

Using E-Networking for the Job Search

The increasing popularity of social networking sites has changed the face of the job search in many ways. According to the CareerBuilder survey, 70% of employers use social networking sites to research job candidates during the hiring process. Job seekers can also utilize these sites to network with professionals and peers in their target fields; learn more about companies and job openings; post information about current research, projects, or publications; and to create a professional public image (also called "e-image"). For more information about managing your e-image, see Ready Reference D-15.

LinkedIn - www.linkedin.com

Connects past and present colleagues/classmates; professional alternative to other social networking sites.

Job Search Tools

- *Recommendations*—Feature provides potential employers with positive references from contacts within your network.
- *Introductions*—Allows you to ask a person in your network to introduce you to one of their contacts, thus expanding your network.
- *Search Engine Optimization (SEO)* - Allows your profile to show up in Google results.

Six ways to Use LinkedIn for Your Job Search:

1. *Profile*—Follow the steps to complete your profile.
2. *Groups*—Search for groups within your company, industry, university, etc.
3. *People*—Search for contacts, leaders or employees within your target industry.
4. *Jobs*—Provides a link to an exclusive job board that includes company contact information.
5. *Answers*—Search questions or relevance to your needs. Also allows you to offer your own answers.
6. *Companies*—Categorizes companies and shows which companies have posted job opportunities.

X (previously known as Twitter) - www.twitter.com

Blogging site that allows you to answer the question, "What are you doing?" in 140 characters or less.

Your X Profile

- Use your real name or a shortened version for your username to keep it professional.
- Keep your profile private and interactions with non-professional accounts to a minimum
- Include a professional picture of yourself or use a Twitter icon.
- *It is not a bad thing to delete or not have an X account due to recent controversy*

Keep X posts professional and to a minimum:

- Job search
- Target industry
- Projects, research or articles
- Keep Tweets professional by posting things like "See my latest blog on optics research at . . ."
- **NOT** "Just ate dinner and am now ready to take a long nap then watch some television."

Following Others

- Follow companies and professionals in your target industry or field of interest.

Facebook - www.facebook.com

Primarily social networking site; however, new applications and features for the job search are now available for use by employers and those searching for a job or internship.

Your Facebook Profile

- Use an elevator speech for your Info page and keep content relevant to your job search.
- Provide links to updates about projects, articles you've written, etc. to establish a professional image.
- Include appropriate pictures of you, discuss books you've read, areas of interest, etc.
- Use the Update Status area to inform others that you are searching for a job.

Networking Through Facebook

- Use your existing friend list to make contact with professionals in your area of interest.
- Join groups that relate to your industry or field of interest (tip—use the Business Link on the Groups page to find links for companies, employment and work, etc.).
- Don't be pushy when approaching a potential contact - allow the relationship time to develop.
- Remember that putting your career goals as your interest will attract others with similar interests.

Job Postings - Facebook & LinkedIn

- Websites such as *Indeed.com* and *CareerBuilder.com* have pages on Facebook that allow users to view job listings, links to resources, discussion boards, blogs, etc.
- LinkedIn's website and smart phone application contains a "Jobs" tab that provides a quick and easy way to job search
- Keep in mind that these are third-party sites and should only be used as a resource or starting point.

Building Your Network - LinkedIn

- Conduct a search of classmates, coworkers, and acquaintances by name.
- Look at your existing network of friends and network with mutual acquaintances.
- Join groups that relate to your major or target industry, including areas of specialty and research.

Social Networking Do's

- Use LinkedIn for professional networking
- Be consistent from site to site
- Set your social networking profiles to private
- Make sure your photo albums are private or set them so that they can only be viewed by your friends
- Utilize an elevator speech on your profile
- Include a professional photo (or none at all)
- Create a professional user name
- Clean up the content of your profiles
- Make professional connections to develop your network
- Use links to showcase your skills and tags for keywords

Things to Avoid

- Discussing controversial topics in a public forum
- Being pushy or asking for a job
- E-stalking a contact or potential contact
- Being inactive – be sure to post on a regular basis
- Using just one site for e-networking
- Making your profile searchable (i.e. listed on Google)
- Being tagged or tagging others in inappropriate photos
- Posting inappropriate or embarrassing things on your own or friends' walls