

Professional Social Media: LinkedIn and the Kenyon Career Network

Kenyon Career Development Office



In today's professional world, it is expected that you will have a LinkedIn profile through which potential employers can connect with you and learn more about your background. More than 14,000 Kenyon alumni are reachable through LinkedIn, and the site posts over half a million student jobs and internships each year. Additionally, the Kenyon Career Network (KCN) is a Kenyon-only platform for career exploration and networking with alumni. It's worth every Kenyon student's time to create an account on both platforms and begin to develop a powerful professional network.

Once you set up your LinkedIn profile, signing up for the KCN is even easier. If you log into KCN (at Kenyon.wisr.io) using your LinkedIn account, important information will auto-populate in your KCN profile, such as your degree, your photo, and your most recent work experience. Make sure to add additional experiences to round out your KCN profile, including your work history, club and organization membership, and volunteerism.

Setting up your LinkedIn Profile:

Your full name—Make sure that you use the same full name across all social media and online publications so that employers can find you easily.

Contact info—You may wish to include your email address on your profile so that potential employers can easily reach out to you. We do not recommend listing your physical address on an online profile.

A great photo—You want to come across as professional, so make sure that your photo reflects that. For help selecting the right photo, refer to the guide from a LinkedIn trainer at [linkedin.com/pulse/immediately-increase-your-linkedin-profile-views-14-times-steve-bruce/](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/immediately-increase-your-linkedin-profile-views-14-times-steve-bruce/).

Your work experience—This is essentially an online résumé. You may wish to refer to the Kenyon CDO [résumé guide](#) for tips on formatting and content. The goal is to use action-oriented statements to describe past and present accomplishments.

A personalized URL—LinkedIn allows you to have your own personalized URL, which will make your page more professional and accessible. To do so, just go to your public profile and click “Edit public profile & URL” on the right side of the screen.

A concise headline and descriptive summary—Your headline is the first aspect of your profile that people will see. Keep it short and to the point, incorporating keywords that will help you appear in search results. Your summary should consist of no more than 2000 characters outlining your interests and qualifications, as well as the fields you have explored. For more help, check out a guide from a personal branding expert on how to write the perfect summary at [linkedin.com/pulse/how-write-perfect-linkedin-summary-william-arruda/](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-write-perfect-linkedin-summary-william-arruda/).

Volunteer experience, interests, other skills—You can add sections such as volunteering, languages, honors, awards, patents, etc. To do so, go to your profile page, and click the button that says “Add profile section” below your photo.

More LinkedIn advice:

Avoid buzzwords—You want your LinkedIn profile to set you apart. If you use the same language in your profile as every other LinkedIn user, your profile will blend in rather than stand out. You can do a quick Google search of LinkedIn buzzwords so that you know which words to avoid.

Ask for recommendations—This is a great way to show off your skills and connections to potential employers. When sending a recommendation request, make sure to personalize the message. Additionally, do not ask everyone you know to

recommend you. This will draw attention away from your strongest recommendations written by your close coworkers. Finally, make sure to thank your recommenders.

Build connections—LinkedIn is all about building your professional network. Try to get 50+ connections soon after you create your profile to show employers that you are outgoing and engaged in your community. When connecting with someone who you do not know, make sure to send the person a message introducing yourself and your professional interests. To get a jump-start on your connections, you can choose to send a connection email to everyone in your address book. Just make sure that your profile is in top shape before you do this.

Join networking groups—LinkedIn allows users to create groups of people with shared professional interests, educational backgrounds or workplaces. Consider joining groups in your fields of interest, like professional associations, or follow key influencers in your targeted industry.

Utilize multimedia—You can use multimedia to show off your best work to potential employers. Possibilities include a PDF of an article that you wrote, a clip from a film you created, or a graphic design sample. See recommendations for how to make the most of this feature at [linkedin.com/pulse/convert-your-linkedin-profile-online-portfolio-hannah-morgan/](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/convert-your-linkedin-profile-online-portfolio-hannah-morgan/).

Check your privacy settings—Make sure that your profile is viewable to everyone so that potential employers can find you and know that you have nothing to hide. You should also be aware that LinkedIn has a default setting that provides your name to users whose profiles you view. If you want, you can update your privacy settings so that you can anonymously view others' profiles. However, when you do this you will lose the ability to see who has viewed your profile, so choose the setting with which you feel the most comfortable. To edit your privacy settings, click on your profile picture in the top right corner of the screen, and go to "Settings & Privacy." Then choose the "Privacy" tab from the menu at the top of the page, and click "How others see your LinkedIn activity." Next, click on "Profile viewing options" and select your preferred privacy level.

Choose how connections see your profile edits—LinkedIn has a default setting that updates all of your connections when you make changes to your profile. While you may wish to share exciting news, such as a new job, you may not want to broadcast every small edit that you make. To adjust this setting, click on your profile picture in the top right corner of the screen, and go to "Settings & Privacy." Then choose the "Privacy" tab from the menu at the top of the page, and click "How others see your LinkedIn activity." Next, change "Sharing Profile Edits" to "No." For more on default settings you may want to change, go to socialtalent.com/blog/recruitment/your-linkedin-settings.

Update your status—This is a good way to show other users that you are active and engaged. One of the easiest ways to do this is to share articles that you find interesting. You may also wish to post updates detailing your own professional highlights.

Include a cover photo—This is another way to make your profile stand out, and it is the background image behind your headshot. Just make sure that your cover photo is relevant to your professional interests and you are not infringing on any copyrights. For ideas, you may wish to browse the profiles of leading professionals in your field of interest.

Keep profile up to date—Outdated information reflects poorly on you. If you change jobs, get a promotion, or win an award, add the new information to your profile as soon as possible.

Making the most of the KCN:

Select multiple industries—When you create your KCN profile, you can select industries and sub-industries that interest you. The platform uses your selections to suggest members to connect with.

Upload a résumé—When you edit your profile, you'll have the option to add your résumé. It's always a good idea to tailor your résumé to the specific position you are applying to, but in this case you should upload a version that is broadly applicable for the field you are interested in. Uploading a résumé will make it easy for KCN mentors to find it and offer their advice.

Create a video profile—The KCN allows you to add a video to your profile by embedding a Youtube video. Use this as an opportunity to briefly introduce yourself to the community; it should be no longer than 60 seconds. Make sure to choose a quiet space with a neutral background and good lighting. It's ok to use a cellphone to film your video, just make sure you attach it to a tripod, securely prop it up, or have a friend hold it so your video is stable and professional-looking.

Make connections without sharing your private information—You can chat and call with other KCN members through the platform without sharing your email or phone number. Connecting with a KCN member who works in an industry you admire or asking an alum about their graduate school choice is a great way to start networking and planning your career path. You may want to consult our [Networking and Informational Interview Guide](#) for more information on how to reach out.

Join communities and ask questions—The KCN includes a range of “communities” that host discussion boards centered on professional topics. Communities are organized by industry, location, and other common interests. Post questions on community discussion boards to tap into the expertise of multiple KCN mentors and view past discussions to see what you can learn from previous conversations.

Navigating the KCN—Once you sign up, you'll land on your dashboard. Three tabs at the top of the page help you navigate the platform, and a search bar on the top left can be used to search for KCN members.

- **Dashboard:** On your dashboard, you'll see your recent activity and a list of recommended members you might want to connect with based on your interests, as well as suggestions for what to do next.
- **Explore:** Under the Explore tab, you can find communities and industries. Communities are groups you must opt into before you can read or post in discussions. Some communities are private; you can request to join these, and a community leader will either approve or deny your request. You can also find a long list of industries in the Explore tab. If you click on any industry or sub-industry, you will see a list of members working in that field. Click on a member's name to see their profile and view work experience, organizations they are/were involved in, and a list of ways they are willing to help.
- **Connections:** In the connections section, you can easily revisit any chats or calls you've made through the KCN.
- **Search:** If you want to search for members, type your terms into the search bar. A list of names who fit your criteria will come up, as will new options for a detailed search. Try searching for industries, locations, companies, majors, or names. With the detailed search, you can limit your results to people who have offered to help with things like résumé review or advising about graduate school.