

# FBLA High School Networking Toolkit 2022-23

Presented by the National  
President's Executive Council in  
collaboration with the Eastern  
Region Council

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FALL 2022



# Introduction

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Greetings, FBLA members!

As we work to become community-minded leaders this membership year, it is more important than ever to discuss how we, as FBLA members, can learn from our peers and engage in real time with one another. This important concept leads to my favorite part of the organization: Networking! From gossiping about Netflix's latest hits to discussing life plans with esteemed colleagues, networking has opened up many opportunities for me to engage with members and business professionals from across the country. These insightful conversations and connections have served as catalysts in my personal development endeavors, allowing me to see myself through peers who are significantly different from me.

Networking has been, and will continue to be, a platform for me to become more well-rounded within my community. It is the reason I am here today; without it, I wouldn't have some of my closest friends. As we continue to serve as one association for service, education, and progress, it is vital that we serve together. And—who knows? You might get your best friend out of it!

And as you continue to write this new story in your book, make sure to use the community at your fingertips. Your National Officers are here to support you and will continue to advocate for members like you to succeed in all aspects of leadership. We're starting now with this toolkit. We have cultivated this resource to help you craft an identity that makes you eager to discover the millions of leaders ready to take on the world. I wish you all the best as you continue to find yourself through this next part of your FBLA journey.



Best wishes,  
Aarav Dagar  
adagar@fbla.org  
2022-23 FBLA High School National President

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## Overview

Many of you have networked in the past, whether you know it or not. After all, networking is more than something you willingly do—it's a process of life!

This section will give a general overview of the importance of networking and some specific examples of its benefits.

## The Importance of Making Connections

Something is rarely made that requires no collaboration at all, especially in the business world. Great products are made through teamwork, and what does a team require? Members!

Networking ensures YOU have the proper connections to succeed. Like the teamwork example above, knowing others can prove to be a very important asset.

There are many different reasons to network, including to make business connections, develop your professional image, or to build confidence, and they're all equally valuable!

## The Different Forms of Networking

Since networking is simply a process, it can happen through any medium. When you can chat and connect with others, you are networking!

### In-Person

Traditionally, networking is done in-person. Conferences, leadership camps, and professional meetings are all great places to connect. Whenever you attend a workshop or talk to another person, make sure to grab their information. All it takes is a conversation and an exchange of information, and you've connected! Make yourself known.

### Online

Networking online can have its benefits and is approached differently than traditional, in-person networking. Services like LinkedIn and social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.) are there to help you connect with others. These forms of networking will be discussed in-depth later in the toolkit.

## National Officer Insights



Aarav Dagar

Networking has given me an opportunity to be unapologetically myself, and I would not have made some of my most meaningful connections without it. My only regret is not starting sooner! I am so grateful for the ways in which networking with FBLA members has formed my identity—I wouldn't trade it for the world.



Alexandria Torbert

Connecting, collaborating, and creating meaningful changes with others are just a few ways networking has positively affected me. Networking has proven to be a priceless asset to deepen my knowledge and stay abreast of best practices to create meaningful changes in business.



Noah Killeen

Networking has provided me the opportunity to represent FBLA as a National Officer. If it wasn't for the connections I made before and during the National Leadership Conference, I wouldn't be where I am at today.



Lyria Zhu

Without networking, I would have never built the experiences that shape who I am today. Networking has provided me with a means to learn from others' strengths and make the most out of opportunities to progress toward my goals.



Deborah Jacklin

Through networking, I have learned various soft skills such as communication, initiative, and confidence. Not only has networking helped me grow as a person, but I have been able to develop meaningful friendships and connections.



Krisha Patel

Networking has been a crucial component of my FBLA journey: from connecting with incredible leaders across the country to being able to expand my own leadership skills, I am forever thankful for the connections I have made.



Sophia Weber

Networking has shown me that everyone has a unique story and purpose. It has pushed me to get to know where people shine and how I can be a helpful person in their life.



Natalie Coon

The connections I've made through networking have provided me with opportunities unlike any I'd ever imagined. I've created lifelong friendships, traveled to unique places, and learned how to be the best version of myself.



Steven Segawa

Networking. It is simply a fancy way of saying getting to know other people. Knowing others can open doors to previously closed opportunities, all from the exposure you receive when you put yourself out there.

## Summary

Any chance you have to connect with others is a chance to network. Networking provides immense benefits and assists members like you in reaching your full business potential. So start early, say hello, and start connecting with others in-person and online!

## Overview

LinkedIn is the world's largest online professional network. You can use LinkedIn to find the right job or internship, connect and strengthen professional relationships, and learn the skills you need to succeed in your career. You can access LinkedIn from a desktop or LinkedIn Mobile.

This section will give a general overview of the importance of networking using LinkedIn and some specific examples of its benefits.

## The Importance of Using LinkedIn

Meeting many people is a great way to expand your network, but it can be hard to keep track of all the connections you've made. By using LinkedIn to your advantage, you not only connect with people you've met in the past, but you create new opportunities with those you haven't met yet. LinkedIn helps you keep track of connections' contact information.

## How to Use LinkedIn

### Create Your Profile

Signing up and creating your profile is the best way to begin using LinkedIn. A complete [LinkedIn profile](#) will summarize your professional experience to your connections, current and future employers, and recruiters. Through your profile, you can showcase your professional life, milestones, skills, and interests.

