LinkedIn Guide

Traditionally, LinkedIn has been viewed as a modern-day Rolodex of professional contacts. The social network was built to allow users to build and nurture a personal network of contacts for job hunting. As LinkedIn has grown and evolved, it has become a way for people to build their "professional brand."

LinkedIn users can now share and publish articles on the network to help enhance their personal brand and position themselves as a "thought leader" in a particular industry.

Why use Linkedin?
Unlike Facebook where you connect and engage with your personal friends, LinkedIn provides you a way to:
- Display your "professional brand" to the world.
    - Résumés have been replaced to a large extent by your digital presence.
    - Recruiters, colleagues, journalists, and peers use it to find you.
    - Your LinkedIn profile typically ranks high in search engine rankings.
- Build a professional network.
- Follow companies and people of interest.
- Engage with peers on topics of shared interest (LinkedIn Groups).
- Find answers to questions.

For the AAFP, your LinkedIn profile:
- Increases your name recognition.
- Supplements your AAFP biography.
- Provides an opportunity, by listing the AAFP and your role on its board of directors, to personify our organization in a positive way.

How do I start using LinkedIn?
1. Go to LinkedIn (http://linkedin.com).
2. Sign up for a new account.
3. Complete your profile.

After entering your name, email address, and preferred password, you will be prompted for additional information in order to create your profile.

Providing your email address will allow you to be located (by email address) and also allow others to contact you. It is recommended that you **not** skip entering your email.
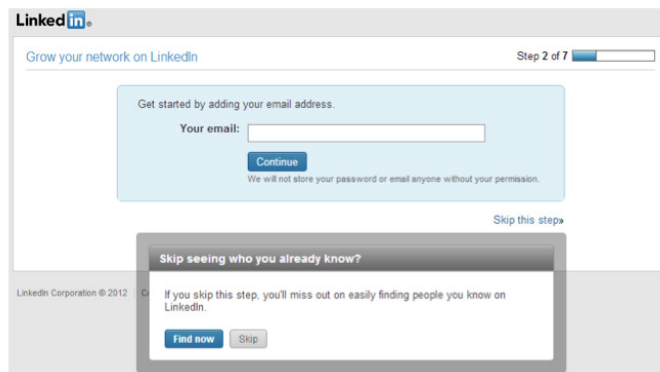
A confirmation email will be sent to the email address you entered. Click *Confirm my* (e.g., Google) *Account* to proceed.
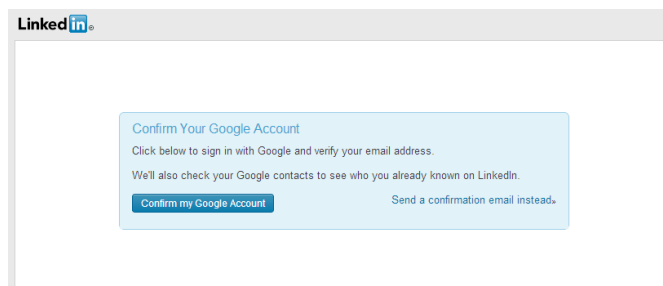
Building your Network
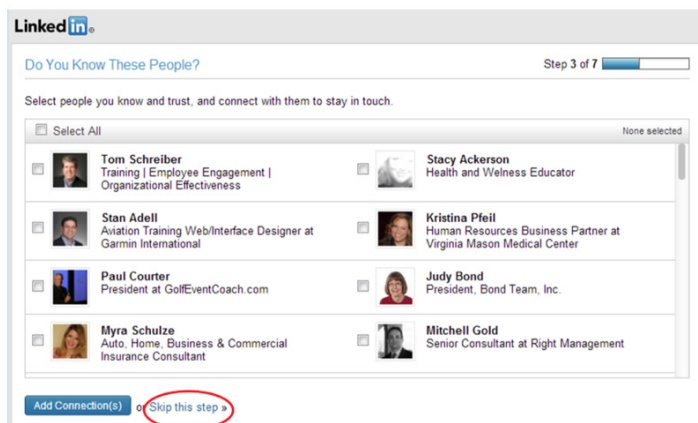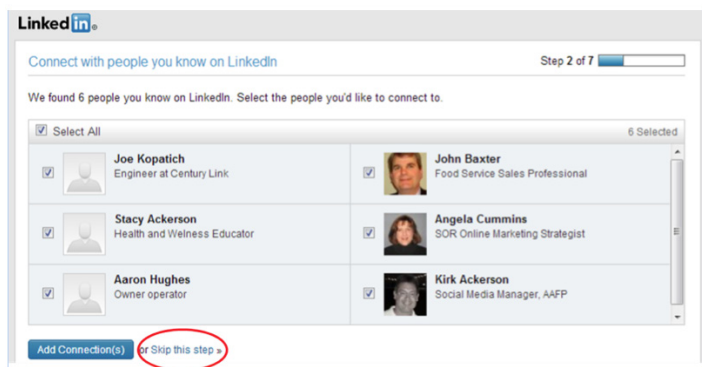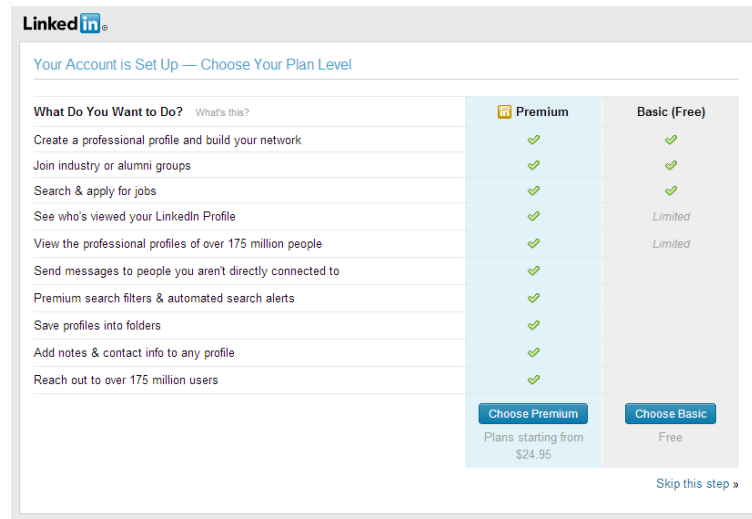The next few screens will prompt you to connect with others in order to build your network. While we encourage you to build your network right away, if you wish to skip these steps and do this later, simply click *Skip this step.*

