What is LinkedIn?
LinkedIn is a professional social networking website. It provides you with the opportunity to post a professional profile, network, research employers and apply for specific positions. As of 2016, LinkedIn has over 400 million users worldwide and over 11 million in Canada. * figures quoted are from the LinkedIn “about us” page.

Do Employers Use LinkedIn?
According to the 2014 Jobvite Social Recruiting Survey of 1855 recruiting and human resources professionals, 73% of employers use social media in their recruitment. Of these, 94% use LinkedIn and 73% of these organizations have hired candidates through LinkedIn.

How can LinkedIn Help You?
You can use LinkedIn to:
• Create a professional online profile
• Connect with your current network
• Search for and connect with new contacts by industry, educational institution (e.g. UTM Alumni), and company
• Research companies
• Participate in online groups
• Get up to date labour market information.

Privacy
Social media is a very public medium. If you chose to be online, remember the following:
• LinkedIn profiles can be reviewed by anyone. If you are concerned about displaying your information publically, LinkedIn may not be a good resource for you.
• Consider your privacy settings. Do you want your profile open to everyone or to your contacts? You can choose who can see which parts of your profile in the privacy settings section. We recommend that you keep your profile private until you have had the opportunity to complete it so that potential employers don’t see an incomplete profile.
• Keep all social media information positive and professional. Employers will frequently look at social media accounts of prospective employees.

Building a Professional Profile
The first thing that potential contacts and employers will see is your profile. An effective profile includes:
• Using a professional picture; be consistent through all your social media
• Updating your profile regularly with relevant information
• Including a powerful headline and summary
• Highlighting the elements of your academic background (e.g. school projects) that would be of interest to potential employers.
• Personalizing your LinkedIn url (e.g. https://ca.linkedin.com/in/JimmiUTM) so that you can include it on your resume
• Presenting your experience with descriptive, relevant language, including your title, summary and experience sections
• Asking for recommendations from those who can positively describe your work.
• Log into LinkedIn frequently as formatting changes regularly. Ensure that your information is up to date with the current format.

LinkedIn profile tips are available at www.help.linkedin.com and www.university.linkedin.com. Once you have completed your profile, you can have it critiqued in the Career Centre.

Featuring Your Work
Providing samples of your work can enhance your profile significantly. LinkedIn allows you to add samples as documents, videos, links and presentations.
To add samples of your work:
• Select "Edit Profile"
• At the bottom of each experience and education entry, select “Add Media”

Remember to seek permission of your employer (or team members) before you post anything in this section in case there are any confidentiality or copyright issues.
Inviting Your Current Contacts

- **Personalize your invitations.** LinkedIn gives you the opportunity to mass mail invitations or to personalize them. It is recommended that you personalize each invitation reminding the contact who you are and why you would like to connect with them.
- **Add contacts from other social media networks.** Some of the people that you know on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter could be valuable networking contacts.
- **Import your contacts from your email.** Doing this step can help you establish your first set of contacts, and eventually allow you to extend your network beyond just your mutual friends.
- **Treat your connections the way you would like to be treated.** This means respecting their time, thanking them for their help and staying in touch, it’s important to avoid contacting people only when you need help.

Searching for Contacts

LinkedIn’s search results will let you know if/how you are connected to an individual. A 1st-degree contact is someone to whom you are already connected 2nd level connection is someone to whom you have a mutual contact.

Networking on LinkedIn

- **Search companies that you have an interest to see if you have any mutual contacts.** If you have a strong relationship with a mutual contact, consider contacting them and requesting that they introduce you to see if the new contact is willing to conduct an information interview.
- **Used the Advanced Search Feature to look for UTM alumni.** When you click “Advanced Search” in the Contact section, you can search by company or school. For example, if you are interested in working at ABC Inc., you can enter the company name and University of Toronto Mississauga (in the education field) to see if there are any UTM Alumni working there. You can then contact the UTM Alumnus and ask for advice.
- **Monitor and participate in group discussions.** You can learn a great deal about your career area/industry by listening to these professionals and asking relevant questions.
- **View the connections of your connections.** People you know maybe connected to people in your career area; if so, ask your connections for an introduction (remember, personalize requests, explaining why this connection could be helpful).
- **Ask for advice. Not for a job.** Advice and information can help you understand what a career is really like and what you need to do to be competitive when you graduate. As you establish connections, you can ask about potential opportunities and hiring/recruitment practices, but not for someone to tell you where the jobs are. Please review the Information Interview Tipsheet for tips on the types of questions to ask.

Maintaining Your Relationships

- **Always Thank Anyone Who Helps.** Send thank you notes each time you speak with someone outlining how they helped you.
- **Keep Your Requests Reasonable.** While many people are happy to help, you don’t want to overload anyone.
- **Give Back.** Remember that networking is two way. If you find an article or other information that you think a contact would value, forward it.
- **Update Your Contacts.** Periodically update your contacts to let them know how you are doing. This way, you are not only contacting them when you need something.

Finding Career and Employment Information

- **Company Search.** LinkedIn can be especially helpful if you know of an organization that interests you already. Simply search for the organization in LinkedIn and you can find stats on the company, current employees, former employees, as well as their past or current position within the company. A number of organizations have begun posting their positions on LinkedIn.
- **Job Listings.** LinkedIn allows you to do an Advanced Search of jobs which includes job level (e.g. entry-level). These positions often have the name of the recruiter listed which allows you to contact them with any questions.
- **Industry Information.** There are many industry-related groups on LinkedIn. Join groups in the industries in which you are most interested to learn about trends and interesting events.

Blogging on LinkedIn

LinkedIn allows you to post blog entries (using WordPress). Professional blogs can be a great way to demonstrate your professional knowledge and writing skills.
- **Decide if your blog is personal or professional and link accordingly**
- **Make sure you don’t blog inappropriately about your employer (you might need to seek permission from your employer to continue posting).**
- Further information available at [https://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/47538](https://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/47538)