

International Student Career Resource Guide



Welcome to Oregon Tech!

This guide is meant to provide information to help you in your search for internships and jobs. Please don't hesitate to seek out help from us in person. We have staff in Klamath Falls and Wilsonville to provide assistance. See www.oit.edu/career for more information.

Resumes vs. Curriculum Vitae (CVs): What's the difference?

A resume is a **concise marketing document** tailored to your career goals with the objective of getting you an interview. It is not a list of every activity you have engaged in or every school you have attended.

Do **NOT** include your TOEFL score, a photograph, immigration status, visa status, age, height/weight, hometown/home country, marital status, race/ethnicity, religion or your personal interests/hobbies. It is illegal in the U.S. for a potential employer to ask about your personal life, so don't include anything that can get them in trouble. A CV is a much more comprehensive document that would include all your teaching, research, and publications. In the US a CV is used primarily in academic environments.

Working on Campus

The great news for Oregon Tech international students is that working on campus is possible (as long as you are attending school and maintaining F-1 status) and a good way to make money and gain experience.

Student employees are required to take at least 6 credits per term. Student employees are limited to working 20 hours per week while classes are in session during the academic year and 40 hours per week over term breaks, regardless of the number of jobs held at any one time.

After you are hired, but before you can begin work, you must obtain a Social Security Number (SSN). Please see your International Student Advisor for required documentation. Your advisor will complete a form letter from the SSN office and explain the process to you. In the past, students could apply for the SNN before actually having a job, but now they must first be hired and then apply.

How to Find On Campus Jobs



The best way to find jobs is to identify the departments on campus that are the best fit with your career goals, and visit them in person to express your interest. While they might not have a current opening, your interest in them will be very compelling and they may keep your contact information should an opportunity arise.

You may also look on Handshake for posted on campus jobs oit.joinhandshake.com
Use your Oregon Tech email to activate your account.

GET HELP:

How do I get feedback on my resume, or help with using Handshake? Contact us! www.oit.edu/career

Working Off Campus - Tips for Success in the Internship/Job Search

- 1) Research companies and organizations that have a relationship with your home country.
- 2) Apply for positions at international companies to increase your chances of being able to find work.
- 3) Network, network, network! Tell everyone you know, including fellow students, professors, friends, and family that you are seeking an internship or job.
- 4) Find Oregon Tech alumni or people who are working in the field that you want to, and ask if they would give you some time for an informational interview. Create a LinkedIn profile and connect to Oregon Tech alumni through LinkedIn. See our website (www.oit.edu/career) for more information about LinkedIn and networking.

Qualifying to Work in the U.S.

Information from the U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement

If you are an F-1 student, you have the option of working in the United States by engaging in practical training during your program or after it ends. Practical training can provide valuable work experience by sharpening and adding to the skills you are learning in school. There are two types of practical training available for F-1 students: **curricular practical training (CPT)** and **optional practical training (OPT)**. **Approval is needed for both CPT and OPT, so you will first need to meet with your DSO [Designated School Official; the main contact at the university for international students on an F-1 visa].**

CPT

- CPT must be considered an integral part of your program and related to your major field of study and the experience must be part of your program of study.
- Student must have been lawfully enrolled full-time for one full academic year.
- When you enroll at the graduate level, your designated school official (DSO) may authorize CPT during your first semester if your program requires this type of experience. Ask your DSO for details.
- Your DSO will provide you a new Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," that shows that the DSO has approved you for this employment.
- You can work on CPT either full-time or part-time, however, you must continue to maintain full course of study in F-1 status during the period of employment.
- CPT requires a signed cooperative agreement or a letter from your employer and academic advisor.
- If you have 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you are ineligible for OPT, but part-time CPT is fine and will not stop you from doing OPT.

