

# Adam Beck

Graphic Design graduate.

“My friends laughed at me when I said I was going to the careers service’s social media networking workshops. But three months later, I was employed in Berlin, working in a multinational agency with clients such as BMW, MINI, and Panasonic as a direct result of a contact I’d made on LinkedIn.”

## Beyond the profile

Adam graduated from Sheffield Hallam University in 2014 with a degree in Graphic Design. As well as outlining details of his work experience, he used his profile to highlight that his creative work had been exhibited at New Designers, D&D New Blood and had been featured in Creative Review.

Although Adam had created a profile on LinkedIn, he wasn't really using any of LinkedIn's other features. This changed after Adam attended social media workshops and attended appointments offered by his university's careers service.

During a discussion with a university careers adviser, Adam explored the idea of networking to unlock hidden, unadvertised opportunities. The adviser suggested networking with graduates from his university who had already secured opportunities in the area he wanted to work in and demonstrated how LinkedIn could support him with this.

“The meeting changed how I used LinkedIn - it made me much more open to the idea of contacting past students on there.”



Adam graduated from Sheffield Hallam University in 2014 with a degree in Graphic Design

## Expanding your network

Adam was particularly interested in working in Berlin after he had completed his course. Using LinkedIn's Alumni feature, which groups together all of the LinkedIn profiles connected to a particular institution, Adam identified a graduate from his university who was already working there in an area related to his course and work experience.

"I contacted a Sheffield Hallam graduate through LinkedIn. We started talking and we built up a relationship over several months. I sent him my portfolio and he then sent it around the office in Berlin. The creative director saw it and liked my work. She offered me an internship and then a job after three months. In this case there was never any opportunity advertised but I managed to get in because of the contacts I had. "

## Accessing hidden opportunities

Adam's experience of using LinkedIn demonstrates how it can expand your network of contacts and help you to access unadvertised opportunities.

*Expand your LinkedIn network by connecting with graduates from your university.*

LinkedIn's "Find Alumni" feature can help you to locate the profiles of graduates from your university. You can narrow down this information by fields such as geographical area, work sector, subject studied, company and skills. If, like Adam, you decide to connect with one of these graduates, make sure that your initial connection request is polite and clearly outlines your reasons for wanting to connect.

Written by Kelly Snape

© The Higher Education Academy 2015