



Your quick guide to: Social Media

Your quick guide to: Social Media



Social media's not just a forum for half-baked opinions or pool party pics. It can actually be a powerful job-hunting tool that allows you to project a positive professional image to a wide, yet relevant, audience. But if you don't use it correctly, you could end up falling on your own social sword. Here are some tips for ensuring your social media profiles give you the best possible chance of finding a new job.

Be selectively sociable

You wouldn't walk up to a random person in the kitchen at work and ask them to be your best friend. In the same way, you need to maturely and patiently engage with a prospective employer rather than jumping straight in and asking if they've got any jobs going. By following them, getting involved in discussions and slowly building up a relationship, you'll come across as a credible professional who they might consider working with one day. Discretion is definitely the better part of valour when it comes to social media.

Put the word out

Let your network know that you're looking for a new role. Your professional contacts, especially those who work in similar spheres, will hopefully be able to provide you with referrals. Facebook can play a role here too, as your friends and family know you best and will (should!) be willing to at least recommend you to others. But as ever, be selective about how you do this. Don't use your company's Twitter account to jubilantly announce to their entire network that you can't wait to get out of there.

Have a professional presence

These days, prospective employers are likely to Google you to see what kind of work you've done and get an idea what you're about. If the first thing that comes up is a picture of you lying spark out drunk on some well-known tourist attraction, you know you probably need to tidy up your social profile. Make sure you use a professional-looking photo for LinkedIn (you'd be amazed how many people don't) and take down anything you wouldn't want an employer to see.

Include the right information

You can use a Twitter bio or your LinkedIn profile to list your qualifications and key skills as well as link to a blog, website or portfolio, showing you have an integrated approach to your career. Similarly, add links to your LinkedIn and Twitter profile (not Facebook) to your CV. On all your social media profiles, include keywords that a recruiter or hiring manager might use to find a person with your skills.

Be careful what you say

It's probably the number one social media faux pas: the careless tweet. Don't make the same mistake as countless politicians or sports stars by making ill-advised or controversial comments about things you know little about, thereby damaging your reputation and credibility. By all means, express an opinion – companies would rather employ someone with a brain – but be careful about how you do it.

Make sure your personal information on Facebook is private and don't post anything publicly that you wouldn't want a prospective employer to see.

Participate

Take part in online discussions, join industry groups, follow relevant blogs and share content to paint yourself as an expert who is genuinely involved in what they do. It will also help you to build up a relevant following. Interact with companies you'd be interested in joining – and people who work for them – by tweeting and retweeting them to put yourself on their radar. Look through your shared connections to find other useful contacts..

If you need more advice on finding a new role, speak to one of our consultants to see how we can help you.