make sure to pin your TOP 3 skills.
- You can use both direct and transferable skills.
- Edit your skills and lead with the skills you want to market first.
- Make sure the skills are relevant to your professional brand.
- Ask people to endorse you (those who know your skills) and give back.

- Review and edit your skills regularly.
- Check LinkedIn job postings to see the skill requirements.

Additional Sections

- Assess and consider adding other information you can include to help make your LinkedIn story more personalized and robust: volunteer, certifications, organizations, courses, languages, projects, causes, etc.

Establishing social recognition

Recommendations

- Remember that social recognition is important.
- References you receive act like real references in a virtual world.
- Reach out to connections on LinkedIn to recommend you but remember, to customize all requests.
- Write as much as possible to guide the referee with important points you want to be recognized for.
- Diversify your recommendations; they can be professional, personal, or academic.
- Only ask references from people who know you.
- Reach out to your potential referee before you ask via LinkedIn.
- Personalize and customize all recommendation requests.
- Control the order and visibility of recommendations. Place the strongest ones first; recommendations will automatically connect to the related job/education section.
- Always be thankful and always offer to do something in return to help.
- If there are any mistakes; you can ask for a revision before posting the recommendation/testimonial.

Building relationships

Connections

- Try and connect with at least 50 people you know well (Peers, family members, current and older colleagues, former supervisors, current project/ association members)
- Make #50 your first connection goal. Then, set up a connection goal challenge for yourself every term.
- Never use a generic request message .

- Always customize it -- let people know how they know you or why you want to connect.
- You can customize using your phone app. Look for "more" and then "personalize request".
- Have your own criteria for accepting incoming invitations (check common connections, see if the person is an alumnus, etc.).
- Just hit "ignore" if you are not interested in connecting.
- You could also make a template for connection requests. The first part you could customize and the other part you could showcase your professional story highlights. You have 300 characters to work with.
- Use the P-Blueprint for connection requests: Polite, Pertinent, Personalized, Professional, and Praiseful. Here is an example:

Hi Eric, thought I would reach out to connect. Was so nice to meet you at the KPMG Info. Session at Rotman Commerce. It was so informative, and I am looking forward to the follow-up webinar next week.

Best,
John Spor

- ✓CPA candidate 2021
- ✓Accounting Specialist
- ✓Advanced Excel
- ✓Audit and Assurance

Final tips

- Make sure to complete your profile, 95% of employers use LinkedIn to vet candidates using a special software called LinkedIn recruiter.
- Avoid using any chrome extensions (your profile will be suspended).
- Write large sections in Word or Google Docs first.
 - Use spellcheck and save your work (grammarly.com is free).
- LinkedIn uses these specific sections to help others find you using a comprehensive LinkedIn search algorithm:
 - Tagline, About, Experience, and Skills.
- Check and adjust your privacy settings.
 - Found under your avatar on the right side of the screen.
- Be professional -- LinkedIn is not Facebook.
- Only have one LinkedIn account.
- Include rich media where possible.

- Customize ALL connection requests.
- Be kind and always support others.
- Do not be afraid to share your accomplishments.
- Create relevant #hashtags to put in your posts and for others to follow.
- Show up regularly and be active.
- Ask people you meet (especially employers/HR representatives) if you can connect on LinkedIn.
- Follow company pages and join relevant groups (i.e. RBC4students is the group RBC uses for recruitment and for building community).
- Edit and update your profile regularly.
- Use the “block” feature if necessary and use LinkedIn Help if any issues arise:
<https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin>

Practical LinkedIn Tools

- [Special Characters](#)
- [Photofeeler](#)
- [LinkedIn Banner Creation](#)
- [LinkedIn Character Limit](#)
- [Yaytext](#)
- [HashtagGenerator](#)