Congratulations!
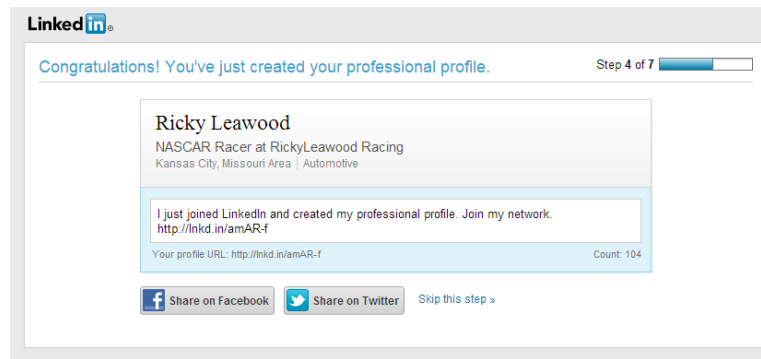
You can choose whether to purchase a premium account or a basic (free) account. If you skip this step, a basic account will be set up. Note that you can upgrade your account to premium at any time.
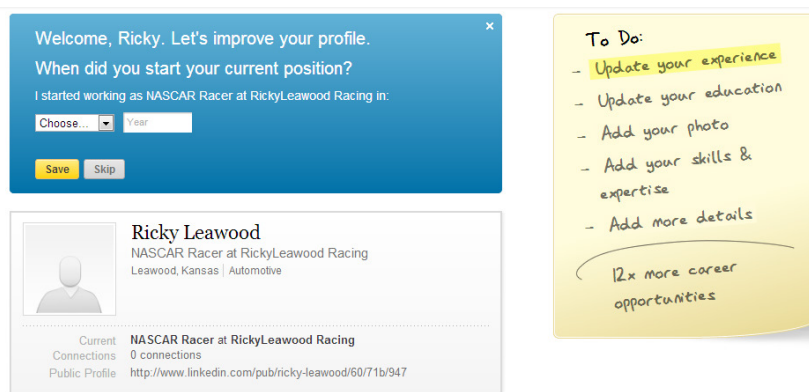
Now that your account is set up, take the time to complete your profile.

Please note that you are in control of what information to add and how to present yourself. It is not recommended that you simply copy and paste your résumé, but rather focus on achievements and keywords that are relevant to your field. These keywords are searchable on LinkedIn and via search engines such as Google. If you need inspiration, look at a peer's profile for ideas.

How LinkedIn Search works

When people search LinkedIn, the results are sorted by relevance:

1. 1st level connections with profiles that are 100% complete (or close to it) and have the most in-common connections/ shared groups, ranked in descending order

   a) 1st level connections with the fewest in-common connections/ shared groups, ranked in descending order by profile completeness

      i) 2nd level connections ranked in descending order by profile completeness

         (1) 3rd level connections ranked in descending order by profile completeness

            (a) Shared group members (outside of your network), ranked in descending order by profile completeness

               (i) Everyone else (those outside your network), ranked in descending order by profile completeness

2. Keywords in your name, headline, company name, job title, and skills rank higher in the search results than keywords in other sections.

