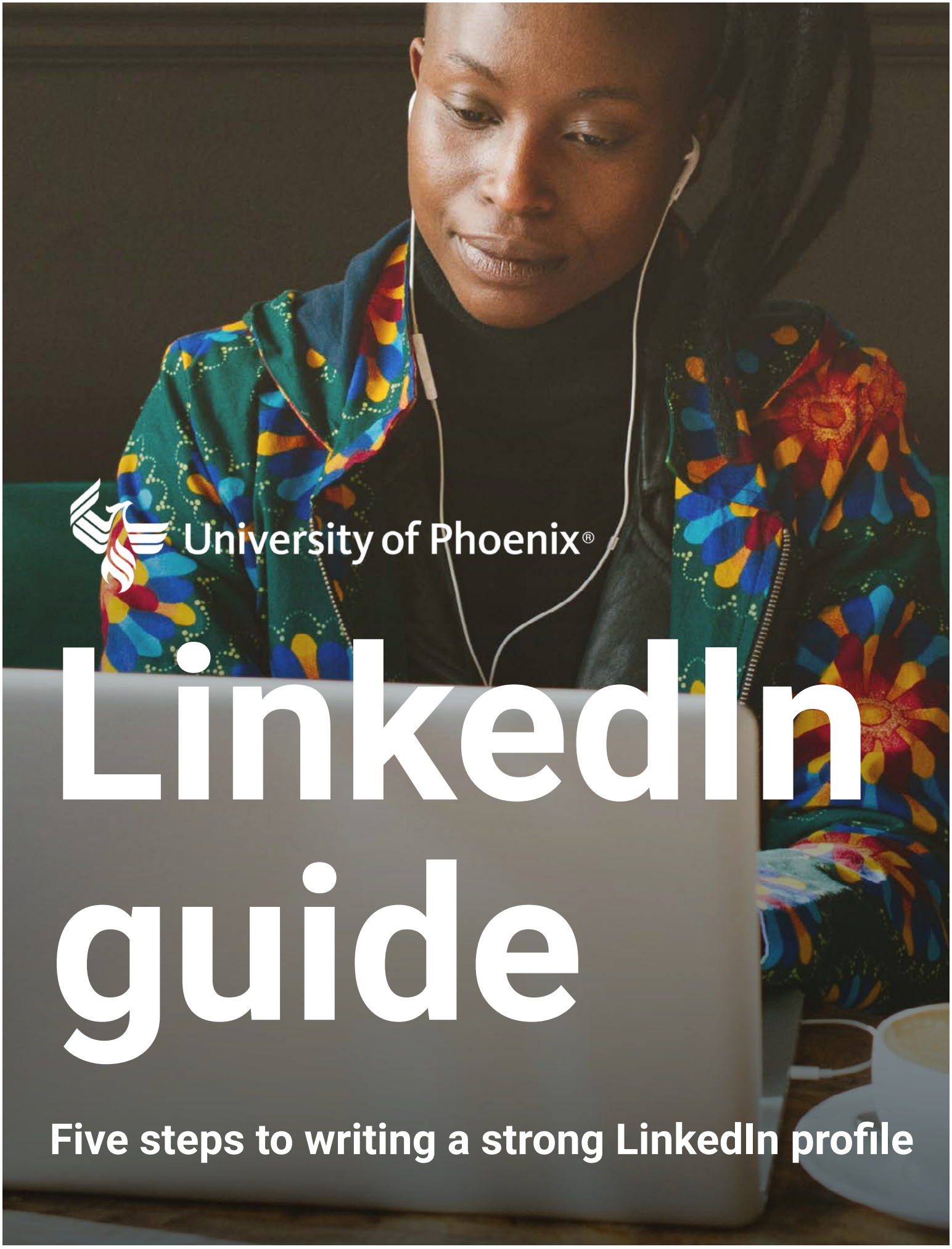

LinkedIn guide

Five steps to writing a strong LinkedIn profile

Along with your resumé, a strong LinkedIn profile can be the key to helping you with your career search. Many recruiters use LinkedIn to vet candidates, and over a million people worldwide have landed jobs through this networking site.

In this guide...

YOU'LL LEARN FIVE STEPS TO BUILDING A STRONG PROFILE

1. **Determine your goals**
2. **Establish your credentials**
3. **Craft a searchable headline**
4. **Write a descriptive summary**
5. **Start making connections!**

TIP

If you need step-by-step help creating a LinkedIn profile, you can find it **here.**

1 Determine your goals

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF LINKEDIN?

