

Original Paper

Using LinkedIn to Teach Students How to Build Their Professional Network and Enhance their Personal Brand

Katryna M. Johnson¹

¹ Department of Marketing, Supply Chain Operations Management and International Business, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis, MN, U.S.A

Received: May 15, 2021

Accepted: May 26, 2021

Online Published: June 3, 2021

doi:10.22158/grhe.v4n2p83

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/grhe.v4n2p83>

Abstract

The majority of hiring managers use social media to find, screen, and eliminate job applicants. Students need to understand the short- and long-term effects of what they post on line. Instructors need to teach students to actively promote and curate a positive image in an online environment. Personal branding focuses on portraying oneself, one's competencies and experiences in a positive light. Since LinkedIn is the most used professional networking platform, it is essential that students not only create a profile but learn to include the essential information that employers are seeking. The author performed a literature review on personal branding, social networking and factors needed to have a successful LinkedIn profile. Based on these findings, a LinkedIn assignment was developed for students to help them build their personal brands and increase their visibility on the web. The author conducted a content analysis of over 150 student reflections on the LinkedIn assignment and found the top three benefits of the LinkedIn assignment to be: building a network, designing a great profile, and finding/receiving job and internship offers. This paper contributes to research by providing a specific assignment that any faculty can use to teach students how to brand themselves on LinkedIn.

Keywords

personal branding, LinkedIn, social network, professional network

1. Introduction

The act of presenting oneself in a positive manner to obtain a job interview and to impress a potential employer during said interview has long been established. Today, students have many opportunities to shape their presence on the Internet even before a potential employer may encounter the applicant. Professional social networking sites such as LinkedIn provide students with the opportunity to present their skills, accomplishments and resume before ever approaching an employer.

Employers are increasingly using social media to screen employees (Curtin, 2021). Students can stand out by presenting themselves in a professional manner and by promoting their accomplishments and skills. Students must keep in mind that employers notice the negative content on a potential employee's postings on the web. Teaching students how to effectively portray themselves on the web is a critical skill in today's hiring environment.

According to a survey by CareerBuilder, a full 70 percent of employers "use social media to screen candidates before hiring" (Curtin, 2021, p. 5). Even more striking is the following statistic: "54 percent of employers surveyed said they chose not to hire a candidate based on content found on their social media profile(s)" (Curtin, 2021, p. 6). One study found that up to 90% of employers use social media to review job applicants (Rathore, 2020). Another study indicated that the dominant sites used to screen applicants were Facebook and LinkedIn (Hood et al., 2014). LinkedIn was used more to search for viable candidates while Facebook was more likely to be used "later during the search process to exclude candidates if profiles contained content that detracted from the candidate's character or ability to discern what is appropriate for public consumption" (Hood et al., 2014, p. 38).

Students, therefore, need to understand what they should and shouldn't do on social media. Posting inappropriate photos/videos or information, posting information on drinking/drugs, and making discriminatory comments made-up the top three reasons employers didn't hire an applicant based on social media postings (Curtin, 2021; Hood et al., 2014). If an individual chooses not to have a social media presence, this can also cause negative perceptions. "Nearly half of employers (47 percent) say that if they can't find a job candidate online, they are less likely to call that person in for an interview" (Nikravan Hayes, 2018, p. 4). Conversely, employers were more likely to hire applicants when the individual's social media profile portrayed information "that supported professional qualifications, demonstrated great communication skills and portrayed a professional image" (Curtin, 2021, p. 12).

Hood, Robles and Hopkins (2014) interviewed hiring managers who indicated that the most sought-after skills included problem solving, time management, teamwork, computer, interpersonal, showing initiative, decision making, creativity, and oral communication. Hood, Robles and Hopkins (2014) also determined the most important criteria that recruiters look at when viewing a LinkedIn Profile. These criteria included having individuals provide a complete job history, list of relevant skills, complete education information, a summary bio, list of skills (and endorsements for the skills), a career objective, relevant coursework listed, and a professional picture.

As the relevance of personal branding online has increased, educators must educate their students about personal branding in an online environment. Additionally, students need to understand the importance of having their personal brand communicated in a positive manner through professional social networking sites. This paper will discuss the significance of personal branding, developing a professional network and using LinkedIn to accomplish these objectives.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Personal Branding

Personal branding involves a conscious effort to maintain an image in person and online. Students need to be aware of what they are communicating with others through non-verbal and verbal communication. Maintaining a strong positive personal brand involves a consistent effort to market oneself to others (Edmiston, 2014; Gehl, 2011; Hearn, 2008; Johnson, 2017; McKorkle & McKorkle, 2012; Peters, 1997; Rampersad, 2011; Shepherd, 2005; Vitelar, 2019).

Personal branding encompasses communicating one's strengths, skills, abilities and career goals to others in an ongoing process (Peters, 1997). To develop a personal brand, students need to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses, how others perceive them, their life and work experiences, their communication abilities and their sense of style (Hood et al., 2014). Furthermore, students' need to consider industry norms and expectations in deciding how to present themselves online and in person (Hood et al., 2014).

Due to the ever-increasing usage of social media and social networking, students need to be taught the strategic importance of managing their own brand on a continual basis (Curtin, 2021; Edmiston, 2014; Hood et al., 2014; Peters, 1997; McKorkle & McKorkle, 2012; Rampersad, 2009). As individuals go through life, their experiences and skills will change. When individuals develop new competencies, they need to update their personal brand especially in an online environment (Rampersad, 2009).

Having a personal brand that stands out from the competition when trying to find a job is essential (Harris & Rae, 2011; McKeon, 2020; Vitelar, 2019; Welsh, 2020). Since today much of an employment search is conducted on the Internet, it is important that a person's web profiles be professional and polished (McKeon, 2020). As educators, it is essential that we teach students the about the significance of establishing and maintaining their personal brand. Part of the development of the personal brand involves an understanding of social networking.

2.2 Social Networking

Social networking involves interactions with personal and business relations to build a network of contacts. Social networks allow communication to be interchanged and information shared. In today's world of technology, transmission of ideas can easily be shared through the plethora of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn (Edmiston, 2014; Lakshminarasimha & Vijayan, 2008; Lucero-Romero & Arias-Bolzmann, 2020). Social networks and communities are formed based on similarities of interest, professions, and hobbies. In the realm of social networks on the Internet, individuals build profiles of themselves, and connect to individuals they know and with whom they want to be connected. People can then use these connections to build additional connections in the process of seeking relationships, advice or jobs.

2.3 LinkedIn

While many platforms exist for social media, LinkedIn is the top professional social networking site. "With nearly 740 million users, LinkedIn has changed the way professionals network. The platform

allows you to apply for jobs and connect with former co-workers and like-minded professionals” (Balkhi, 2021, p. 2). Linked is beneficial because it allows individuals to create profiles that contains their expertise, skills, work experiences and career goals (Balkhi, 2021; Curtin, 2021; Doyle, 2021; McKorkle & McKorkle, 2012; Stoller, 2021). Additionally, LinkedIn allows users to seek recommendations from others in order to build credibility (Bautista, 2021; Chan, 2021; Doyle, 2021; Rycraft, 2018). Furthermore, LinkedIn allows individuals to make connections with individuals they have never met in order to build their network.

93% of recruiters use LinkedIn to research and recruit candidates. LinkedIn allows you to have an online personal brand which makes you visible to key decision makers and recruiters. This means when your name is put into a search engine such as google, you have an online personal brand and you are appearing in search results (Rycraft, 2018, p. 3).

2.3.1 LinkedIn Guidelines for a Successful Profile

Past studies have enumerated key factors for building a LinkedIn profile (Arruda, 2013; Balkhi, 2021; Bremner & Phung, 2015; Curtin, 2021; Doyle, 2021; Heath, 2017; Hood et al., 2014; “How to Make, 2021; Johnson, 2017; Kellogg, 2020; Labreque et al., 2010; McKorkle & McKorkle, 2012; Moran, 2021; Rampersad, 2001). These factors include:

- Having a professional profile picture
- Defining who you are and what you want in profile summary
- Developing storytelling skills
- Showcasing accomplishments/skills/work
- Using keywords throughout profile
- Being authentic and consistent
- Posting meaningful and engaging content
- Keeping profile updated and active
- Asking others for recommendations
- Performing spell check and grammar check on profile
- Building a network
- Commenting and sharing information posted by contacts within network

2.3.1.1 Having a Professional Profile Photo

I have been using a class assignment on LinkedIn for five years. During this time, I have realized that many students do not understand what it means to have a professional looking photo. I tell students that they do not need to pay money for a photographer, but that they need to keep the photo professional. Still, some students choose to post a profile picture with their pet or significant other, wear clothes that appear like they are on vacation, and wear hats/glasses that obscure the view of their face. To decrease the likelihood of this occurring, I have links and comments on the assignment to assist students with developing an appropriate and professional looking profile page, but still have found it necessary to elucidate what is meant by a professional looking photo. I have provided students with a summary of

requirements found in an article by Kellogg (2020, p. 20) that nicely summarizes expectations. Students should keep these things in mind when selecting a profile photo:

- Profile should include face and/or shoulders. No extreme closeup of face or full-length picture.
- Photo should be crystal clear and unpixelated.
- Person should not wear hats, sunglasses or any other obscuring accessories.
- Smile.
- Have great lighting.
- Do not use a selfie (or at least something that you can tell is a selfie).
- Don't have anyone else in your picture.
- Dress professionally.

2.3.1.2 Profile Summaries

Typically, 10-20% of students in my classes forget to include a summary statement. I instruct students to create a statement that highlights their skills, work experience and goals. Recently, I started providing examples of how to write a summary statement that will entice employers. A recent article suggests "People don't want to know about your accomplishments. Instead, they want to know how your experience can help them. So, rewrite your LinkedIn About section to present your expertise to show how you can help your customer or others" (Moran, 2021, p. 12).

2.3.1.3 Developing storytelling skills

Moran (2021, p. 15) suggests that students develop their storytelling skills to transmit ideas.

People listen to and become engaged in stories. So, transform your fact-based pitch or presentation into a story. If you provide some relatable context to help your audience "get it" more efficiently, you will increase your brand's positioning by appealing to a broader audience (Moran, 2021, p. 15).

2.3.1.4 Showcasing Work

Vitellar (2019) found that social media profiles can be used to showcase students' skills, personalities and passions. By highlighting their accomplishments, students are able to demonstrate how they are distinctive from other potential applicants of a job. All of the marketing majors at my university will have course projects on real companies that they can display to promote their abilities. I always encourage students to publish the projects they are proud of on LinkedIn.

2.3.1.5 Using Keywords throughout Profile

Employers use keywords in their search to find qualified applicants. Students need to spend time searching through job descriptions and job advertisements to determine what key skills are needed for desired jobs. If the student possesses these skills, it is important that they highlight these skills using appropriate terminology on their profiles (Balkhi, 2021; Heath, 2017; Hood et al., 2017).

2.3.1.6 Be Authentic and Consistent

Students should post information that is accurate and true (Rampersad, 2001). If a person posts that they have skill such as good oral and written communication, but then has trouble answering questions, seems

flustered in an interview, or has grammar problems throughout a cover letter, the employer will question other aspects of that person's profile.

2.3.1.7 Posting Meaningful and Engaging Content

Bautista (2021, p. 11) identifies seven forms of content that can be shared: "Free e-books, checklists or worksheets, Live webinars, LinkedIn Live events, On-demand webinars, Free consultations, Virtual LinkedIn Local events and Free live coaching sessions". Bautista (2021, p. 11) recommends that not only should individuals share significant content with others, but that they should create their own content that is engaging. Balkhi (2021, p. 14) suggests that individuals post "interesting and educational content that they own" to demonstrate knowledge or expertise in a field.

2.3.1.8 Keeping Profile Updated and Active

It is important for students to not to let their profile become outdated (Arruda, 2013). If some has changed jobs, the individual needs to make sure to update the profile to reflect the new position. If a person has been promoted, then they should make sure to list the new position and the new responsibilities.

2.3.1.9 Asking Others for Recommendations

Written recommendations on LinkedIn help build a student's credibility. Students can ask for recommendations from professors or from their job experiences (Balkhi, 2021; Doyle, 2021; Moran, 2021). When making a request for a recommendation, it is important to include a summary of accomplishments to make it easier for a person to give a recommendation (Doyle, 2021).

2.3.1.10 Performing Spell Check and Grammar Check on Profile

Many job postings list oral and written communication as a required skill for a position. A profile that demonstrates organization and clear communication, makes a good first impression (Moran, 2021; Peterson, 2019). "When a worker writes well, she demonstrates courtesy, attention to detail and intelligence. In addition, employees who have good written communication skills benefit their company by ensuring quality communications with clients, prospects and other outside interests" (Peterson, 2019, p. 2). Conversely, poor communication has many negative connotations.

On the other hand, misspellings, poorly organized thoughts and grammatical errors make the writer appear unintelligent and unprofessional. At the application or interview stage, this could cost a worker a job offer or result in a salary offer that is lower than what it might have been otherwise (Peterson, 2019, p. 3).

2.3.1.11 Building a Network

When requesting a connection on LinkedIn, it is a good idea to include a personal note of introduction rather than just sending an invite (Balkhi, 2021; Kellogg, 2020; Li, 2018; Moran, 2021; Proctor, 2021). "Invite past and current coworkers, classmates, friends and family to connect. Be sure to add these 3 things to your customized invitations: the person's name, a personal message, and thank you" (LinkedIn for networking, 2021, p. 2). Searching for alumni from one's university is also a good way to find connections.

Another suggestion is for students to request an informational interview with a connection (LinkedIn for networking, 2021). Informational interviews allow a student to learn about a company and different positions. Students can also join groups that are related to their field of interest (Balkhi, 2021; Kellogg, 2020). Balkhi (2021) points out that just joining isn't enough, students must interact with other individuals in the group.

2.3.1.12 Commenting and Sharing Information Posted within Network

By sharing content, students are helping others build their networks. Commenting allows people outside an individual's network to become aware of the individual and potentially invite that person into their network (Balkhi, 2021).

2.4 LinkedIn Assignment

Students are asked to develop a LinkedIn profile with the following criteria: a professional photo, a summary statement on career goals, skills, work experience and a resume. Students are required to connect to the instructor, to 5 students from class, to join/follow at least 2 marketing groups and to connect with the university Career Center. The Linked Assignment is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. LinkedIn Assignment

<p>This week you will apply concepts in the text. Join LinkedIn and start a basic profile.</p> <p>Please view video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qG4NF-2tt4c</p> <p>You should have a professional looking photo in your profile. In your photo you should smile, not have anyone else in the picture, not wear sunglasses or a hat, show only your face & shoulders, have good lighting, and dress professionally. Please review this link on https://www.searchenginejournal.com/social-media/linkedin-personal-brand/#close</p> <p>In addition to your professional looking photo (you don't need to pay for this just look professional and not casual as this is a business site), you should have your name, summary statement on career goals (the "About" section), information on your skills, education, work experience including job description and education. In the Accomplishment section, make sure to list relevant courses to your major as this will help when employers search for potential candidates for a job. Do not list the course number as this won't mean anything to an employer, just list course titles such as Buyer Behavior or Integrated Marketing Communications. If you have a resume, please post it on LinkedIn as we want to get you started on building your professional profile.</p> <p>Post your profile URL to this discussion area by 7:00 p.m. 2/17. If you have a profile, but do not post the URL to this discussion area, you will not earn points.</p> <p>Connect with me by 7:00 p.m. 2/17 at https://www.linkedin.com/in/xxx. Post that you have connected with me.</p> <p>Connect with at least 5 people in the class to start building your network by 7:00 p.m. 2/11. List the 5 people from class in this forum in your thread by 7:00 p.m. 2/19. Please do not edit your original post</p>

as it won't show up as new. Reply to your first post with your URL and then list the names. Connect with Career Center <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/xxx/> by 2/11. Find at least 2 marketing groups to follow such as “Social Media Marketing” or “eMarketing Association” by 7:00 p.m. 2/11. You can also search for groups. Post (list) the groups to the weekly discussion area to make it easy for everyone to find good groups to follow by 7:00 2/11. You can find some example groups for Marketing on my page by going to “Interests” then click “See All” then click “Groups”.

Typically, about 20-30% of students already have a basic LinkedIn profile. The profiles vary in how much information is provided. The students who already have a profile edit their profiles to include required information while those without profiles, build new ones. Early feedback is given if students have forgotten to include any component of the profile and students have time to edit their profiles before the final due date.

