

Keeping It Clean: Social Media and Getting a Job

B budbilanich.com/social-media-and-getting-a-job/

Once it hits the Internet, it will always be there! You hear it all the time from teachers and employers about just how dangerous [social media](#) can be when trying to apply and get hired for a job in your respective career.

We all have had those moments in college that we're not too proud about and about 95 percent time your friends know about those moments because of social media. It's where we post videos, photos and details of our personal lives for everyone to see including those we might not want to see like perspective employers.

A 2012 survey by Jobvite found that 92 percent of recruiters for mainstream companies in America used social media as a part of their recruiting process. Many companies even require their perspective applicants to have a strong online presence to promote the company they're applying for.

Many people ask why is my social media profile so important for getting a job in a career that I have expertise in? For employers it doesn't matter about experience, it matters about any risks that could potential hurt their company. They want employees who mesh well with their other employees, someone who's kind and courteous, who doesn't have a temper or engage in any practices that could prove unethical to company standards. It's surprising to most that an employer can tell all of this by simply looking at your Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, or Instagram profile.

How do they do this? What do they look for? What tells them that you might not be a good employee for their company?

What Hurts Your Chances and Why

Photos and Videos

According to most social media strategists, photos can tell a lot about who someone is in all aspects of their lives. If many of your photos are of you out drinking at a bar or at a club through the early hours of the morning, many employers might see this as irresponsible, immature and unstable. All three are crucial in maintaining a job for most employers.

Are your pictures or videos of questionable behavior that could be labeled as illegal? According to one national survey, pictures and videos of a perspective job applicant smoking marijuana or them being in a room where others are doing it, is the quickest way to be taken out of contingency for a job position.

Using profanity or vulgar hand gestures gives employers a sense of your attitude about life in general. They're less likely to consider you for a position if many of your photos or videos show you using your middle finger or dropping the 'F' bomb regularly.

Rants and Raves

We all know that one person who goes on their rants about specific topics in their lives. This includes talking about their love life, finances, jobs, and friendships.

A number of employers have turned down offering jobs to perspective employees because they've actually went on rants about how much they hated their last career and who they worked for. For employers it shows immaturity to be able to work in a professional environment and work with those you might not always agree with or get along with.

Friends Lists

This section of our social media profiles doesn't hold as much weight as pictures or our tweets/statuses but it gives an employer a chance to see whom you associate yourself with.

A person's group of friends shows an employer how diverse you are and if you could work in a culturally diverse environment in their company.

Info Section

If this section is filled with information irrelevant to promoting yourself, it could potentially hurt you. Usually this section is one that many people only allow those who aren't friends to see so it's really the first and only impression of who you are aside from your profile picture.

Many times Facebook users will label their job as "getting money day and night" for their occupation section or "the school of hard knocks" for their education section. If you're a 25-year-old college graduate, employers expect to see a sense of professionalism when it comes to promoting your image on social media. Doing things like these shows the lack of professionalism, putting you below other applicants in the job pool.

Fixing Your Social Image

It goes far beyond just choosing a new profile or cover photo for your Twitter or Facebook. Pay full attention to your entire profile and leave no section unturned because chances are your prospective employer will be searching every inch of your social media presence in addition to [background screening](#).

Privacy Settings

They're different for each social media platform but all work the same way, to limit what people see. Privacy settings have so many features whether it be hiding certain posts from those on your friend's lists or completely blocking someone from seeing your profile at all.

On Twitter and Instagram, making your feed private allows people who follow you to see what you post. You're also in control of accepting follower or friend requests for these pages so you can limit who sees your posts.

In Facebook situations, you can even make your profile untraceable so prospective employers or family members would even be able to find you when they type in your name.

If you feel the need to keep the same material on your social media profiles as you start your job search, make sure you're protecting your profile and keeping it out of reach from job employers.

However, other more professional profile pages like your LinkedIn should be searchable and visible for employers. These types of profiles can serve as an expanded resume showing business connections, organizations you belong to and even reviews your fellow co-workers and former employers give you.

Cleaning Up Your Act

There's a point in our lives where we all realize that we need to grow up and start acting like adults. When that moment happens on social media, you'll know it's now time to do some spring-cleaning of your multiple profiles.

Deleting pictures and videos can be difficult because they're memories we've made with friends, family and co-workers but if it detracts from your overall image, it's time to hit the delete button. You can always save these images to your phone or computer so you don't have to lose out on memories built in the past.

Leave no stone uncovered on your social media profiles! Sometimes we forget we posted a picture, video, note, status, or comment because it happened a while ago but it's your job to clean up 100 percent of your profile.

The deeper you dig, the more you can uncover and the more you can clean up!

Google Yourself!

No, we're not talking about being conceited but it really is a great way to see what material you have on the Internet that you've published from your multiple social media platforms. Many people forget they have a Tumblr page or Vine profile with material they've posted but when searching Google, material on these profiles may be uncovered.

Don't Slip, Stay Professional

This may be the hardest part for teenagers and young adults, even harder than doing the cleaning on their social media profiles. Once you've done your extensive cleaning, now it's time to keep it clean. You don't want to regress back to your old posting habits once you get your dream job because your employer could still be watching!

Ask yourself before you post on Facebook or Instagram, will this hurt my chances of getting a job in the future or ruin the relationship I have with my current employer? If the answer is yes, it's best to keep the thoughts or posts in your head and off of the Internet because once it's there, chances are it will always be there!