- First, check out a few profiles — you'll need to **sign up for an account** first.
- Write down a few people or companies you'd like to connect with.
- Ask yourself what you'd like to achieve on LinkedIn: find a job, build a network, market your own business? These will help determine your next steps.
- Think about what others would like to see in a candidate or a colleague like you.

2 Establish your credentials

YOU MAY NOT LIKE TO BOAST, BUT YOUR PROFILE CAN

When setting up your profile, you'll start by filling in the minimum requirements

Profile photo, Education, Location & Industry, Connections (at least 50), Skills (minimum three), Current role and two past roles.

Upload a professional photo

Your appearance on LinkedIn is important. A professional photo will help you make your best first impression on colleagues and hiring managers.

"Selfies" are best left on Instagram. Have a friend or a pro take your photo.

Crop your portrait so it's a close-up and make sure you're the only person in the picture.

Dress the way you would at work. No sunglasses or hats, and keep jewelry and makeup workplace appropriate.

Lead with your skills

Even if you don't have a lot of experience yet, adding at least three skills learned during your coursework at University of Phoenix can help you qualify for more jobs.

Add your education and experience

Add experience from your last two jobs, even if it was a barista job or a ride-share gig. If you don't have a lot of relevant work experience, focus on your education.

Ask for recommendations

Recommendations come from co-workers or instructors. They make a huge impact on employers because they validate your expertise.

Set up a custom URL

Take this extra step to look professional: A custom URL appears in the search bar when others view your page. You can also add it to your resumé or email signature.

3 Craft a searchable headline

YOUR HEADLINE IS WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER — IN 220 CHARACTERS OR FEWER

Your headline is searchable. That means the summary you write for yourself should be filled with searchable keywords that will help you make the right connections:

Digital Marketing Student: Marketing Strategy | Social Media | Facebook Ads | Google Analytics | Community Manager

Another way of writing your LinkedIn headline is with a sentence starting with "I help..." and describing what you do (or want to be doing):

Project Manager: I help teams get work done, on time and on budget | Certified Project Manager | Jira Administrator | US Navy Veteran | Committed to sustainable growth.

TIP

You can use **Character Count Online** or a word processor to help you keep your headline to the 220-character limit.

4 Write a descriptive summary

CREATE A LINKEDIN SUMMARY THAT SHOWCASES YOUR STRENGTHS AND PERSONALITY

A LinkedIn summary is the heart of your profile. Aim for about three paragraphs with no more than three sentences per paragraph.

Imagine your career as an epic tale with you as the hero of the story. Tell people what you do, why and to what end. Here are two examples:

Example: Sammi, The Accounting Student

Running a small business by day — tireless mom and accounting student by night. I expect to complete my CPA Exam within the next six months. My passion is running a business that will positively change the world while growing revenues, profits and EBITDA. Graduate of the University of Phoenix College of Business and IT with a degree in Accounting, GPA 3.7. Ready to take on the challenge of my first accounting role.

If you are looking to change careers, describe how you're preparing for the change and what fascinates you about where you're headed next:

Example: Andrew, The Career Changer

Cybercrime fighter specializing in threat detection and analysis. I am combining my background in law enforcement with a bachelor's in cybersecurity from University of Phoenix. As a former military MP, I've always seen myself as a force for justice — standing up for what's right and ethical to make the online world a better place.

5 Start making connections!

CONNECT WITH PEOPLE YOU KNOW OR WANT TO KNOW

First, connect with instructors, friends and co-workers

These 1st-level connections are some of the most important — and can help you discover 2nd-level connections: people who know your colleagues, and may be willing to connect with you.

Next, seek out fellow University of Phoenix alumni

You'll already have something in common, and with over 1 million alumni, you'll have a lot of potential connections.

TIP

LinkedIn's Premium feature allows you to introduce yourself via "InMails" to people and recruiters you'd like to connect with.

Still need help?

OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO CAREER SERVICES FOR LIFE™

At University of Phoenix, our commitment to you doesn't end at graduation. Whether you're actively pursuing a degree with us or graduated long ago, you'll have access to career advisors and resources — from your first class to your last job.

You'll get access to personal career coaching, including job search planning, resumé fine-tuning, interview prepping and more. See all of your options at **phoenix.edu/career-services.**