3. Method

At the end of the semester, students were asked to reflect upon using LinkedIn for the class. The reflection paper asks students to discuss if they found the LinkedIn assignment helpful and if they currently use or plan to use LinkedIn in the future.

A content analysis was performed on over 150 student reflection papers. Qualitative research allows for in-depth analysis on a topic and does not limit what students can say in their feedback. Qualitative analysis was deemed most appropriate to allow for a breadth of responses from students since they are from a very diverse background. The university population has 59% female students, 50% students of color, 3% international students and an average age of 30.

The content analysis of students' feedback on the assignment revealed three major categories of benefits LinkedIn usage: building a network, designing a great profile, and finding/receiving internship and job offers. An excerpt of quotations from student papers is provided for each category.

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Student Feedback on the LinkedIn Assignment—Building a Network

I believe the LinkedIn assignment serves as a major stepping stone for students who have not yet ventured the world of networking, professional self-branding, and career exploration. Personally, I was already on LinkedIn, however, the assignment enabled me to connect to peers in the same field of study which has the potential of fruition in the form of professional relationships and ventures.

I did find the LinkedIn assignment to be helpful because it taught me how to make a profile first and foremost and then how to connect and network with others. It is something that I will continue to use especially since it is a great workspace to find open positions at companies, network with people already within companies and join groups and can aid in career opportunities.

I enjoyed connecting with my fellow classmates as it gave me a better sense of where others are compared to me in their schooling and professional life. Utilizing this network can only help each student toward finding a job in the future.

Creating the LinkedIn profile was extremely helpful. I have already made several connections and am looking forward to the opportunities that will come from it. This is probably the best thing I have gotten from this class. I never knew just how helpful it could be to have one. Hopefully this will open many doors for me as I move on in the business world.

3.1.2 Student Feedback on the LinkedIn Assignment—Designing a Great Profile

We were instructed on what the different sections on your profile are for and where recruiters tended to look first. This class assignment of filling out our profiles was helpful to me. It forced me to update everything and I made more connections out of the assignment which was great.

I found the LinkedIn project we did early in the semester to be quite helpful. I had not set up a LinkedIn account prior to this assignment, and I was actually having a bit of anxiety about it. Being a 39-year-old who has worked serving tables for the last decade and a half, I am a little nervous about my lack of professional work experience. Not having a LinkedIn profile was almost a symbol of my anxiety to my late entrance into the business world. Not only did the assignment force me to finally create a profile, it allowed me to explore the platform and helped me get over my silly apprehension.

I do think the LinkedIn activity was beneficial. This way when looking for jobs in the future we already have a base profile, and until then we can add to it. I do this with my resume as well, so then I will never forget any information or jobs/experiences.

3.1.3 Student Feedback on LinkedIn Assignment—Finding/Receiving Internship and Job Offers

I found the LinkedIn assignment super helpful on a personal scale because making connections is important in the business realm. It also gave me the opportunity to research internships for the summer that I would not have found anywhere else. LinkedIn is a great platform and I never realized until this assignment. Social media and technology are the future, so having your resume online is practical and useful to many.

LinkedIn was something I never took seriously until I took this class and it was a required assignment. I am thankful that I got a chance to do this assignment because after starting to check it and update my portfolio, I have gotten 2 job offers, that I had to decline due to being out of state but I did get an internship offer that I have applied to and hopefully get. Overall, I think it's a good networking website that can open doors for people and help your network grow.

One of the best assignments I have had in my college career was to create a LinkedIn profile. Had I known what a great tool it is, I would have gotten one years ago. I now use it consistently as I try to make up for lost time and build my network. I was unaware of the job search abilities LinkedIn provides as well. I have already applied for a few internships with the simple click of a button. I have been encouraging friends who don't have a LinkedIn to get connected. This is an incredible networking site that all working professionals should be connected with and take advantage of.

I like that other employers can get in contact with you via direct messaging and reach out to apply at their company.

I really enjoyed the fact that we had to make a LinkedIn account as one of our assignment because not only is it getting us ready for when we are looking to seal the career of our dreams but it also gave me time to get to know some of my peers and what their interests and experiences involved. The number of jobs and job descriptions that are listed on LinkedIn application is incredible it really shows that there is a whole sea of opportunity when one is just going through the pages. In conclusion I felt that I learned the most from the discussions and enjoyed looking at what my peers had to say.

4. Discussion

Every semester I have used the LinkedIn assignment, I have found that some students have created superior profiles. When this happens, I ask students if I can use their profile as an example for the class. The profiles I choose have an excellent summary statement, clear career goals, job experience with bullets that highlight responsibilities, examples of work and or school experience, multiple groups that they follow related to their field, a personalized cover photo and a professional looking photo of themselves.

I do find that not all students follow the instructions for the LinkedIn assignment. The most common oversights students make are not using a professional picture, not listing responsibilities for a job and not providing a summary statement. Students are given the opportunity to fix the omissions so that the profile can be improved before the final due date.

I provide students with examples of how to write job descriptions and also provide links such as <https://www.topresume.com/career-advice/server-job-description>. I have found that some students have no job experience. In Table 2, I have provided some helpful links for these students. Additionally, due to COVID, more students than usual were out of work so I provided some direction for them with a helpful link.

Table 2. Helpful Links for Students with No Job Experience or Who Are Out of Work

Just in case you don't have job experience, take a look at these links on what you might do on your LinkedIn profile

<https://people.acciona.com/professional-development/no-work-experience-heres-optimize-linkedin-profile/>

<https://yr.media/tech/you-should-have-a-linkedin-account-even-if-you-have-no-work-experience/>

<https://davidjpfisher.com/2014/04/07/linkedin-profile-advice-millennials/>

Some general tips on creating a good LinkedIn profile can be found at

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-to-make-a-better-linkedin-profile-2062332>

<https://www.inc.com/amy-george/recruiters-will-ignore-your-linkedin-profile-if-its-missing-these-2->

things.html

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-tips-students-new-grads-linkedin-omar-garriott/>

<https://www.topresume.com/career-advice/10-ways-to-create-a-winning-linkedin-profile>

What if you are currently unemployed?

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-to-put-on-linkedin-when-you-re-unemployed-2062318>

For any instructor planning to create a LinkedIn assignment, I have several recommendations.

1. Provide students with examples of good LinkedIn profiles
2. Discuss what type of information should go into each section of a profile
3. Provide resources on how to develop a good profile
4. Provide students with resources on professionalism
5. Encourage students to connect to alumni
6. Require students to connect with their school's career center

5. Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This paper has discussed the importance of personal branding and professional social networking. Further, the paper provided a specific example of how to assist students in building their professional personal brand. A limitation to this research is that it was conducted in a marketing class. While there were students from communications and other business majors, future research should include assisting students from other disciplines in building their personal brand and professional networks.

References

- Arruda, W. (2013). 9 reasons you must update your LinkedIn profile today. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2013/11/25/9-reasons-why-you-must-update-your-linkedin-profile-today/>
- Balkhi, S. (2021, April 22). Using LinkedIn to build a professional network. In *Business.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.business.com/articles/linkedin-networking-tips/>
- Bautista, V. (2021, March 21). 7 posting tips to help boost your personal brand on LinkedIn. In *Social Media Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/7-posting-tips-to-help-boost-your-personal-brand-on-linkedin/597084/>
- Bremner, S., & Phung, B. (2015, December). Learning from the experts: An analysis of resume writers self-presentation on LinkedIn. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 58(4), 367-380.
- Chan, T. H. (2021). LinkedIn for networking, career building & Job search. *Harvard*. Retrieved from <https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2017/08/Published-LinkedIn-Guide-SW-5-2-17.pdf>