3. Using all fields and options available to you (e.g., joining LinkedIn Groups) boosts your ranking.

4. Use a variety of keywords and terms in describing what you do will allow you to show up in a variety of search results.

5. View LinkedIn search trends to see how many times you've shown up in search results and how many people have viewed your profile over the past three months, and then adjust your profile as needed.

Tips

- Make sure your profile is public.
- Claim your vanity URL (especially if you have a common name).
- Upload a professional headshot.
- Have a descriptive headline.
  - Your headline, by default, displays your current job. Make the job title descriptive, because the first pieces of information people will see are your name, photo, and headline. We recommend adding your AAFP board title.

Robert Wergin MD
President, American Academy of Family Physicians
Milford, Nebraska | Medical Practice

Current — American Academy of Family Physicians, AAFP Board of Directors, Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians
Education — University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Send a message

458
connections

- Share relevant articles periodically. Your network will appreciate it, and it raises awareness of your professional profile. This also establishes you as a thought leader.
- Think before you accept a request to connect. You are under no obligation to accept a request to connect to another LinkedIn member. In fact, it is a violation of LinkedIn's User Agreement to invite someone into your network whom you don't personally know. In certain circumstances, however, connecting to someone you don't know may make sense.
  — What's a LION? LION stands for LinkedIn Open Networker. LIONs seek to grow their networks and influence by accepting all connection requests. Connecting to a LION allows you to research a larger network of people that are now linked to you through the LION.
  — What is a Super-Connector? A Super-Connector is a person who has a large network that spans different social, cultural, professional, and economic circles. Though not necessarily LIONs, Super-Connectors are arguably more valuable than LIONs because they have built their networks through known connections, not by simply accepting all requests.

- LinkedIn has recently added a *Follow* feature that gives users the ability to follow others before connecting with them. Try following a person before linking to them to determine whether you might benefit from the connection.
    - You cannot follow people just by finding them in the search results. You must be members of a common group. But once you share a common group, you can follow them after finding them in the *Members* section of your common group.
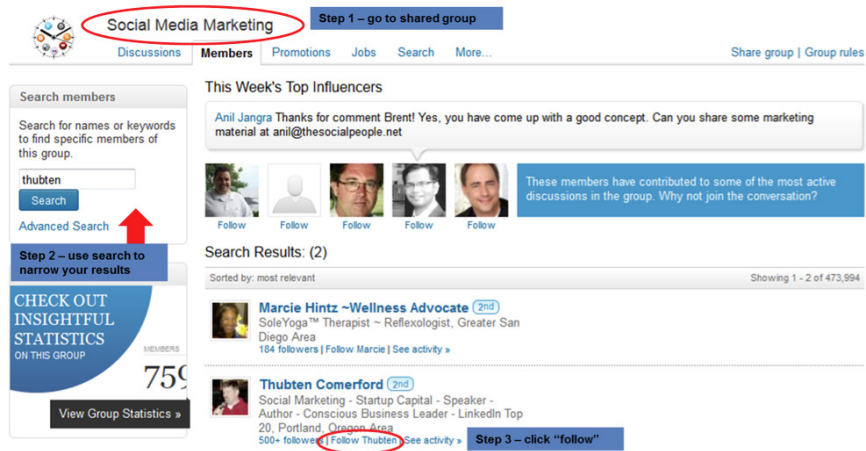

LinkedIn also gives you the ability to follow companies and receive their updates. We recommend that you follow the AAFP company page and *like* or comment when you feel it is appropriate. This helps the AAFP extend its messages to a larger network.

