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LinkedIn: The Basics

This document is meant to introduce the basics of LinkedIn, from setting up your professional profile, to making connections and interacting with other organizations. The key is to put enough information that connections are able to find you and connect you with opportunities.

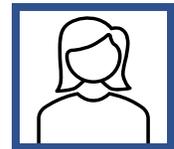
Setting Up Your Profile

Go to [LinkedIn: Log In or Sign Up](#) and click 'Join Now'.

Once you have created an account, make sure to fill out your profile with some information.

Key Information to Include

- **Headline**
This is where you will describe your current position. The headline is important when it comes to the LinkedIn algorithm – when people are hiring or looking for connections, they will often search for relevant headlines.
-It is common practice to use the following format:
{current position} at {current employer}
-If you are a student, you may choose to use the same format: *Student at {School}*
-It is also common to use a descriptive sentence that encompasses what you want to say if you work on a broad range of projects or are not currently working or in school.
- **Photo**
This is not critical; however, a lot of connections and potential employers like to associate a face to the name. It feels more personal. You can select privacy settings that allow only connections to see your photo, or connections of connections, etc. If you do choose to include a profile photo, remember to follow these steps:
 - i. Zoom in – keep the focus from your waist-up and centered.
 - ii. First impressions – think about how you want people to perceive you in your industry. Adjectives that come to mind are respectful, approachable, making an effort, etc.
- **Experience**
This section is meant to list and describe your recent work experience. It's a good idea to put your most prominent experiences here. The same goes for the Volunteer experience section.
**Tip: make sure to spell the company names exactly how they are – many companies are on LinkedIn and if you spell them correctly, they will pop up when you type in your experience. This is good, as connections and future employers can then find you through that company.*



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- Education

Again, if you have gone to a college or university, include it! Your school likely has a large network of alumni and staff, who often make valuable connections.

Licences and certifications

This is a good place to list that Digital Marketing Certificate from Google way back when! You never know what might be relevant to one of your connections.

How to build your network

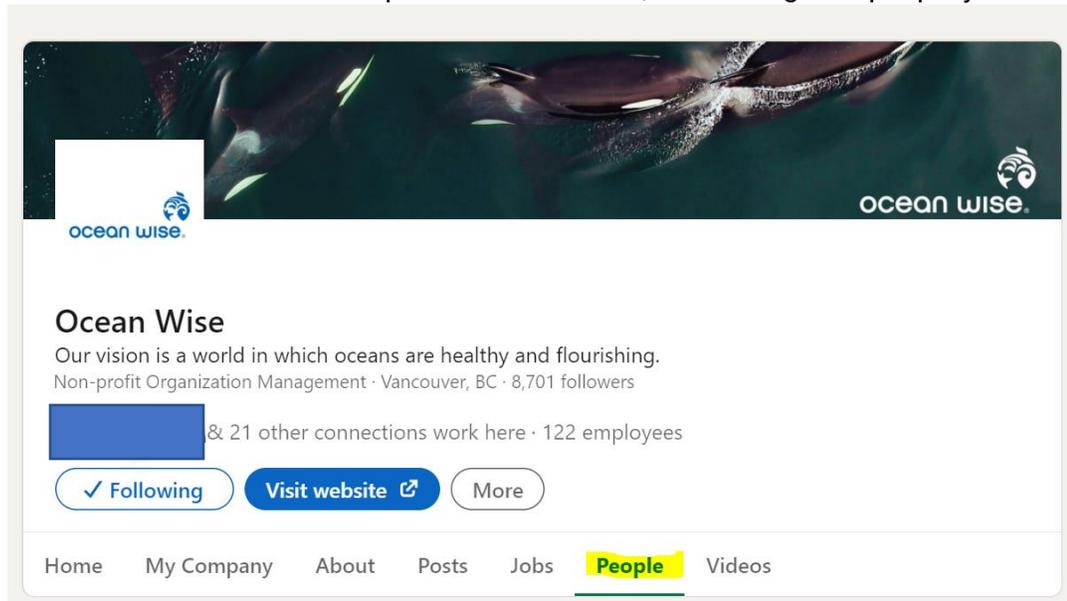
Your network is the most valuable part of using LinkedIn – this is what will lead to opportunities. More people use connections to find jobs than the ‘Jobs’ feature on company pages, because connections often like or share opportunities within their organization. After you have filled in the key profile information, you are ready to make connections. How can you start doing that?

- ‘People You May Know’

This pops up on the right-hand side of your profile; LinkedIn uses the algorithm to feature some people you may know based on how you filled your profile.

- Using organization ‘People’

Use the Search bar to look up organizations that you have worked for or schools that you have attended. Click on tab ‘People’ and scroll down, connecting with people you know.



- Organic search

Use the Search bar to directly search people by name.

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**Important note to remember: most people who have gone to the trouble of creating a LinkedIn profile are looking to make connections. Don't be shy about asking people to connect! If you are wanting to make a connection with someone you don't know well or have never met, a top tip is to add a note when you ask them to connect. (After clicking 'Connect', a pop up will allow you to write a note). This is a great chance to introduce yourself and let them know why you would like to connect.*

Interests

In your profile, you have the option to 'Follow' companies. This is another great way to find opportunities within your desired field. By following companies that you are interested in, you are more likely to find out when they are hiring, and potentially make connections within the company. Some companies that are great to follow with values aligned with conservation, environmental stewardship and youth engagement are:

- Ocean Wise
- WWF-Canada & WWF
- David Suzuki Foundation
- The Nature Conservancy
- National Geographic
- International Water Association
- IUCN
- Global Shapers Community
- Sustainable Development Solutions Network
- UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network – Youth

We hope this intro to LinkedIn helps you to build your own profile! Think of it as another tool to use as you build your career. It can be a very useful platform to stay connected to past, present and future colleagues – you never know where you might find your next opportunity!