OPT

- OPT must relate to your major or course of study.
- There are pre-completion and post-completion OPT options.
- You can apply for 12 months of OPT at each education level, (i.e., you may have 12 months of OPT at the bachelor's level and another 12 months of OPT at the masters level).
- Your DSO will provide you with a new Form I-20 that shows the DSO recommendation for this employment.
- Your DSO will assist you with your application, documentation and mailing. You apply either with a paper form or electronically filing a Form I-765, "Application for Employment Authorization," with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and paying a filing fee with required documentation.
- With the pre-completion OPT, you may only work 20 hours per week while school is in session.

17-Month OPT STEM Extension

You may qualify for an additional 17 months of OPT under the following circumstances:

- ✓ The degree for your current period of post-completion OPT is a bachelor's, masters or doctoral degree in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) program listed here.
- ✓ You must have found employment before applying (different from OPT).
- ✓ The employer from which you are seeking employment must use the E-Verify program.
- ✓ You must not have previously received a 17-month extension of OPT.

Your DSO will provide you with a new Form I-20 that shows the DSO recommendation for this employment.

American Work Culture

Business Dress

Both men and women should think conservatively for business dress. Every company culture is a bit different, so pay attention to what your co-workers wear and copy them. Wear colors that don't attract attention to you in a negative way. You want your boss and co-workers to focus on your contributions, not on your appearance.

Grooming

It is expected that you be well-groomed and pay attention to personal hygiene. Cleanliness is valued in American business culture. Strong odors of any kind (including cologne) are not considered acceptable.

Communication

Americans are direct when they communicate. Reason and direct thinking are valued and it is expected that employees speak in a straightforward manner. If you are from a culture that is subtle in communication style, do your best to embrace the direct method of communication.

When speaking or communicating via email, make your points quickly. Depending on the business, Americans use telephones to conduct meetings that might take place face-to-face in other countries/cultures.

Eye contact and firm handshakes are an important way of establishing trust in work settings when meeting new colleagues or clients. Handshakes in the US are brief and firm, regardless of the gender of the person's hand you are shaking.

Gender Roles

American women perform a wide variety of roles in the workplace. Do not assume that female co-workers are in administrative or support roles, or that male workers are in supervisory positions. If your religion or culture prevent you from touching or being alone with members of the opposite sex you may wish to seek counsel from others about how they have navigated this, as these situations will often arise.

Work Hours

A typical work week is 40 hours, Monday through Friday, beginning at 8:00 am each day and ending at 5:00 pm. Some businesses and jobs involve longer hours, including working weekends.

Compared to your home country, American work culture may seem harder. Most American workers typically get only two weeks of paid holiday a year. There may be fewer paid sick days and maternity leave than your home country.

Business Meetings

Meetings are a way for employees to collaborate on work and reach a consensus on important decisions that are made within a business, office, or department. Meetings with agendas follow a protocol, typically reviewing the agenda from the previous meeting as well as discussing ongoing business within the unit.

If you are attending a meeting where you must make a presentation, focus on being direct and to the point. Using tools like PowerPoint can be effective visual aids. When making important points, use statistics and hard data as a means to provide evidence for problems that exist and solutions that could be implemented.



International Student Web Resources

H1VisaJobs.com

<http://www.h1visajobs.com/> - Their online database contains thousands of companies all across the United States that have filed H-1B paperwork with the U.S. government for sponsoring international professionals.

U.S. Department of Labor's Certification Data Disclosure (Click on FLC Case Data)

<http://www.flcdatacenter.com/> - This website helps you find out which companies have applied for H-1B visas for one or more new employees within the last couple of years. This site will shed light on which employers are open to hiring international employees. You can search by year, employer and state.

International Affairs Resources

<http://www2.etown.edu/vl/> - This is an internet directory with resources, contacts, and other information relevant to international affairs. There are also career related resources and new positions that are posted on this site.

International Student

<http://www.internationalstudent.com/> - This website seeks to help international students better understand the American immigration authorities and educational system. Additional information is provided on studying abroad and finding low cost products and services needed while studying in the U.S.

Idealist

<http://www.idealists.org/> - Thousands of nonprofit and community organizations listed on their website. Search or browse by name, location, or mission. It helps to connect people, organizations, and resources to build a better world. Find job opportunities or chances to volunteer. Volunteering can be a good way to gain experience.

U.S. Immigration Support

<http://www.usimmigrationsupport.org/> - An online guide to U.S. Visas, green cards, and path to citizenship

IStudentCity

http://www.istudentcity.com/career/career_placement.asp - A site for international students for the entire job search process. The free career placement service is designed to meet the special needs of international students and find the best employer possible for you.

Websites for Funding US Study Opportunities

Find Scholarships by State

<http://www.fundingusstudy.org/StateSearch.asp> - The Institute of International Education provides a database of searchable scholarships, fellowships, and grants for non-U.S. students who are seeking funding for U.S. study. Here, you can search by region of interest to find available funding opportunities.

Fulbright Program

<http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/> - Funding opportunities for non-U.S. students in pursuit of Master's or doctoral study in the United States.

Reference Guide for International Students

<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/guides/foreign.html> - The Foundation Center has created this informative site for non-U.S. students, with links to funding databases that assist with grant-getting, as well as relevant books for finding funding for study in the United States.

InternationalScholarships.com

<http://www.internationalscholarships.com/browse.php> - This web site provides a database of scholarships, fellowships, and grants for international students wishing to study in the U.S. These programs can be searched by location of interest, award type, and field of study.

Oregon TECH Is Your Resume Ready for Primetime?

Use this checklist to identify areas of improvement in your own resume. If you receive this feedback from an advisor, and a box is checked, your resume could use some editing. See Career Services for questions: www.oit.edu/career

General Formatting

- Margins:** No smaller than 0.5" all the way around.
- Headings:** Your category headings generally look better in ALL CAPS or SMALL CAPS, and **bold**, so that it is very easy to see where a new category begins.
- Line Spacing:** It is generally easier to read your information if it's single spaced (or 1.15), with an extra space between sections.
- Fonts:** Don't use ~~Times New Roman~~ font. Employers tell us that they feel it is very over-used, since it's the default on Word. A sans serif font, such as Calibri, Tahoma, or Arial, is generally your best bet. Your name and category headings can be a different font/color for a more interesting look if you like, but it's not necessary.
- Reverse chronological order:** Within each section, most recent experiences should be at the top, least recent at the bottom.
- Errors:** Your resume should be completely free of spelling and grammatical errors. You may use tools such as Grammarly.com to help.
- No photo:** Employers in the US are usually barred from accepting resumes with photos, as it exposes them to charges of discrimination. You will want to remove your photo.
- Length:** One page is great as long as you don't shortchange yourself, but no longer than two pages. Some students need more space to describe their projects and experiences. If you have a second page use at least half of the second page.

Contact Information

- No street address** needed. You will see older resume examples with street addresses, but employers no longer expect them. If applying for a job in your area, you may include your city and state to indicate that you are local.
- Use a professional email address** (example: johndoe@gmail.com), or use your OIT student e-mail which is good for one year after you graduate.
- Include links:** Personalized LinkedIn URL/GitHub/other sites in your contact information
If you have a LinkedIn profile (you do, don't you? ☺) include your URL in your contact information. On your Homepage, select "Me" and "View Profile." Once you're inside your profile, select "edit your public profile" on the right-hand side of the page. You will be redirected to your profile. Again, on the right-hand side you'll see your URL and "edit public profile URL." Clicking on the pencil icon allows you to edit.

Summary Section

- Omit Objectives.** Employers are more concerned with the value you can provide, and not what you hope to gain. Consider a Summary instead.
- While not required, a **Summary** section is where you can highlight 2-3 keywords and phrases that are strengths of yours that match the position. It's a great place to *really* customize your document to the job.
- Instead of a Summary or Objective, consider a centered **Headline** under your contact information, something like:

[Your Major] Internship Candidate

Education Section

- ❑ **Location:** For students, employers expect to see **Education at the top** of a resume. For degrees where technical skills or certifications are very important, these can be listed first, followed by Education, or immediately following Education, as long as they are at the top.
- ❑ **Dates:** You don't need to include the date you started your degree, just your estimated graduation month and year.
- ❑ **University:** Include (Oregon Tech) after Oregon Institute of Technology, as we are known by both names. Typically, your degree is more important than your university, so put it in bold.
- ❑ **GPA:** Include your GPA if it is over 3.0. Employers tell us that if they have a GPA requirement, they won't look at students who don't have a GPA on their resume.
- ❑ **High School:** Once you are a junior, remove your high school information from your resume. If there are organizations you belonged to that continue to be an area of involvement (and are related to your career goals, like DECA), you may still include those under an Involvement section.
- ❑ **Prior schools:** You are not required to include prior college education. You may want to include it if you have an Associate of Science in a field related to your career, but a transfer degree is not necessary.
- ❑ Make sure you **spell out** your entire degree. It should read "Bachelor of Science in Operations" rather than just "Bachelors in Operations" or "B.S. Operations."

Formatting example:

Oregon Institute of Technology (Oregon Tech), Klamath Falls, OR June 2018

Bachelor of Science in Business Management: Marketing

GPA: 3.4

Certifications Section-if applicable

- ❑ **Certifications** in some fields, such as IT, Management (Green Belt), Behavior Analysis, and Healthcare, are extremely important. Highlight them in a separate section near the top of your resume.
- ❑ Having a **Secret Clearance** from the military can be a real asset when working for military contractors. Even if yours has expired, if you had one include it prominently.

Skills Section

- ❑ **Technical skills** go in a Skills section: software, foreign languages, lab tests, productivity software, business presentations, etc. If you have many skills, they should be categorized to make it easy on the reader to understand.
- ❑ **Non-technical skills** are communicated in the the way you write bullet points under your Projects or Experience or Leadership. Examples would be bullet points mentioning the excellent customer service you provided in your part-time job, or the leadership roles (with details) you have assumed on campus, or the work ethic you demonstrated by working 25 hours per week while attending school full time.

Experience Section(s)

- ❑ **Position descriptions:** You need to add at least one bullet point per experience, describing what you did while you worked there. More than one would be even better, but no more than 4-5 max. Begin with an action verb. They should be formed into "**What, How, Why**" statements. Essentially, you want to describe what you did, how you did it, and what the goal was. For example, a lifeguard may write: "Maintained constant surveillance of patrons in the facility (**what**) and acted immediately and appropriately (**how**) to secure safety of patrons in the event of an emergency (**why**)."

- Tenses:** Make sure all of your job descriptions for experiences you are no longer doing are written in past tense rather than present tense (so *Created* rather than *Create*). Do not use verbs ending in “ing” (*Creating*).
- Optional: Two Experience sections:** Consider splitting your experience into Related and Additional Experience. *Related* means more related to your career goals. Provide more information about your Related Experience and less about your Additional Experience.

Project Section

- Projects**, especially your Capstone Project, are critical to include and should be featured prominently (above your experience if you don’t have related experience).

Leadership/Community Service Sections

- Optional: if relevant**, include in separate section. Any Community Service or Campus Leadership experience is helpful to include. If you assumed a true leadership role, describe what you did and call the section Leadership Experience.

References

- No mention of references.** You should have a separate document with your references that you can give to employers should they ask, but do not include references or the phrase “references available upon request” on your resume.

Other Sections

- Interests:** Employers typically are not interested in personal information like hobbies, unless they are very unusual (like deep-sea pearl diving 😊). If you have personal achievements that don’t fit elsewhere in your resume, and you feel strongly about including them, then absolutely do so.

Next Steps

Questions? Contact us (see our contact info on oit.edu/career). We are happy to help and sometimes an in-person review is very helpful.

Once your resume is ready, upload it to **Handshake** and immediately populate your profile. Then edit your Profile, especially the Skills section, to make sure it reflects all of your strengths. oit.joinhandshake.com



Sample Student

Oregon Tech
Senior
Graduates June 2017
GPA: 3.75



Mechanical Engineering
School of ETM

An HR Manager's Cover Letter Success Tips

Why are cover letters important?

Your **resume** details your education and experiences. The **cover letter** is your opportunity to make the connection between your experiences and *a specific position*. You are demonstrating that you are a great fit for the specific position, that you can communicate clearly, and that you have researched the organization. You are differentiating yourself from other applicants who may have similar qualifications.

HR managers and hiring managers see hundreds of cover letters, and they know what makes the successful ones stand out. These tips apply to cover letters for both internships and full-time jobs, although cover letter for internships will typically be briefer since you don't yet have much experience, and the experience you do have may be primarily classroom-based. Take advice from the experts:

Tell Me What Prompted You to Apply for the Job

Where did you see the ad? What was it about this ad that caught your eye and made you act? One sentence is plenty. If you saw the ad on the company's website, kudos—you weren't out trolling the boards; you were actually looking into us. What did you like about us?

Show Me Why You Believe You Are Qualified

It isn't necessary to write a long and detailed summary of your experience here, one or two sentences that distill the most relevant experience will do. You can quantify years of experience in the industry and with a couple technologies listed in the ad, reference a noteworthy accomplishment, or briefly describe how a current or past role prepared you. A link to past work might help in certain cases.

Express Interest

If you've covered what prompted your application and your qualifications nicely, a simple "I'm very interested in learning more about this position..." can suffice. If you feel you may need just a bit more to put you over the top, demonstrating that you did a minute of research on the company can help. Is there a product we offer that you'd like to know more about? Did the way we described our culture have particular appeal to you?

Mention the Company's Name, Twice

Doing this lets me know you cared enough not to send a pure form letter. Applications that use generic phrases like "your company" name scream "I'm just looking for any job" and not "I'd like to be an employee of COMPANY". The first mention can be in the opening sentence when you list the job itself ("...apply for Senior Python Developer at COMPANY"), and specify again in your closing.

Don't Do Anything Stupid or Desperate

Referencing the wrong company name due to cut/paste miscues is a common one, and although we are willing to forgive a small error it does give the appearance that the candidate has applied to several positions simultaneously (which is fine, but decreases our odds of hiring). Creating a tone that you are desperate to work is not helpful, regardless of how true it is. Make the recipient want to hire you based on your skills and not on sympathy. Don't ask me to hire you, just explain why I should want to.

If You Are Asked for a Salary Requirement

If you are uneasy about providing salary requirements, at least acknowledge the request tactfully (as opposed to completely ignoring it). Try something like "It's difficult to provide an accurate salary requirement before knowing any other elements of employee compensation packages, as well as the job responsibilities and company's expectations for this role.

If You Are Applying for a Job in a Different City

Recruiters receive many resumes from out-of-town applicants. When we see a non-local address without any explanation, it is often safe to assume that you are applying for many jobs all across the country. There is nothing wrong with that, but the odds that we will hire you become much lower if you are looking everywhere (more choices lower the chance you'll choose us). Unless your résumé is spectacular, a non-local applicant may not be given the same level of consideration.

When targeting a move to a specific city, mention this in the body of your application. Companies will pay close attention to candidates that have concrete plans to move to their city, and agency recruiters are much more likely to work with you if you are only seeking jobs in one or two locations. If you can provide a future local address on a résumé, that may help.

If You Are Somewhat Underqualified for the Job

There will be times when a job looks very appealing but your experience clearly falls a bit short. In this situation, the opportunity to write a few sentences in support of your résumé is your best shot at consideration. Recruiters will often give at least one chance to underdog candidates who attempt to make up for a lack of years with some enthusiasm or an interesting story. It is much harder to say no to someone who demonstrates that they are eager to work for you.

E-mailing your application

If you are instructed to e-mail your application, your email is the cover letter, and your resume is an attachment. This makes it as easy as possible for the hiring manager to quickly see how interested you are.

Do I have to send a cover letter?

Do you want to stand out from other applicants? Then you must send a cover letter that highlights your strengths as an applicant. Even if no cover letter is requested, it never hurts to include one as long as it is well written and helps to elevate you as a candidate.

