Why LinkedIn?
LinkedIn is the world’s largest online professional networking platform that features resources and benefits to support professionals in all career fields. LinkedIn, which can be utilized at no-cost, allows users to:

- Showcase their skills and experience
- Promote their professional brands
- Connect with other professionals
- Access resources and information
- Effectively network
- Identify job opportunities

Building Your LinkedIn Profile
To make the most of LinkedIn, students should first create a stellar profile. Professionals, recruiters, and employers will review your profile to determine your skills and qualifications.

1. Utilize the Alumni Finder Function to identify URI alumni in your target field. To do so: type in University of Rhode Island in the search box, once on the URI LinkedIn page click on See alumni button, search and sort results based on six columns provided or enter your own text in the box that reads Search alumni by title, keyword, or company.
2. Integrate keywords relevant to your career field and industry into your profile and related posts. This will showcase a connection to your professional network (you are speaking their language), and can result in recruiters identifying you for job and internship opportunities through the LinkedIn Recruiter function.
3. Customize your LinkedIn URL to effectively brand yourself. To customize your profile: click on View Profile - Edit public profile and URL - the pencil in the Edit URL section - customize your URL - Save. Your LinkedIn URL should be some version of your name as you are known professionally (no nicknames). Don’t forget to also include your customized LinkedIn URL in your resume header.
4. Add support materials to relevant sections to stand out and grab the attention of readers. Include samples of your work, projects, portfolio, and links to relevant websites. This will showcase your achievements and can illustrate the positive impact of your work to date.
5. Customize LinkedIn invitations, as connection requests that are tailored are more likely to be accepted.
6. Seek endorsements for your skills. Skills should be relevant to your career field. Proper etiquette is to endorse those who endorse you. Only endorse others for skills that you have witnessed and can support in good faith.
7. Join groups relevant to your target interests. Groups are an excellent source of industry-specific content, connections, and resources. You can search for relevant groups by clicking on the Work tab – Groups – Discover. Also, identify groups that peers and professionals belong to via the Interests section within their profiles.
8. Share original content by writing and publishing articles and subject matter that will allow you to share your knowledge and gain awareness within your professional community.

Key elements of your profile are:
- Professional photo
- Experience
- Headline
- Skills
- Summary
- Education

See the reverse side of this QTS to learn more about each section and how to maximize your profile’s effectiveness.

How to Use LinkedIn
- Create an effective profile
- Update your profile every 3-4 months (add skills, etc.)
- Identify network contacts and send invitations to connect
- Search for jobs and internships via the Jobs tab
- Create search alerts for target jobs
- Identify skills, experience, and education of professionals working in your target job(s)
- Join professional groups
- Explore salary information through LinkedIn Salary link
- Gain skill endorsements and endorse others

Tips for Making the Most of LinkedIn
- Show your skills and experience
- Promote your professional brand
- Connect with others
- Access resources and information
- Effectively network
- Identify job opportunities

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Complete (All Star) LinkedIn profiles are 40x more likely to receive opportunities through LinkedIn than those with incomplete profiles and they tend to rank higher in LinkedIn and Google search results. This means you will have the opportunity to connect with more professionals and truly experience the networking benefits of LinkedIn. It will also help you to develop your online presence and professional brand.

Create or update your LinkedIn profile using the criteria below. Point values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile Sections</th>
<th>Basic Level</th>
<th>All Star Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn URL</td>
<td>Not customized (assigned by LinkedIn)</td>
<td>Customized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo</td>
<td>Selfie or cropped photo from personal life</td>
<td>Professional profile picture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Headline         | Generic headline such as “Student at URI” | Engaging Headline that:  
  o Reflects personal brand  
  o Summarizes ambition  
  o Catches attention |
| Summary          | Limited Summary  
  o Does not express interest or tie in past experience(s)  
  o Does express ambition or goals  
  o Not professionally written | Summary briefly (1-3 paragraphs):  
  o Describes previous relevant experience or connects background and skills  
  o Conveys direction/ambition/passion  
  o Spells out goals or accomplishments  
  o Uses professional but personal voice  
  o Contains keywords relevant to industry |
| Connections      | <50 connections with professionals | 50+ connections with professionals in your field |
| Experience       | <2 experiences listed  
  o Descriptions lack detail, are unclear, and/or do not include accomplishments  
  o Typos or errors are present | 2+ experiences listed  
  o Descriptions are clear and concise and encapsulate skills, duties and accomplishments  
  o No typos or errors |
| Education        | Incomplete education history | Complete education history listed, including  
  o University level Institution(s)  
  o Graduation Date(s)  
  o Degree(s)  
  o Study Abroad, if applicable |
| Skills & Expertise| <5 skills listed  
  o Skills not endorsed | 5+ relevant skills identified  
  o Skills endorsed by appropriate connections |
| Accomplishments & Volunteer Experience | <2 accomplishments added | 2+ relevant accomplishments added:  
  o Relevant courses  
  o Honors/Awards  
  o Projects/Publications  
  o Languages  
  o Certifications  
  o Volunteer Experience |
| Interests (Following) | Member of relevant and irrelevant groups  
  o Not following companies / Influencers | Connected to groups, companies and thought leaders or Influencers in your field |
| Overall Competencies of Profile | The profile provides some information, but does not provide an accurate portrait of your direction or experience | The profile demonstrates an in-depth understanding by providing completeness in all relevant fields |