How to Network and Job Search with LinkedIn

1. Create your personal network

Start with fellow students that can speak to your professional qualities, former colleagues/co-workers, professors, friends and family.

2. Join and follow groups or companies related to your field/industry

When joining a group, view the members within that group to see if there are contacts to add to your network. Find out the companies those members are with.

On a company’s page, you will see the number of employees on LinkedIn under How You’re Connected. Pay attention to the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd that may appear on an individual’s photo, as this means they may be connected to someone you are acquainted with. Click on that person to find out how you might be connected. This could open the door to an introduction from your connections. Find out more information about the company and view job postings on the company page.
3. Find a hiring manager

Use the advanced people search feature (click on advanced next to the search bar at the top of the page) to search for your target company and then input the most likely title for a hiring manager within that company (program manager, project manager, director, etc.) as a second search term.

4. Read the profiles of potential contacts (possibly your next boss!)

Check out what groups they belong to, what they care about, the influencers they follow, and what you might have in common. This information will be helpful when trying to reach out to them.
5. Connect with individuals by sending a personal message

Always include a personal message when connecting on LinkedIn. Do not use the generic, “I’d like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn,” because individuals are likely to ignore that message if they don’t know you.

The purpose of networking and connecting on LinkedIn is to prospect for possible vacancies in your occupation, get your resume read, and generate interviews. Target specific individuals in specific organizations. Structure this message similarly to a cover letter, but instead of using specific position information, focus on broader occupational and/or organizational aspects to describe how your qualifications match the work environment. Here’s what to include in a personal message:

- Indicate your interest and reveal your source of information.
- Outline your strongest qualifications—focus on broader occupational and/or organizational aspects to describe how your qualifications match the work environment.
- Convince the employer that you have the personal qualities and motivation to contribute to the organization.
- Suggest an action plan. Request an interview, and indicate that you will follow up within a certain amount of time.
- Express appreciation to the reader for his or her time and consideration.

6. Search for jobs/open positions

You can search for jobs using the search bar at the top or by clicking on the Jobs tab. Enter a job title or some keywords to start searching. Use the advanced search to narrow down the industry, function of the job, search in a certain location, search by experience level, etc. Save jobs or searches and keep track of jobs you have applied for. Use the “About this company” when clicking on a job posting to help with your cover letter/personal message and to decide whether the company is the right fit for you.