



**CASE STUDY**

# **LinkedIn's REACH Apprenticeship Program & 42 Silicon Valley**

## The Impact of Social Networks on Careers

When we think of social media, funny memes and “going viral” are features that may come to mind first. But social media has helped us connect with a larger network of people outside of our closest friends and family. Now you can connect with an acquaintance in the form of a friend of a friend, alumni from your school, someone who worked at the same company, or a person you met at a conference. Having a place to maintain these casual relationships can actually be helpful to one’s career.

According to an article in Forbes, “Those who are outside of our insular circle of family and very close friends occupy a distinctly different space in the world than we do, and they are much more likely to know something we don’t, or to have experienced something we haven’t. In so doing, they often lead us to the bright colors in our lives, the unexpected changes of direction, the rare opportunity or critical knowledge that on our own we would likely never have discovered. It is exactly this group of people who can most impact our professional success.”

## LinkedIn’s REACH Apprenticeship Program



Since its launch in 2003, LinkedIn has changed the way we network with other professionals and conduct job searches. Instead of business cards, we connect through LinkedIn. And when we are ready for our next career move, we can let recruiters know that we are open to new opportunities.

Over the last 15+ years, LinkedIn has emerged as the premier professional social network. Now with over 645+ million members, LinkedIn is growing at a rapid pace.

There are now six alumni from 42 Silicon Valley who work at LinkedIn. They all started their journey through LinkedIn’s REACH apprenticeship program. LinkedIn’s REACH apprenticeship program creates opportunities for every individual with the passion, potential, and drive to either develop or restart their career in engineering.

## Finding People Who Have a Well-Rounded Skill Set

Jiaao Chen is a Site Operations Manager at LinkedIn. He manages a team that handles all incidents at LinkedIn. He shared, "We handle the initial troubleshooting, find out where the problem is in our stack. Once we know where the problem is we hand it off to an SRE/dev to do the specific changes required."

When looking for new hires to join the team, Chen shared that it's important candidates demonstrate having a growth mindset, "Beyond that, it's important that new hires can learn quickly and are also able to manage panic in stressful situations. Given that we are a first-line defense team, any time we need to be involved means that something is broken on LinkedIn. Issues can come slowly, or quickly, therefore it is imperative that we find people who are capable of learning quickly to resolve a variety of different issues, and also someone who doesn't panic easily and can handle the pressure." Chen explained how people generally can be good at a single, or a few aspects, like being a great coder or great at troubleshooting, but can lose sight of all the other things that matter as well.

## 42 Alumna Joins The Site Operations Team at LinkedIn

Chen first heard about 42 Silicon Valley when 42 Alumna Julia Iliuk joined his team as an apprentice within the company's REACH program.

When asked how Julia has contributed to LinkedIn, Chen shared, "Julia works with our engineers day to day to proactively monitor availability and performance of the LinkedIn application stack. She efficiently responds to alerts/tickets/emails by triaging and escalating issues as needed. She also uses coding to automate parts of the job to accomplish more in less time."

## Results: 42 Alumna Brings Enthusiasm and Competency



The skills that Julia brings to LinkedIn that Chen finds most valuable start with the fact that she is super enthusiastic. Chen elaborated, “Julia is generally unafraid of trying new things, which is great. Along the way of learning, you have to break a lot of stuff. You need to have the bravery to do that, not panic and fix what you broke. She is enthusiastic and not afraid to push the boundaries. She has proven she can learn really quickly and get competent with coding. Julia looks for the optimal solution no matter the size of the project. This is exactly what you want to do as you go on to write more complex solutions.”