I took a course at a recent NYLAA Conference (mid 2014) here in Saratoga Springs with Tom Whalen, RPI’s director of Lally MBA/MS Career Resources at the Lally School of Management & Technology at RPI in Troy. He is responsible for the professional and leadership development of over 200 graduate students, who all use Linkedin to advance their careers and job searches. Much of what is written below came from the seminar I attended with Mr. Whalen. Much of what Mr. Whalen said is also in compliance with what Jan Bailey has presented in her handouts, as well. – Kathy Handy

1. **Interesting fact:** Linkedin is now RPI’s alumni database.

2. **Implied message I personally gained from the seminar:** If you are seriously seeking employment, put yourself out there and don’t be afraid to do so on Linkedin – the free version is a good start – make sure to include a photo of yourself! Visit your profile frequently. I had read that not many people actually GET a job through Linkedin, and Linkedin, like many other reputable sites, has had problems with hackers and so forth, but nonetheless, this professional, Tom Whalen, said Linkedin was a crucial and effective tool, and in his field of work, which has brought him to China and California, and to many other areas of the country and world where he has networked with professionals, it was widely used, and his students have had success with employment through the site. Whalen acknowledged that there is a reputational risk present with social media. Yet, if used correctly, social media can be extremely helpful. So I conclude that it should, in fact, be used with common sense and practical caution.

3. **Know what you want to do with Linkedin:** Search for jobs? Post your portfolio/resume? Network with people? Monitor news feeds? You can do all of these things with Linkedin.

4. **Creating and Maintaining a Linkedin Account involves these important things:**

   Be sure to make your Linkedin account or professional profile include these four items:
   - Photo
   - Headline (if looking for a job, say so)
   - Education
   - Summary

5. Some good tips (six) for creating an account include:
   - You need a 100% complete profile for most effective results – search results will promote you if this is the case, often putting you first within Linkedin.
   - Make your photo visible, and have an engaging photo – smiling is good! This may increase recruiter interest.
   - Optimize your professional headline
   - Keywords are very important for both education (list 2) and work (list 2) experience.
   - 50 connections to other people
   - 2 recommendations

6. More detailed tips (eight) ...
   - Can and should upload portfolios, PowerPoint shows, even code for computer programming, web design, and so forth, highlight projects you are working on or have worked on, and team memberships, blogs as well, can be linked to. Include websites if they show your experience.
7. Still more tips (six)...

- Join Groups
- Optimize your own URL for Linkedin, and include the URL on your business card.
- Add your Twitter Account – this is more important than E-Mail – E-Mail, according to Whalen, is no longer a real-time avenue of information.
- Add a skills section as these are what drive recommendations and endorsements. Endorsements are tied to skills.
  - You can and should decline endorsements that are not solid or pertinent
- Analytics are used in Linkedin – study them and learn to use them for bettering your profile.
- There are no set rules when creating your profile or account, as is often the case with a traditional paper resume, so it’s up to you how to create it – you can be as creative as you want!

Whalen said that the beauty of Linkedin is that there really is NOTHING you cannot add or include in your profile. So photographers, artists, musicians, business people, computer programmers, and many others have so many ways to showcase their resume in terms of video, sound, and much, much more. Your resume becomes more than just words on paper, and can come to life through this type of portfolio display.

8. More about your Profile...

- When you make a change to your profile, make sure you BROADCAST it! Go to your settings to make sure this is active. Make sure all can see the feed.
- Look at job postings and within them, look for key words. Where appropriate, include these keywords into your profile.
- Look at other profiles – do not feel you are doing something wrong by looking at profiles. Leave a footprint when you visit a profile.

9. More about invitations:

- SEND them – customize them, though, and say why you want to connect with the individual, for the purpose of... use flattery.
- DO NOT SEND the default invitation as it sends a “red flag.”
- Respond to and accept invitations
- An all-or-nothing tool that will work for you.

10. Check who has viewed your profile and share updates. Be proactive (Steven Covey’s 7 Habits)
12. Check Linkedin’s security page: https://security.linkedin.com/ for information on LinkedIn’s security and protections that are in place.


14. Recent 2016 hacking issue: http://fortune.com/2016/05/24/linkedin-password/ -- would probably be a good idea to change your password if you haven’t already done so since May of 2016 (don’t use something like “linkedin” which, it turns out, was one of the most popular passwords used on the site!!) The BBC also reports this on the 2016 hack: http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-36320322

15. 2018 Tips -- Good video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpdrYXNaoyk (3min. 45 sec.)