

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Making the Most of Your LinkedIn Headline, Summary, and Connection Requests

HEADLINE

The “**Headline**” is the space on your profile right under your name, and it can say whatever you want it to say. This phrase will also appear elsewhere on the site below your name. If your headline simply reads, “Student at University X,” this doesn’t tell me a whole lot about you. You have leeway to be creative; put some personality into this. By default, LinkedIn populates your headline with your current job title and employer—and that’s precisely what a lot of people leave in there. But allowing the LinkedIn default to take charge of your headline is a missed opportunity to differentiate yourself!

Clearly identify your career interests! You get 220 characters, including spaces, for your headline. Use them wisely!

Most LinkedIn profile headlines are dull, unoriginal, hard to understand, or not relevant to your perceived value. Like a good “elevator pitch,” your headline should be clear, original, and compelling.

Headline Examples:

- Highly motivated college senior seeking full-time career opportunities related to financial planning
- Social Media | Branding | Graphic Design | Marketing
- Experienced young professional seeking opportunities in financial planning
- Non-profit Program Manager passionate about building buzz for important causes and securing the grant and donor funding to carry them out
- Emerging public relations practitioner with interests in social media and brand management
- Interior Design student at High Point University seeking a summer internship in fabric design in the New York City area
- Computer Science senior seeking entry-level programming role
- Experienced Internet Marketer | Community-Based Interactive Marketing | Social Media & Web Content Management
- Honors Marketing graduate seeking opportunity in consumer packaged goods
- Recent college graduate with extensive nonprofit experience

Headline Examples For More Creative Students:

- Copywriter who knows how to craft web content that goes viral and you’ll never beat me at Scrabble
- New High Point University grad with a journalism major and graphic arts minor looking to make a splash in online media

- Wordsmith with proven ability to translate business objectives into communications strategies and tactics

You can also choose to identify by your current job/internship title, but make sure that it's directly relevant to where you'd like to go in the future!

For example, don't have your headline read "Analyst, JPMorgan Chase" if you're looking to switch into non-profit human rights work.

Remember that this is the way that you'll be identified throughout the site, and it is the first thing that people will see upon opening your profile. Make sure that you're using the headline to your advantage

SUMMARY

Your "**Summary**" section offers a more detailed description of who you are and where you are headed. Think of this as your "elevator pitch" or the place where you can differentiate and brand yourself. Your Summary should be creative and personable and can read almost like a conversation; remember that LinkedIn is for networking! The 2,000 character limit offers unlimited possibilities, and you should take the time to craft your content carefully.

- Look at what current students, recent graduates, and young professionals have created on their profiles to get ideas for your own summary section.
- Use either paragraphs, resembling a story format, or bulleted statements.
- Have someone you trust (your career advisor, professor, parent, employer) review your summary before you add it to your profile.
- Make sure your summary is flawless in terms of grammar, spelling, etc. Proofread very carefully before you add this important narrative to your profile!

CONNECTION REQUESTS

Always customize your connection requests! It takes two minutes to come up with a customized message.

Be sure to mention what you have in common with the other person and why you'd like to connect. It can be as simple as:

"I'm a current senior at University X, your alma mater. I'm interested in pursuing a career in retail management and, given your career path, I'd love the opportunity to connect."

Even with someone you already know, maybe an internship supervisor or classmate, the invitation can be a great way to show that you value the person and also to remind him/her of your career goals.

An example:

"Lilly, how are you? I miss Marketing 509 with Professor Smith! I wanted to connect on LinkedIn so that we can help each other in our respective job searches. I am looking to pursue brand management positions in Boston. Let me know if I can be of any help to you."

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Always follow up an informational interview, phone call, or in-person meeting at a career or networking event with a request to connect on LinkedIn. You might say something like this:

“Mr. Jones, it was such a pleasure speaking with you today at the HPU Career Expo. I would love to keep in touch with you, as I am very interested in what I learned from you today about ABC Company.”

Even your HPU Career Advisor will appreciate a personal connection request! Here is a great example of one that a student sent:

“Bridget,

You spoke to my business communication class taught by Dr. Guffey recently about the importance of LinkedIn. I am trying to grow my network of connections for future opportunities and would greatly appreciate it if you would connect with me.

Best regards,
HPU Student