Lecture 4 - LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most powerful tool for both employers and employees, able to connect people from all over the world, offering many interesting and useful features to find people, jobs, companies, and so on. Any engineering student and graduate has to have a LinkedIn profile.

People who don't have a LinkedIn profile yet, please go to www.linkedin.com and create a LinkedIn profile, filling the online form with information such as: first name, last name, email address, and choose a password from at least 6 characters. In general, it is better to use only one first name and only one last name, even though you might have more given names, because it would be easier for people to remember your name. Once you do these basic things, start adding more information about yourself.

You will see various sections and in the right corner, there is a pen that can be used to edit the section by adding information.

You also need to add a professional photo. You have to be dressed in a business attire, in a professional or natural environment, smiling and looking at the camera.

Now edit your profile and add:
- A headline (for example; Civil/Industrial Engineering student at La Trobe University). You can make it fancier if you want

Using the edit tool, please fill in the sections below:
- "About" should be an interesting and impactful paragraph about yourself. This is the first thing that people read about you - it is similar with your "elevator pitch"
- Part time/casual job, if you have one, or previous experience - any type of work undertaken in Australia is relevant. If you are an engineering Master student and have a part-time job as a cleaner, that is still a very good start. You should put this part-time job on LinkedIn, highlighting the fact that you have important skills such as: communication and teamwork, attention to detail, time management, etc.
- Short courses you undertook should be added to the "licenses and certifications" section
- Volunteering experience, if you have any. This could be a sports club, Scouts, any community activity that you were not paid for. In Australia it is very important to work as a volunteer, because you prove in this way that you can help people without expecting something in return
- Skills you gained in your journey; if you did a small project in the past and you used C++, for example, even if you are not an expert in C++, add it as a skill because you already have the fundamentals, and in case you are hired somewhere and you need to use C++, you can improve your C++ skills in time
- Publications, if you have any
- Awards that you obtained in various stages of your life, whether they are related to your professional life, volunteering or other areas
- Projects that you have worked on, in the university subjects, during your volunteering activities or in your free time
- Languages you speak, and the level of proficiency

For all these sections, try to highlight the skills you gained working in your paid or voluntary positions, or for your projects. You can add the fact that you worked in teams, if this was the case, and you developed strong teamwork skills, etc.

Follow a few companies or organisations. These can be anything that interests you. A few to get you started: Engineers Australia, NASA, IEEE, La Trobe University, TESLA.

Change your URL. By default, your URL will look something like this:
www.linkedin.com/in/gabriela-raducan-7a9bb9180/
Go to your profile, near the top right, click 'Edit public profile and URL"
Change it to something simple to type. If you have a less common name, you may be able to get firstnamelastname, or firstname-lastname or even more simple, for example for the name "Gabriela Raducan", I have "graducan": www.linkedin.com/in/graducan/

You now should have a basic profile that you can build on over time. You can expand your profile by adding skills, awards and more, as well as following more companies or people etc.

Now that you built your profile, you will start the most interesting part of the journey: building your network and finding job opportunities.

In order to build your networks, start by searching for people that you know. When you want to add someone on LinkedIn, make sure you add a note. Keep it short and simple, such as:

"Hi Anna, this is Jane. We met at the networking event 2 days ago. Please accept my request to connect on LinkedIn."

Don't assume that people remember you. Give them a brief idea of who you are and how you met, which will ensure that they accept your request. A lot of people receive requests that they don't accept because they don't remember who that person is, or how they met. Once someone rejects your request, you can't send them a LinkedIn connection request again, so this is one of those situations where the first impression matters most.

Even if they are people who know you well, still, out of politeness, add a note to the connection request.

If you haven't met a person, but saw them giving a speech at an event, or you just found their LinkedIn profile really interesting, you can say:

"Hi Joe, I heard your speech regarding the future jobs in engineering and I was very impressed with the thorough analysis you presented. I would like to keep in touch with you, so please accept my LinkedIn request".

"Dear Mike, I came across your profile and I found your work experience really interesting, especially the work you did at Tesla. Please accept my request to connect on LinkedIn to ask you for some information."

"Hi Laura, I came across your profile while I was looking for skills needed to obtain a job at AWS. I saw that you work there and you come across as a great professional. I would like to ask you for some information, please."

Then use LinkedIn to talk to people from various companies and ask them what skills are most valued in the company where they work, and try to find out information about the job recruitment process, interesting projects that they are working on, and basically anything that you could use in a job application to prove to the assessment panel that you did your homework about the company and you are not just randomly sending CVs to any company you find on Google. The company must feel like you chose them because you genuinely want to work there, not because you need a job - but this will be discussed more in-depth in the CV and Cover Letter sections.

On LinkedIn, you can have a maximum of 30,000 connections, which includes the amount of requests sent that were not responded to. Hence why, to maximise your chances of accepted connection requests, make sure you have a good and complete LinkedIn profile and send a nice note with your connection request.

Be careful what posts you make on LinkedIn. That is your professional profile, and you don't want to have anything that puts you in a bad light in front of such a powerful network of professionals.

You can also use LinkedIn to look for jobs and to create "job alerts" - basically getting emails whenever jobs appear with your desired job title.

Last but not least, while searching for jobs, you can use the feature "Let recruiters know you're open to work" which is free on LinkedIn:
https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/67405/let-recruiters-know-you-re-open-to-work?lang=en

LinkedIn can also help you prepare for a job interview.
Go on your LinkedIn profile and on the top of the page menu you will find a button called "jobs". Click on it, and a submenu will appear underneath. Click on "Interview Prep". On the left side of the page you will see a list of possible interview questions, and some sample answers. Also, there is the option to "Practice and get feedback"

Another interesting LinkedIn feature is that you can export your profile as a pdf, by clicking on "MORE", then clicking on "Save to PDF"

You can use this file as your CV, and before you save it, LinkedIn allows you to tailor it for a specific job, keeping only the items of interest in there, not all the content from your LinkedIn.

Best of luck creating your profile, building a network, preparing for interviews and finding the job you want, using LinkedIn resources!