

About.com Job Searching

Social Recruiting and Your Job Search

Positioning Yourself for Social Recruiting Success

By [Alison Doyle](#), About.com Guide

Just about everyone is using Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter to network - both for personal and professional reasons. Even if you're only using these sites for personal networking, it doesn't preclude your employer or prospective employers from checking out what you post.

Are you prepared for companies and recruiters to find you on all these [social media](#)¹ sites? If not, you should be.



Twitter

Companies are increasingly using [social recruiting](#)² to source candidates for employment, as well as to investigate applicants they are considering hiring. It's important to be aware of how companies are using social media to recruit, so you can use employers' recruiting tactics to your advantage and position yourself to be discovered by companies seeking candidates.

You should also be aware that an inappropriate post on a networking site could knock you out of contention for a new job, or even cost you the job you already have. David Manaster, CEO, [ERE Media, Inc.](#)³ told me about someone who recently lost his job because of something he posted on Twitter.

He's not the only person who has gotten in trouble because of what he posted online. Every single tweet you post can be found on Google and they can come back to haunt you. You don't want to become one of those people whose posts cost them a job, so consider David's advice on what you shouldn't do online.

What Not to Do When Using Social Media

- Don't embarrass yourself.
- Be aware that people are reading everything you post.
- Don't say anything about your boss online that you wouldn't say to him or her in person.
- Don't take a chance of hurting your career.

Positioning Yourself for Social Media Success

On the flip side, what can you do to use social media to boost your career and enhance your prospects of finding a job? How can job seekers capitalize on what companies are doing?

Social recruiting is a new endeavor for many companies and they are still experimenting with what works from a recruiting perspective, and what doesn't. That means there are no hard and fast rules on how to connect and position yourself to be found, but there are tactics you can use to make the right connections with people in your industry and career field.

David explains, "It's important to dialog with connections in your industry, even when you don't need them. It's too late when you need a job now." Take some time, every day, to connect with who you know and who you don't know - yet. However, don't just connect with random people. Identify people who you have something in common with - college, industry, experience, professional associations, etc.

Networking Before You Need To

Build your network well in advance of when you need it. Talk to your connections on Twitter or the other networking sites. Join Groups on LinkedIn and Facebook, post and join the discussion. Be engaged and proactive in your communications. By building a network in advance, you won't have to scramble if you unexpectedly lose your job or decide it's time to move on.

The contacts you make online will help you transition from technology to person-to-person communications. For example, a relevant tweet can lead to an @reply (a reply in response to your post) or a DM (direct message) from a hiring manager.

David says "Use your online connections to connect with 'real people' online. These human connections will serve you well in the long run and help you get a foot in the door at companies of interest."

Growing Your Network

As an example of networking building, I'm connected, mostly via LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, with a broad base of contacts I've made over the years. We stay in touch, even though our careers may have transitioned since we met. All those contacts (500+ on LinkedIn and 4500+ on Twitter) are there if I need them, and I can help them, as well.

Take it one step at a time - and one contact at a time - and you'll be able to build your own career network. It won't happen overnight, but it doesn't have to. Work on your network when time permits, being cognizant of the fact that your network is key to getting your next job.

Then be sure to use your network wisely and carefully, thinking twice before you post, so you're using it to help, not hinder, your job search.

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