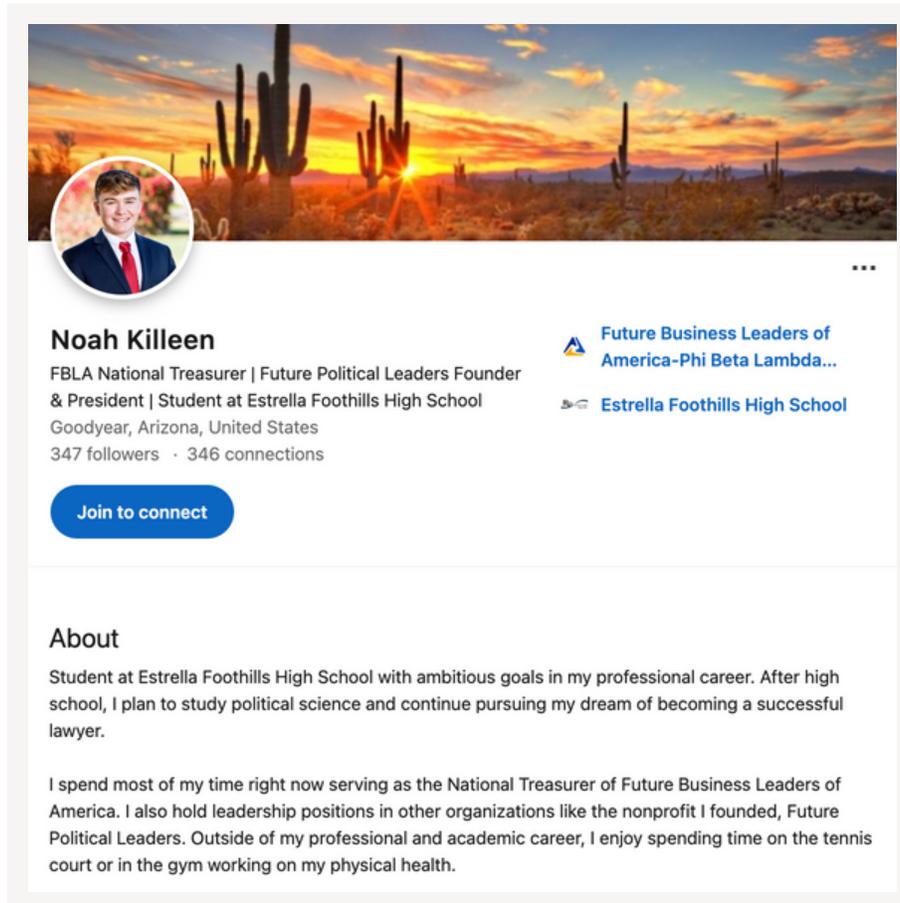
### Build Your Network

Your [network](#) plays a crucial part in unlocking the power of LinkedIn. It will help you understand what is happening in your industry and your professional circle. You can begin by adding your family, friends, past or current classmates, and coworkers to your network. You can also follow people, companies, or topics by navigating directly to the [follow fresh perspectives page](#), which displays recommended sources to follow. You can use the [LinkedIn Events](#) feature to create and join professional events such as online workshops, seminars, sales and marketing events, networking events, and more.

### Find a Job

If you're looking for a new professional opportunity, you can [start your job search](#) on LinkedIn. You can use LinkedIn to research companies and reach out to the hiring community. You can also apply directly for roles, save job searches, and notify your connections and recruiters that you're open for job opportunities.

## Case Study: Noah Killeen



## What Makes a Great LinkedIn Profile?

### Photos

A professional headshot and banner goes a long way! Being presentable to those you want to connect with is extremely important. Noah's example shows a clear headshot with professional business attire. In addition, his profile displays a banner that applies to one of his key characteristics (his Arizona residency). Your banner can range from different options, whether it's custom-made, your state, your school, etc., as long as it matches you!

### Headline

An important headline is crucial! This allows your peers to discover you, depending on how you know them. Noah Killeen has his headline not only set to "FBLA National Treasurer," but he lists two other roles, providing a larger chance to connect with others.

### About Me Section

Whether you use it to put career choices in context, highlight your biggest achievements, or show off your personality, the summary is your chance to put your best self out there. It strengthens your first impression in a way no other profile section can.

# Linking with LinkedIn



## How to Make a Profile

You have heard of all the great things LinkedIn offers, so what are you waiting for? Get started using our four-step guide to creating your profile today!

To join LinkedIn and create your profile:

1. Navigate to the [LinkedIn sign up page](#)
2. Enter your first and last name, email address, and a secure password  
Register using a non-school email address. This ensures you can continue to use your account after leaving your current school
3. Click Agree & Join  
Or, you can choose to Continue with Google and sign up using your Google account
4. Complete any additional steps as prompted. You may be asked about your general location, most recent job title, or any other information that relates to your work life

Sign Up Page

Additional Question Example

Once your profile is completed, start sending out network connection requests!

## Summary

LinkedIn offers you an excellent opportunity to network with other professionals in your field. And the faster you start networking, the better it will be down the line. Regardless of whether you are currently working, are in school, or are looking for your first job, you can utilize your network of LinkedIn connections to help take your career to the next level.

A well-written LinkedIn profile will give you credibility and will establish you as a trustworthy individual.

## Overview

Professional social media use is all about building a positive online presence. It is important because it allows you to grow connections with others and show what you have to offer within an organizational setting. Professional social media is used for many purposes, including advertising a brand, supporting a mission or cause, and showcasing achievements and past experiences.

### Social Media Comparison

<u>Professional</u>	<u>Personal</u>
Create a Professional Identity	Use in Your Personal Life
Establish Useful Career Connections	Communicate with Family & Friends
Find New Opportunities	Find Sources of Entertainment
Learn About Career Fields	Socialize
Hold to Higher Standards	Can Include Informal Language & Tone

There are a few things to keep in mind when creating an online profile:

#### Be Authentic

The purpose of your profile is to show who you are. Don't be afraid to highlight your skills and what makes you unique.

#### Be Intentional

With information you choose to include, focus on how it is relevant to the purpose of the account.

#### Stay Engaged

Feel free to show involvement by following similar accounts and sharing or liking content.

