
Creating Your Professional Profile

What is a Professional Profile?

A professional profile is a brief summary of your skills, strengths, and key experiences. It also should convey what you are seeking or what you have to offer the person reading it. The professional profile can be used as your elevator speech, the in-person introduction that serves as a starting point to networking at job fairs or professional gatherings. Or, it can be used in a LinkedIn profile or other written materials to garner interest in what you have to offer in a professional capacity. Here are guidelines for creating a compelling professional profile:

Keep it brief and focused

Of course there are plenty of wonderful things you could say about your background and skills. Employers and potential mentors just want to know the most relevant information. Try to stick to 500 characters or less (about three tweets), or a short paragraph.

Consider your audience

Knowing who will be reading your profile will inform the kind of information you include. Feel free to include jargon or technical information if the audience knows what you're talking about, but stick to transferable skills and personal qualities if they don't.

Illustrate with examples

"Strong communication skills" and "leadership qualities" don't mean much to employers without context. Draw from extracurricular activities, research experience, coursework, volunteer or work experience to provide examples of your skills.

Be clear about what you're seeking

Want to secure an internship or full-time position upon graduation? Just looking for information about a career field you're considering? There's a big difference, and people like to know how they will be helping you. Make it easy for them by being open about your expectations.

Lead with eye-catching words and phrases

Statements within professional profiles tend to be sentence fragments that emphasize your transferable skills (see examples below). In addition, work to convey your enthusiasm and personality as much as you can. Here are some examples of professional profiles for Chemistry majors:

