

Job Search Strategies: Online Social Networking

Get Noticed! 6 Tips for Using Social Networking Sites in Your Job Search

Building and maintaining professional relationships with as many people as possible is what networking is all about. Networking is even easier with the growth of online social networking sites. Now, networking on sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn can go hand-in-hand with your in-person networking efforts for an even greater impact on your job search efforts.

Social networking sites cover many different online tools. They can be professional or primarily social and still be useful for networking and job search. These technologies can be a time-drain, so knowing tips for effective use is a must.

Dan Schawbel, personal branding guru, says, “most job seekers don’t optimize their profile, cultivate their network, join and participate in groups, use applications and exchange endorsements.” They fail to do the important things that will get them noticed by hiring managers and recruiters. Below are tips on how to use these sites and get noticed!

1. **Choose Wisely** - Research shows Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to be the most popular social networking sites among employers. Each industry may also have specialized sites, so learn those for your industry and use them.
2. **Use your Social Network Professionally** - Use your Facebook account professionally for your job search. Let your friends know that you are looking for work. Someone may know of the perfect position for you! Beware, look at your site with a critical eye and make sure you would want a potential employer to look at it. Avoid pictures with beer cans and friends who may post inappropriate pictures. Ask a CPCC Career Counselor to conduct an “online-audit” of your sites. Employers DO review Facebook pages!

Twitter can come in handy during your job search in several ways – you can use it as a networking tool, gather information about employers, follow industry leaders, learn new strategies for your job search, and see job postings. Maintain an employer-friendly Twitter profile by including a brief job pitch in your bio and by tweeting about your job search – you do not have to keep it a secret you are looking (unless you are currently employed). Using Twitter is a great way to be a proactive social networker!
3. **Join and actively participate in groups/Blogs** - Pose discussion questions and respond to others’ questions. Professional associations often have groups on social networking sites. Sometimes you can even join these discussion groups without actually being a member of the association. Blogs can offer insights into career fields.
4. **Endorsements** - When using LinkedIn, endorse co-workers and former colleagues; maybe they will do the same for you. Endorsements will help you get noticed by those outside your network and let prospective employers know you get results.
5. **Target Specific Employers** - Use LinkedIn to do a reverse look-up. Target a company and look to see how you might be linked to someone who is on the inside. Ask your contact for an introduction. Once introduced, let the insider know you have applied for a job.
6. **Use Correct Grammar and Spelling** - Always check your postings for grammar and spelling errors. You could lose a possible job!