## Benefits

Professional social media helps you expand your network and learn about new people who share similar interests with you. It also makes it much simpler to find volunteer and internship opportunities which you can directly apply for. This is a great way to stay involved in your community and gain hands-on experience or exposure in relevant career fields. So as long as you have a reason for maintaining an account, then creating one is not a bad idea.

## Managing a Social Media Account

As an FBLA member, you may want to consider creating a professional account to network with others. You will have the opportunity to make an individual profile, follow other accounts, and use it for any FBLA-related items.

## Managing a Social Media Account

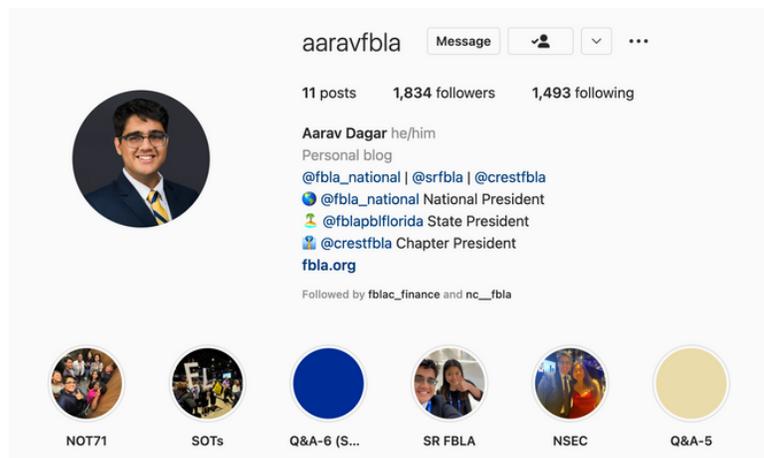
As a general guideline, if creating an Instagram account for FBLA, try to focus on the following:

1. Write a detailed but concise bio with meaningful information (e.g. awards or leadership positions)
2. Create an account name indicating that it has to do with FBLA (e.g. @john.fbla)
3. Upload a professional photo

## Case Study: Aarav Dagar

Looking for inspiration? Check out the FBLA Instagram account of Aarav Dagar (@aaravfbla), our National President. There are several ways he uses this account to effectively inform and engage with others. For example, his account handle includes FBLA so others can easily identify the organization.

Aarav also utilizes the description box to list/tag his officer roles and affiliations. This is an effective way to describe your role in an organization and direct members to other accounts similar to your own.



As for the posts and stories, these are beneficial opportunities to keep others up-to-date on your current projects and activities. Is your chapter hosting a fundraising event? Advertise it with a post! Want to share a picture from NLC? Post it!

Another way Aarav uses Instagram is to reach out to other FBLA members. As he put it, "After engaging in hundreds of conversations with friends and colleagues, it has been so rewarding to see how these connections have extended beyond the screen and into real life!"

So, do you need to be the National President to have a FBLA Instagram account? Of course not! However, you can use Aarav's Instagram account for inspiration and adjust it to fit your own needs.

# Social Media Management



Looking for more examples? Check out the other national officers' accounts and see how they've utilized Instagram to network.



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# Conclusion



Whole books have been written on networking, so we've given you a very brief overview of what it involves. In this toolkit, you've learned what it means to network with others, the different mediums of networking, how to harness the power of LinkedIn, and the process of managing a professional social media account.

If you take away one thing from this toolkit, it should be to put yourself out there. You'll find that networking comes a lot easier if you're able to step out of your comfort zone and speak to new people.

You've now reached the end of the toolkit. Congrats! Again, we hope this toolkit has been helpful in enhancing your networking skills, and that you'll put it to use in the very near future!

The content written for this toolkit was curated by our FBLA's 2022-23 High School National President Aarav Dagar and the leaders of various national councils. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions! You can find our contact information below. And hey, it might just be a chance to put your new networking skills to use!

Best wishes,



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