

How can you effectively advocate for yourself online to potential employers?

Technology, especially social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, LinkedIn), continues to influence society in unprecedented and unforeseen ways. It impacts how individuals engage with each other, develop their sense of community, and interact with their environment. This includes how university students in the market for internships or jobs interact (or fail to interact) with potential employers.

A [2017 study on the role of social media](#) in the job hunt found that only 32.2% of the over 21,000 students surveyed felt comfortable initiating contact with potential employers. The other 67.8% are unfortunately missing out on opportunities to expand their professional network and show off their drive and leadership skills. [Requesting an informational interview](#) is an effective strategy to learn more about a particular line of work or organization and to get a foot in the door during (and anticipation of) the interviewing and hiring process.

[Generation Z's views and interactions with strictly social platforms](#) such as Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat illuminate their values and priorities on a raw and personal level. LinkedIn, on the other hand, requires a different kind of engagement. It is understandable [why college students shy away from it](#), as responses to communication are slower and their follower count may be considerably lower than on their Instagram account. Furthermore, LinkedIn is for aspiring and current professionals, and so discretion about images, grammar, and the overall professional appearance is critical. After all, nearly half of [hiring managers screen social media](#) to assess applicants.

There are resources that can help students [create an impactful LinkedIn profile](#). But as we all know, employers hire the person and not the cover letters, resumes, or on-line profiles. As such, effectively incorporating a short video can bring your personality, opinion, and self-expression to the forefront and help facilitate your internship or job search process.

The suggestions below can further assist you in highlighting your recent accomplishments and how they tie into your intended roles for viewers.

- ◆ Discuss a book that you finished recently – a biography, fiction/non-fiction, classic novel, etc.
 - Based on your newly-acquired knowledge about how fictional or real characters in literature dealt with human dynamics, challenges, successes or larger societal issues, can you draw solutions for current problems for a specific business or organization?

- ◆ Highlight a recent research paper, essay, blog post, or another piece of your original writing.
 - Competent writers are made, not born! Where were your writing skills before this assignment? What resources did you utilize to strengthen your skills? What did you gain from this experience, and what was the result? For example, did you receive an award for your work, or have it published or cited?

- ◆ Elaborate on your experience working in a group.
 - What was your team’s focus? What was your role in the project? How did you delegate responsibility and contribute? What did you accomplish?
 - Did your team encounter any challenges? If so, how did you approach and solve them?

These suggestions for videos are applicable to anyone, irrespective of where you are in your process. Success is only possible after taking that initial step.

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.”

Arthur Ashe – 1975 Wimbledon Tennis champion.

To further discuss this topic, please [schedule an appointment](#) with the [Internship Coordinator, Ned Khatrichettri](#).