



Job Search Marketing Resource Kit

LinkedIn Profile Creation Guide

OVERVIEW: WHY LINKEDIN?		2
BUILDING YOUR PROFILE		4
BUILDING CONNECTIONS		11
BEYOND THE CONNECTIONS		13

LINKEDIN PROFILES |

In today's digital age, LinkedIn has become the standard for professional online networking and career-focused self-marketing. With more than 200 million global users, LinkedIn has also become a standard tool for recruiters and hiring managers to identify and connect with top candidates, and utilize the network's exclusive membership to promote thousands of job opportunities.

You may already have a LinkedIn profile, and even if you don't, this guide will provide you a basis for creating, improving and optimizing your LinkedIn profile at every level.

- **What is the Advantage of Having a Professional LinkedIn Profile?**

For job seekers, LinkedIn is like the digital version of your resume, though it follows slightly less formal standards, and appeals to a more general, widespread audience. Having a strong profile with complete information increase the likelihood that you will show up in relevant search queries, and significantly increases your visibility to potential connections, including recruiters and hiring managers.

LinkedIn also provides an easy to use, non-invasive platform for obtaining recommendations from managers, colleagues and others who can help you highlight your skills and accomplishments to potential employers.

Finally, LinkedIn has become so widely adopted that it's truly a standard for professional online networking, and is a premier tool for building your network by connecting you with peers, potential hiring managers, thought leaders, and other professionals in your industry.

- **How Does My LinkedIn Profile Differ From My Resume?**

LinkedIn profiles can vary greatly in terms of length, content and branding. Generally speaking, your LinkedIn profile provides a snapshot of your experience that allows others to connect with you on a professional level. Profiles generally include less detail than a resume might, with well-designed ones giving a concisely branded overview of your skills, strengths, experience and knowledge.

Much like a resume, LinkedIn does provide different themed sections in which to include and organize important information about yourself, such as Experience, Projects, Volunteer Work, Awards and Organizations you're involved in. In some cases, some of the more detailed information that might typically appear in a resume is often left off the LinkedIn profile, as there is less ability to customize and format, which can make the profile seem overly wordy, long and difficult to read. When creating a profile, think of it as more of a snapshot, a lead-in designed to generate interest and spark conversations and connections.

- **I'm Not Looking for a Job. Should I Be On LinkedIn?**

Absolutely! The idea and advantage behind LinkedIn is the simplicity it provides in building your professional network and connecting you with others in your field or industry. While you may not be looking for a job right now, building a network of quality connections which you can leverage down the line can take years, and it's good practice to be building those connections at all levels of your career.

- **Will Having a LinkedIn Profile Raise Suspicions With My Current Employer?**

Many people are concerned that having a public presence on LinkedIn will raise suspicions with current employers or clients that they're actively looking for a new job. Luckily, LinkedIn offers a range of privacy settings that allow you to limit who can view your profile (everyone, no one, or only your connections), and even how your name is displayed in search results. If Natalie Smith prefers to keep her profile confidential except for potential job leads or other connections, she can display her name simply as "Natalie S." to those people who are not directly connected to her. This will also prevent people being able to search her directly by name.

However, LinkedIn has become such a universally accepted "social" media platform for general networking, with many functionalities that reach outside of simply job searching, that it often isn't viewed in a negative manner if a non-job seeking professional has a presence on the network. As mentioned earlier, building a network of quality connections is an important strategy at every level of your career, and LinkedIn provides a wealth of tools to do so. And with an increasingly mobile job market that often sees increased job hopping, flexible work arrangements, and moving around from company to company, many utilize the network as a means of staying in touch and sharing resources with colleagues, clients and acquaintances.

BUILDING YOUR PROFILE |

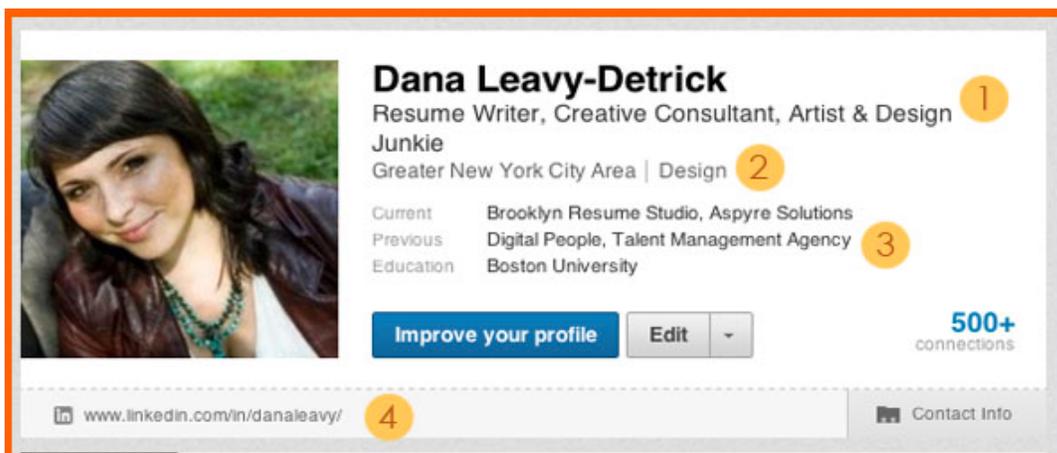
Overview

The great thing about LinkedIn is that its interface is fairly user-friendly, making the process of building out a basic profile relatively easy. Every profile has several default sections, and the network also offers a number of additional optional sections to showcase other skills, affiliations, accomplishments and projects. Here is a breakdown of each section, and what kind of information should be included in each.

Image Header

Every profile has a header box at the top that, by default, displays the information around your Name, Headline/Title, Location, Industry, Current & Previous Work Experience, Education and Connections. You have the option to control what people see on your profile and who can see it by modifying your privacy settings. While having a profile picture isn't required, research shows that profiles with photos get significantly more views than those without. They also appear higher in search results due to the Profile Completeness Score.

1. Create a compelling headline around your expertise, not just your current job title. There's nothing wrong with using your current job title as your headline, but being a bit more descriptive and creative will encourage people to take a look. Instead of "Marketing Manager at XYZ Company", get a little creative: **"Creative Marketer Specializing in Fashion & Retail Startups"**.
2. Choose the appropriate industry description that best describes your line of work. This is another search variable, and can help increase the visibility of your profile.
3. By default, LinkedIn displays your Current and Previous Positions, and if applicable, educational institution(s). You can control whether or not you display these by modifying your privacy settings.
4. Each profile has a default URL that starts out as the LinkedIn URL followed by a long mix of numbers and letters. You can customize your public profile URL for easier access, and also sharing on your resume or other profiles.



Summary Section

Similar to your resume, your LinkedIn profile provides the opportunity to write a short and compelling Summary around your career experience and expertise. This is an excellent platform for branding your profile and giving your audience a snapshot of your skills, strengths, experience and knowledge. Including industry-specific keywords, phrases and skills can also increase your chances of popping up in relevant profile search queries.

BACKGROUND



SUMMARY

As a career advisor with an entrepreneurial mindset, I have helped hundreds of professionals in advertising, marketing, design, multimedia and other industries in creating the career plans, freelance ventures and small businesses that ultimately allow them to make a living doing the work they are passionate about. I've presented seminars on personal branding, career transition and work-life balance to several colleges and universities, and her advice has been featured in Forbes, MSN Careers, Fox Business News, NewsDay, CareerBuilder.com, GlassDoor and About.com.

I specialize in working with mid and senior-level professionals across different areas of career transition: job search strategy, resume preparation, personal branding, and transition away from traditional employment and into starting a small business or freelance venture.

SPECIALTIES:

- Resume Writing & Analysis
- Personal Branding & Marketing
- Career Transition Planning
- Small Business & Freelance Development
- Career Consulting & Job Search Strategy
- LinkedIn Profile Development
- Cover Letter and Document Writing

Experience

The Experience section of your profile includes a chronological list of your current and past positions. You have the option of listing them simply by title and employer, or adding a brief description (recommended). While it's not necessary to add as much detail as you might in your resume, such as all of your accomplishments, projects, clients, or other quantifiable information, it is a good idea to provide some context around what you did in each role and the correlating responsibilities and skills that you utilized.

Since LinkedIn's platform doesn't allow much room for customization and creative formatting, it's a good idea to provide a brief job description in a several-line paragraph format. Bulleted lists and caps do not transfer well, and there is no option for formatting elements such as bolds, italics and underlines.

For some organizations, you may have the option to display the company logo on your profile as noted below. This will also connect you to the company's own LinkedIn page as an employee, another beneficial search functionality.

Any recommendations associated with that particular position will also be visible on your profile. Asking your former supervisors, colleagues, clients and peers for recommendations is a great way to market your skills and credibility. But only ask for recommendations from people whom you know and have had a working relationship with.



EXPERIENCE

1

Founder & Chief Career Consultant
Brooklyn Resume Studio
August 2009 – Present (3 years 8 months) | Brooklyn, NY



Provide career management and job search strategy tools for mid and senior-level professionals across multiple industries, with extensive work specifically within advertising, marketing, design, multimedia, technology and administrative fields. Specializing in resume writing, editing and analysis, LinkedIn profile development, cover letter and document writing, personal branding tools and assessments, and career consulting.

2

Small Business & Career Consultant
Aspyre Solutions
June 2009 – Present (3 years 10 months) | New York, NY



Specializing in small business and career management, Aspyre Solutions provides a platform for information, articles, resources and tools focusing around small business building, freelancing, entrepreneurial lifestyle, independent creative ventures, and navigating career transition. I consult with clients one-on-one around business building, branding, marketing and career management, and also manage a twice-weekly blog and email newsletter catering to small businesses, freelancers, and independent creative professionals.

▼ 4 recommendations, including:



Emerald L
Clerical Closer at CIGNA Healthcare

Dana is a rare talent. She is a listener who is able to gather information and present it strategically and professionally.... [View ↓](#)



Lydia H

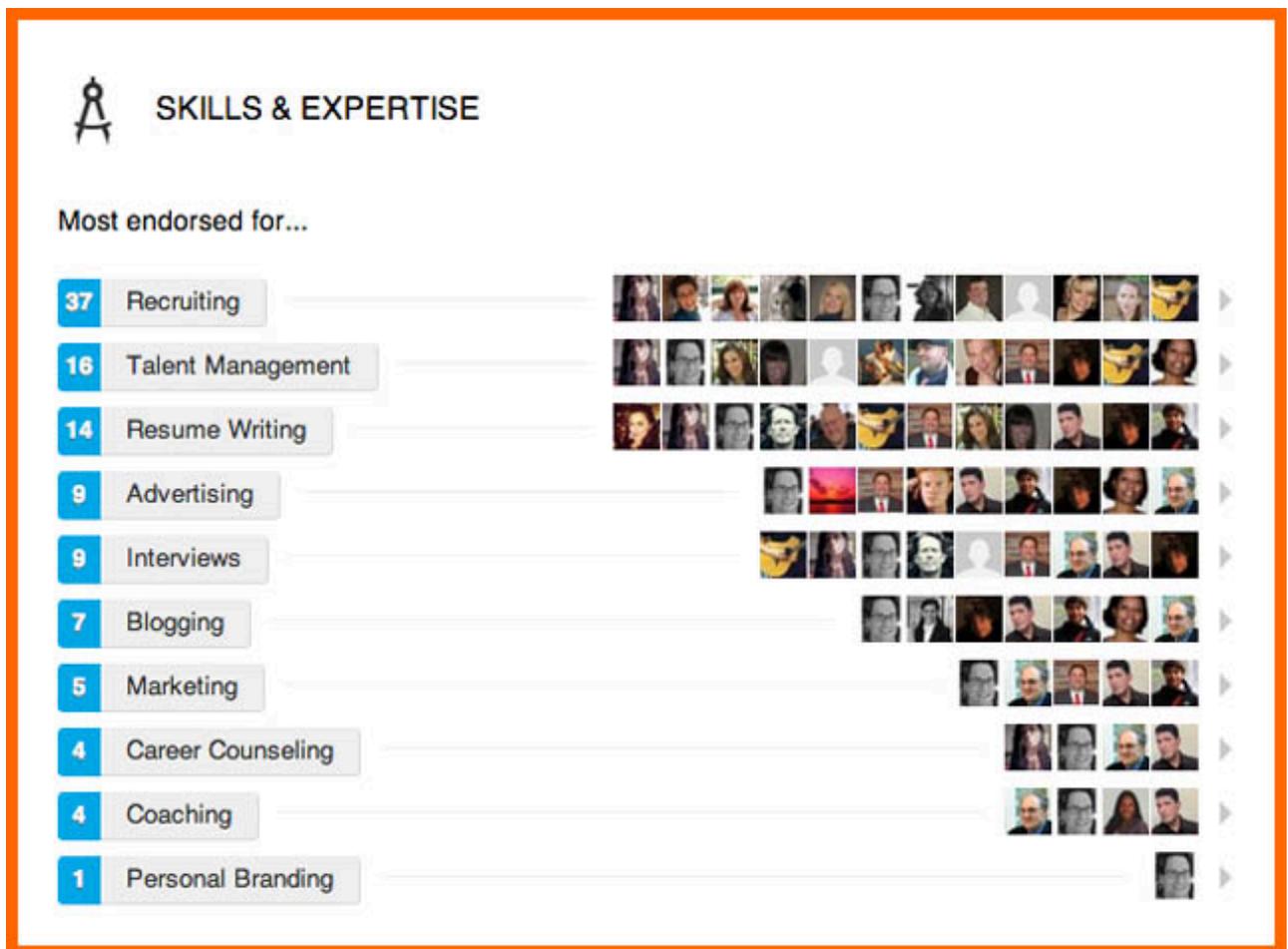
Dana is great, she really helped me to start thinking about my career change. I would recommend her to anyone looking for... [View ↓](#)

[2 more recommendations ↓](#)

Skills

The Skills section is a relatively new feature to LinkedIn that provides an opportunity to list your top skill sets, and make it easier for your audience to search your profile. In addition, your connections can endorse you for specific skill sets, showcasing your knowledge and credibility in a more visual aspect.

The numbers next to each skill represent the number of connections who have endorsed you for that skill, and LinkedIn automatically displays a small thumbnail of that person's photo next to the skill. It's not necessary to be endorsed for a skill in order to add it to your profile. So be sure to add skills that describe your core strengths, but also the areas which you might be building up your knowledge and transitioning into – a great way for career changers to brand themselves around a different area of focus.



Education

The Education section is fairly straightforward, and a great place to list any relevant degrees, areas of study, continuing education or coursework, or certifications. Note that there are separate sections available to list Certifications as well as Courses, and it's fine to put that information in either section. Avoid making the profile overly lengthy on purpose, in that if there's only one entry under Certifications, another under Courses, and then another under Education, it might be worth consolidating all of that information under the Education section, as demonstrated below.

 **EDUCATION**

Boston University
Communication & Visual Arts

▼ 1 recommendation

 **Hillary R**
Freelance Journalist, Editor, Media Consultant

Dana is one of the most talented and creative people I've ever met. She is organized, driven, and dedicated, while maintaining a great sense of humor and down-to-earth, professional attitude. She can adapt to all kinds of situations and still manage... [View ↓](#)

IPEC
Professional Coaching Certification (CPC) - Transitional Coaching
2009 – 2010

Additional Information

The Additional Information section is a great place to let readers know how they can contact you, as well as any additional details that might not fit into the other sections. You might include links to portfolios or projects (there is a separate area to include a website link or additional contact information under the Contact Info tab).

 **ADDITIONAL INFO**

Advice for Contacting Dana
dana@aspyresolutions.com

Organizations

The Organizations section is typically used to showcase any outside networking and community involvement, and is pretty open-ended in terms of the type of information you can include. Once again, you can utilize this section to include community or industry-based organizations you are involved in, or you might opt to place it under sections such as Volunteering & Causes, or Projects. Where you place the information is not quite as important as the relevancy of it, and keeping the profile concise where possible. It's not necessary to list every organization or hobby you're involved in, but it can be an excellent platform for showcasing your involvement and interest in connecting with peers and thought leaders in your industry.



Additional Sections

There are a number of other optional sections that you can add to your profile to showcase pertinent information, projects, accomplishments and involvements including:

- **Publications**
- **Honors & Awards**
- **Volunteering & Causes**
- **Projects**
- **Languages**
- **Test Scores**
- **Courses**
- **Patents**
- **Certifications**

Additionally:

- **Groups**
This section displays the logos and names for any LinkedIn groups you opt to join and follow, and will show up automatically in this section. You can opt to not display certain groups you are in by going to the settings function on the group's page.
- **Following**
This section shows the logo and names of any LinkedIn Company Pages that you are following.