Stumped about what to include? One thing that ANY applicant can write about is what you know about the organization. Showing that you did some research beyond reading the home page of their website is a great idea.

Adapted from jobtipsforgeeks.com

Highlight Your Strengths and Get Connected!

Yes, you need a photo or you will not be found!

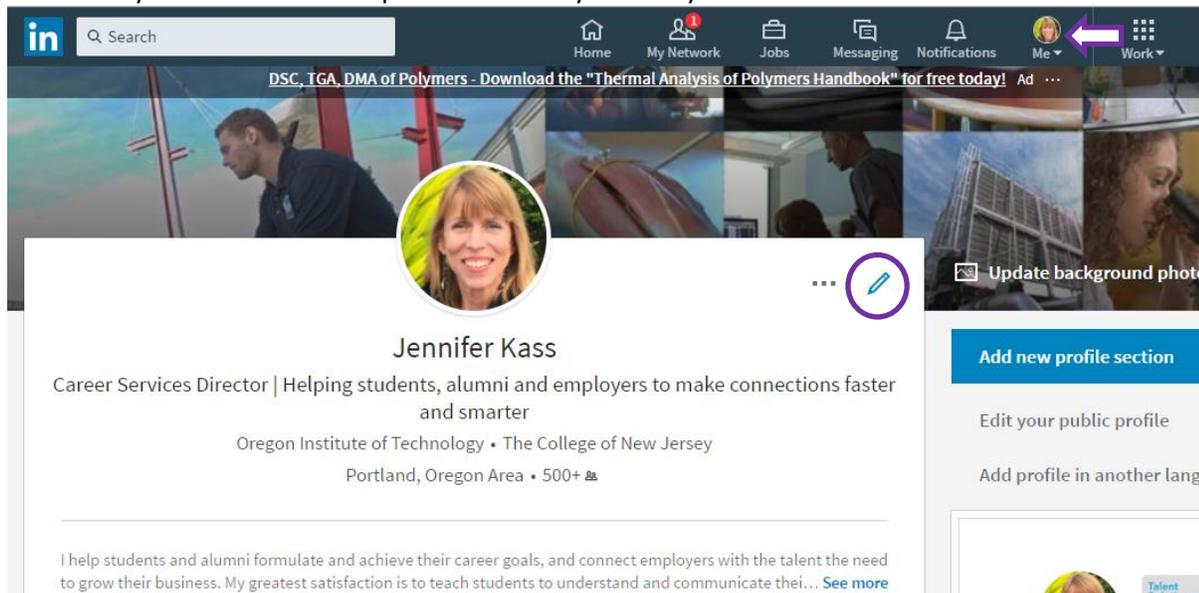
First step - create a profile that highlights your strengths

As a starting point, the first things you want to tend to are: **name, headline, photo, summary, education, experience, and contact info**. LinkedIn makes it simple for you by providing a resource (help.linkedin.com) for what each section of the profile should contain. You can add, change, or remove information on your profile.

Before you edit, click the toggle button so you do not inform your network about all your minor changes.

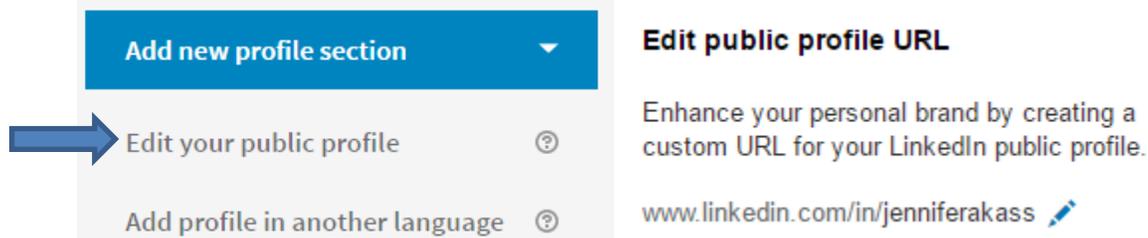
For most items:

- Move your cursor over **Me** at the top of your homepage and select **View Profile**.
- Hover your cursor over the pencil icon in any section you'd like to edit and it will become editable.



- Name** - First, last, include former (maiden) name if people will be searching for you using that name.
- Photo** – Add a professional-looking headshot, but make sure you look friendly and approachable too.
- Headline** - This information will default to your current job title. Change it to reflect how you want to communicate your professional identity, or opportunities you seek. Your job may be in customer service at Target, but if you are a Management student, “IT Internship Candidate” is a better choice.
- Location** – Include the location where you will be seeking opportunities or where you live.
- Industry** – What is your target industry? Pick the one that is the closest to your current goals.
- Contact Info** - Add your preferred Contact information, which can include your email and phone (only visible to connections), as well as your Twitter handle and websites.
- Summary** - Information about your accomplishments and goals. If you are just beginning your career journey, this may be tough to summarize. As you acquire more experience and self-knowledge, this is a valuable section to communicate your professional identity.
- Samples of your work** – You may add samples to your Profile that showcase your skills, making your LinkedIn profile much like a **professional portfolio**. You can add a link or upload a file (as long as it's not proprietary to your employer). Include writing samples, coding samples, presentations, spreadsheets, etc.

- ❑ **URL** – In “View Profile,” **look on the right and select Edit your public profile, then on the next page click Edit public profile URL.** Customize it to *www.linkedin.com/in/(some version of your name)*. Add your new URL to your resume contact information if you want employers to easily find your LinkedIn information.



- ❑ **Education** - Schools attended, majors and degrees, and other educational information. As in your resume, include information that highlights your strengths. Include study abroad, high GPA, Dean’s list awards, etc. High school is typically not appropriate unless you are a freshman or perhaps a sophomore.
- ❑ **Courses** - Adding related coursework can help you support the importance of your education.
- ❑ **Projects** - Showcase the projects you've worked on, particularly capstone or thesis projects, and especially if they are evidence of skills you have listed in your Skills section.
- ❑ **Experience** - Positions and experiences, including jobs, volunteering, military, and student activities or clubs. The information here will be similar to your resume, and you can cut and paste from it.
- ❑ **Skills & Expertise** - A list of relevant skills will help others to understand your strengths and improve your chances of being found when employers search for those skills. You can add up to 50 skills – look at other student and young professional Profiles in your field to get ideas of skills to add.
- ❑ **Recommendations** - You can request recommendations from contacts and display them on your profile.
- ❑ **Certifications** - Certifications, licensures, or clearances you've attained.
- ❑ **Honors & Awards** - Show off your hard-earned awards.
- ❑ **Languages** - Languages you understand or speak.
- ❑ **Organizations** - List the organizations or associations you belong to. Purchasing student memberships to professional organizations is a great idea, and can be inexpensive.
- ❑ **Volunteering & Causes** - Organizations you support, and causes you care about.

Next, join groups

Groups are becoming less widely-used in the LinkedIn universe, but still have an important function. Joining groups with very specific industry focus, or Oregon Tech groups, can be great networking tools and ways to find out about opportunities. Search for groups using the search bar, and also look at others’ profiles to see what groups they are in. Look for groups related to Oregon Tech like Oregon Tech REE Students.

Then, begin to create a network

Once you’ve created a strong profile, you can begin to invite people to connect. Don’t worry about getting your Profile perfected before you connect, as you’ll be editing it frequently. Your network can include fellow students, friends, family, friends of family, relatives of friends, professors, co-workers, and others. A professional network does not mean only people who are in your major or field. You never know who people are connected to now, or who they might be connected to in the future. When reaching out to connect with others, it is ESSENTIAL that you are polite, professional, and create a customized invitation rather than use the default generic invite.

Endorse others for skills (but only if you know they have them)

Is your classmate great at PowerPoint? Endorse her. Is your supervisor at your job excellent at training? Endorse him. You get the idea. Others will do the same for you. Skill endorsements do not carry the same importance as recommendations, but they help, especially when you are just getting started.

Go deeper

Download the **LinkedIn for Students** app | Get help at **students.linkedin.com** and **help.linkedin.com**