To search for a company or organization, use either the search option at the top of the page or hover your cursor over *Interests* and then choose *Companies* from the toolbar at the top of the LinkedIn page, and then *Search Companies.*
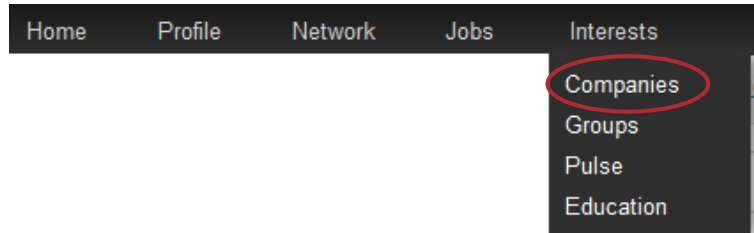
As you type the name of the company or organization in the search field, it will pre-populate to help you in your search. Choose the organization you wish to follow (e.g., American Academy of Family Physicians).
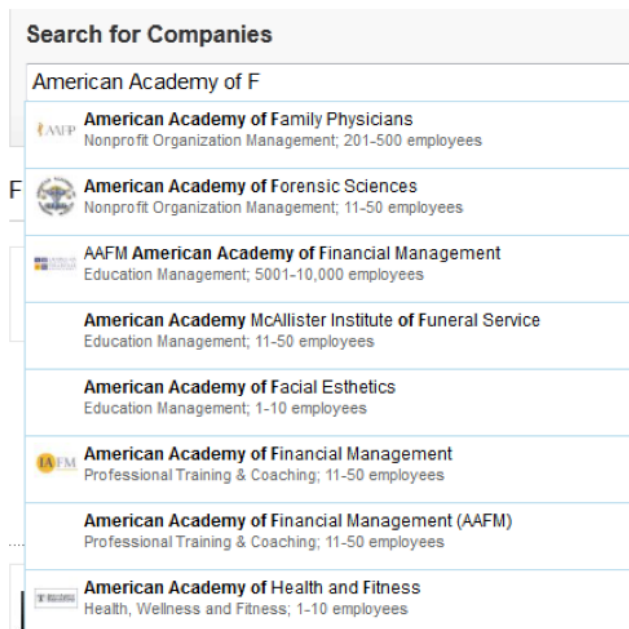
Once the company page displays, click the *Follow* button on the right side of your screen.


LinkedIn Groups is another feature that allows you to engage in discussions related to topics of interest. Another benefit, related specifically to the AAFP LinkedIn group, is the ability to monitor discussions and gauge member interests. The AAFP LinkedIn group is restricted to members.

To join the AAFP group, hover your cursor over *Interests* and then choose *Groups* from the toolbar at the top of the LinkedIn page.
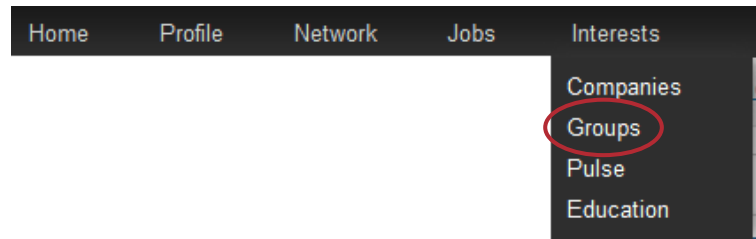
Type "American Academy of Family Physicians" into the search bar. Once the group page appears, select *Join.*
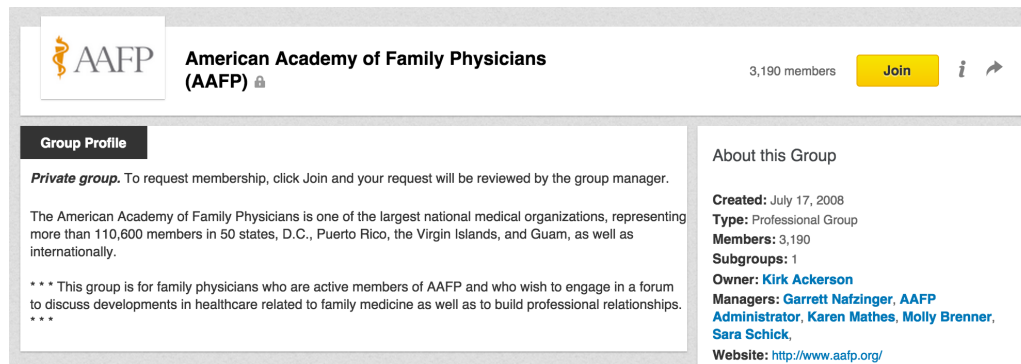
To find other groups that might be of interest, you have two options:

1. Using the search field at the top of your homepage, select *Groups* from the dropdown list on the left and then type in your keywords or group name to search. Once the results appear, you can refine your search by using the checkboxes on the left.

2. Scroll down until you see the section titled, *Groups You May Like.* This section will recommend a few groups for you based on your profile. If none of these are appealing, click *See more* to expand the results.

Like any social network, LinkedIn is a service that returns value by the amount of time and effort you invest in it. Check in at regular intervals to keep your profile updated and to stay connected to your networks through participation in discussions or events.

Need additional help?
LinkedIn provides a very robust and ever-evolving *Help* section for questions ranging from building your profile to managing your account settings. We recommend that you visit the *Help* section if you have questions at https://help.linkedin.com/app/home.