HONORS & AWARDS

Outstanding Contribution in the Field of Education

Network of Michigan Educators

Booker T. Washington Educator's Achievement Award

Pi Lambda Theta, Horace Mann Society



VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES

Caucus Leader

Detroit Children First

Board Member

ACLU Detroit

Member

Michigan Council for Social Studies



PROJECTS

Detroit Children First

July 2007 – Present

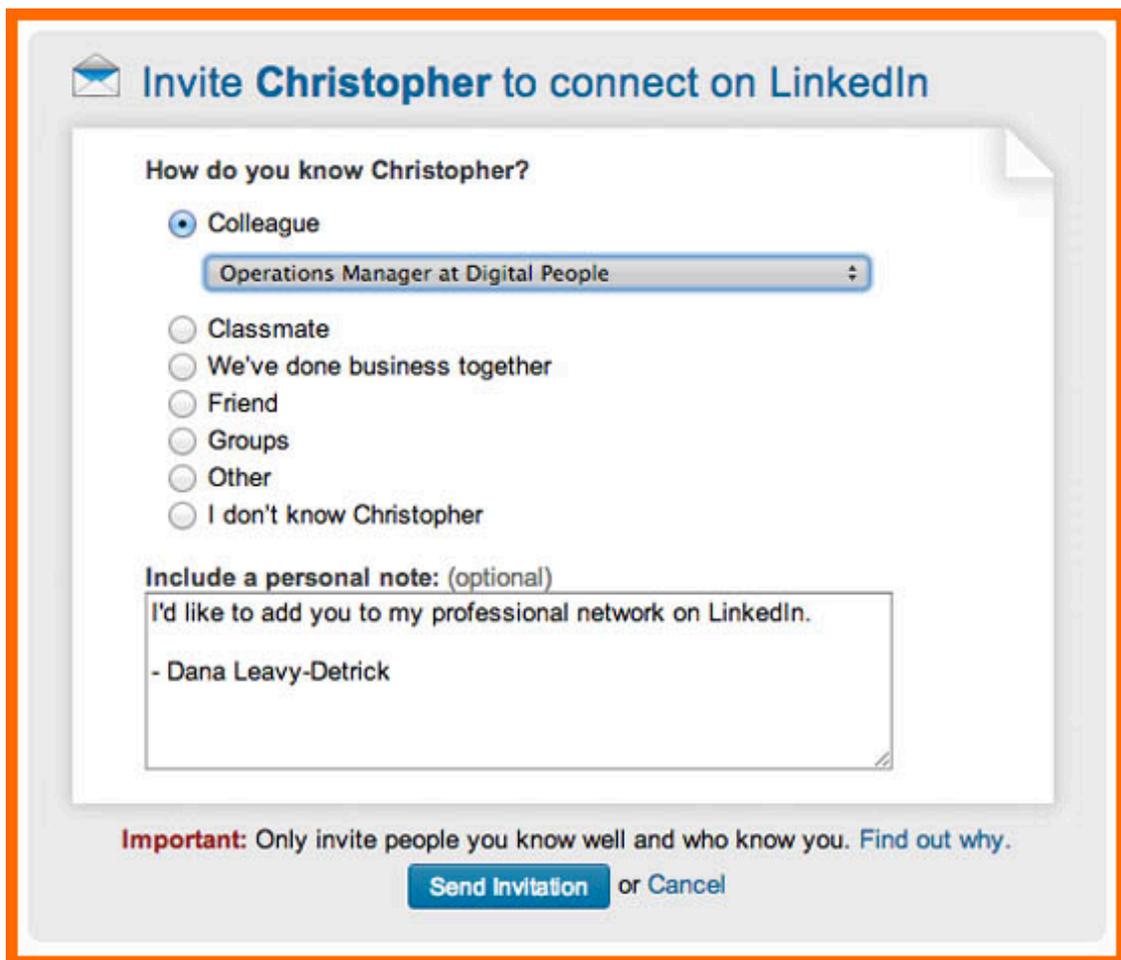
Detroit Children First is an organization promoting educational justice for children living in poverty and in urban communities. Supporters consist of teachers, parents, community activists, educational leaders and politicians from all branches of the government.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS |

Helping people build quality professional connections and expand their network reach is the backbone of LinkedIn's platform. It's less about quantity and more about quality – connecting with other people with whom you can mutually leverage your relationship.

The Benefits of Building Quality Connections

- Learn about company openings and “hidden” job opportunities
- Follow thought leaders in your industry
- Keep in touch with former colleagues, supervisors, customers and contacts
- Obtain recommendations from former coworkers and managers



The image shows a screenshot of the LinkedIn interface for inviting a connection. The title is "Invite Christopher to connect on LinkedIn". Below the title, there is a section titled "How do you know Christopher?" with several radio button options: "Colleague" (selected), "Classmate", "We've done business together", "Friend", "Groups", "Other", and "I don't know Christopher". Under the "Colleague" option, there is a dropdown menu showing "Operations Manager at Digital People". Below this, there is a text area for a personal note, which contains the text "I'd like to add you to my professional network on LinkedIn." and "- Dana Leavy-Detrick". At the bottom, there is an "Important" note: "Only invite people you know well and who know you. Find out why." and two buttons: "Send Invitation" and "or Cancel".