- Curtin, M. (2020, January 9). 54 Percent of employers have eliminated a candidate based on social media. Time to clean up your feed (and tags). Do your profiles tell the right story? In *INC*. Retrieved from <https://www.inc.com/melanie-curtin/54-percent-of-employers-have-eliminated-a-candidate-based-on-social-media-time-to-clean-up-your-feed-and-tags.html>
- Doyle, A. (2021, January 13). How to ask for a recommendation on LinkedIn. *The Balance Careers*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-get-linkedin-recommendations-2062316>
- Edmiston, D. (2014). Creating a personal competitive advantage by developing a professional online presence. *Marketing Education Review*, 4(1), 21-24.
- Harris, L., & Rae, A. (2011). Building a personal brand through social networking. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 32(5), 14-21.
- Hearn, A. (2008, July). Meat, masks, burden: Probing the contours of the branded self. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 8(2), 197-217.
- Heath, T. (2017, April 3). How to rock your LinkedIn profile and build your personal brand. In *LinkedIn*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-rock-your-linkedin-profile-build-personal-brand-tyrona-ty-heath/>
- Hood, K. M., Robles, M., & Hopkins, C. D. (2014). Personal branding and social media for students in today's competitive job market. *Journal of Research in Business Education*, 56(2), 33-47.
- How to make the best use Of LinkedIn and virtual networking opportunities. (2021, February 19). In *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/theyec/2021/02/19/how-to-make-the-best-use-of-linkedin-and-virtual-networking-opportunities/?sh=3a9f652b5629>
- Johnson, K. (2017). The importance of personal branding in social media: Educating students to create and manage their personal brand. *International Journal of Education and Social Science*, 4(1), 21-27.
- Kellogg, K. (2020, Feb 5). 15 ways to boost your personal brand on LinkedIn. *Search Engine Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/social-media/linkedin-personal-brand/#close>
- Labreque, L. I., Markos, E., & Milne, G. R. (2011, February). Online personal branding: Processes, challenges and implications. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(1), 37-50.
- Lakshminarasimha, A., & Vijayan, A. (2008, August). Value chain analysis: Social networking communities. *ICFAI Journal of Marketing Management*, 7(3), 34-42.

- Li, L. (2018, November 23). How to build (and maintain) an effective LinkedIn network. In *Fast Company*. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90265127/how-to-build-and-maintain-an-effective-linkedin-network>
- Lucero-Romero, G., & Arias-Bolzmann, L. G. (2020, March). Millennials' use of online social networks for job search: The Ecuadorian case. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(3), 359-368.
- McCorkle, D. E., & McCorkle, Y. L. (2012, Summer). Using LinkedIn in the marketing classroom: Exploratory insights and recommendations for teaching social networking. *Marketing Education Review*, 22(2), 157-166.
- McKeon, K. (2020, April 28). 5 personal branding tips for your job search. In *The manifest*. <https://themanifest.com/digital-marketing/5-personal-branding-tips-job-search>
- Moran, G. (2021, January 11). 10 tips to fix your personal branding on social media in 2021. In *Business 2 Community*. Retrieved from <https://www.business2community.com/social-media/10-tips-to-fix-your-personal-branding-on-social-media-in-2021-02375762>
- Nikravan Hayes, L. (2018). More than half of employers have found content on social media that caused them not to hire a candidate. In *Career Builder*. Retrieved from <http://press.careerbuilder.com/2018-08-09-More-Than-Half-of-Employers-Have-Found-Content-on-Social-Media-That-Caused-Them-NOT-to-Hire-a-Candidate-According-to-Recent-CareerBuilder-Survey>
- Peters, T. (1997). The brand called you. *Fast Company*, 10, 83-89.
- Peterson, L. (2019, February 12). The importance of good writing skills in the workplace. *Small Business Chronicle*. Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-good-writing-skills-workplace-10931.html>
- Rampersad, H.K. (2001). Authentic personal branding. *Brand Channel*. Retrieved from http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=1360
- Rathore, S. (2020, July 22). 90% of employers consider an applicant's social media activity during hiring process. *Small Business Trends*. <https://smallbiztrends.com/2020/05/social-media-screening.html>
- Rycraft, S. (2018, May 24). 7 benefits of using LinkedIn. *LinkedIn*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/7-benefits-using-linkedin-sarah-rycraft/>
- Shepherd, I. D. H. (2005, July). From cattle and Coke to Charlie: Meeting the challenge of self-marketing and personal branding. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 21(5/6), 589-606.
- Stoller, K. (2021, March 30). Job seekers, LinkedIn will guarantee your next interview—If you can pass a test. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kristinstoller/2021/03/30/this-new-linkedin-feature-guarantees-candidates-a-job-interview-after-this-one-task/?sh=3f33bee927a3>

- Vitelar, A. (2019, June). Like me: Generation Z and the use of social media for personal branding. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy*, 7(2), 257-268.
- Welsh, J. (2020, January 1). *Personal Branding in 2020: A guide to personal branding in 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/guide-linkedin-personal-branding-2020-justin-welsh/>