Tips for Reaching Out

- Don't reach out to just anyone based on where they work or what they do. Have some kind of mutual connection to the person, such as a common connection, similar field of interest, membership to the same group, or an affiliation with the same college.
- When reaching out with the form above, it's always best to personalize the message as much as possible. While space and characters are limited, do your best to create a greeting that gives them context around how you know them and why you would like to connect.
- If someone suspects that your connection request is "Spam", or that you don't know them, they can decline your request. Having your requests denied multiple times can lead to a suspension of your LinkedIn account.
- Don't just collect connections and ignore them. As with other social media platforms, make an effort to engage with your network, by sharing career updates such as promotions or job changes, sharing interesting articles or content, engaging in LinkedIn groups, and following and liking others' updates and discussions.
- Need help crafting a good connection request message? Refer to the [Email Marketing Scripts guide](#) for examples.

BEYOND THE CONNECTIONS |

Did you know there are a host of other great features that LinkedIn offers to help you connect, network, engage, and grow your reputation?

LinkedIn Groups

LinkedIn Groups provide an excellent opportunity to connect, engage, and share information and resources with other industry peers and professionals. Groups are typically moderated by one or multiple members who manage and monitor the discussion threads and postings. Be advised that most groups discourage self-promotional tactics such as linking back to your personal blog, asking for leads, or advertising your resume or website. But many groups do include their own targeted job board and daily/weekly email digest of new and ongoing discussions. Use relevant keywords to search for groups that pertain to your industry and interests.

TIP: Trying to break into an industry, or build your visibility? Look at profiles of colleagues, supervisors, or other peers within in your field to see which groups they follow.

Job Board

The job board feature on LinkedIn allows you to search jobs you may be interested in by core criteria such as keyword, industry, location, function, and salary. You can also look for jobs specifically at companies within your network, where you may already have connections. There are additional Premium Job Seeker features available, including the option to obtain special placement as a featured applicant. Your job activity remains private at all times and is never visible to your connections or in your news feed.

Recommendations

Recommendations are short professional testimonials provided by your colleagues, supervisors, peers, customers, and other connections with which you have a trusted relationship. By accessing the Recommendations center from the Profile drop down menu, you can view existing recommendations, approve pending recommendations before they go live on your profile, or use LinkedIn's 3-step customizable form to ask someone for a recommendation on your work.

TIP: Many of the jobs listed on the LinkedIn Job Board ask specifically for applicants to have at least 2 exist recommendations when applying. You don't need to be in full job search mode to ask people for recommendations – it's perfectly fine to reach out after completing an important project, working with a new client, transitioning into a new position or department, or other scenarios where the quality of your work might be fresh in their minds.

People Search

You can search for potential connections simply by typing their name into the search query box on your screen, or utilizing LinkedIn's Advanced People Search form, which also allows you to save your searches. You have a variety of criteria to utilize, including keywords, location, title, company, industry, job function, or educational institution.

Remember that the best connections are those with whom you share a common interest for building a professional relationship, and reaching out to people you don't know risks them denying your connection request. Too many denied requests can position you as a spammer, and potentially lead to suspension of your account.

TIP: One way to connect with someone whom you don't know, but would like to establish a connection with is to look and see if you share any common groups. This can be an interesting and non-invasive conversation starter, and more effective and reaching out blindly to connect. Note that there IS any option on the connection request form to let someone know that you share a common group.

Company Pages

LinkedIn members can follow companies that have a Company Page setup, and stay updated on key developments, job opportunities, staff changes, and other timely topics. Whether you are following a company you have worked for previously, or a company of interest whom you would be interested in applying to work for, company pages can provide a wealth of inside information to help you get a better sense of the organization's goings on, culture, growth, and current job opportunities. You can also find a list of people who work or have worked for the organization to see if you have any common contacts that you can potentially leverage for an introduction or lead.

TIP: Individuals can utilize company pages as well, if you are a consultant or freelance professional who markets themselves as an independent organization. Set up a company page to let your connections and other LinkedIn members know about your products and services, and other key information about what your business offers. In order to create a company page, the organization must be listed in the Experience section of your profile, and you must have a company email address with the company domain added and confirmed on your LinkedIn account.

For Additional Tips & Resources Visit www.bklynresumestudio.com