

Social Media + Job Hunting



Long gone are the days where potential employees are assessed purely on their application, suitability to a role, how they present themselves at an interview, and a handful of affirming reference checks.

While these things are still important in securing a role, hiring managers and recruiters are now able to dig deeper and explore the entire online presence of a potential employee, deciding if they *truly* are fit for the role, and likely learning a lot more too. From googling your name to exploring your social media presence employers now have access to a much clearer picture of you personally and professionally.

Social media can sometimes be a blessing and a curse. Employers have easy access to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google and other social media platforms and it's changed the world of recruitment forever.

It seems obvious right? Behave yourself on social media, or keep your privacy settings tight so they're not visible. But it's a little more complicated than that. A strong and positive social media presence can be the element that can make you stand out against other applicants. A negative and unappealing profile however, can be what makes you miss out, even if you're a great candidate in all other areas.

Imagine an employer who has a candidate who is ticking all the boxes. They've submitted a strong application, they look great on paper, and they are potentially keen to meet with them. But when they look on Facebook, they've shared a picture saying, 'I hate my boss' and have decorated the point with some pretty colourful language. So, even though they looked like a great match initially, this could prevent the application from progressing further, and surfaces questions about their attitude at work.

However, a well-constructed and presented profile can help to get you across the line for a role. Imagine you were applying for a role in a Vet Clinic and you also did volunteer work for the Animal Welfare Society, and supported them

on social media. This re-affirms your love of animals and may just be the extra tick that puts you over the line as it shows where your values lie and that you have a genuine passion in this area.

It's also great to see a profile full of pictures of family dinners, travel, reposted favourite recipes, runs that they've been on, and voluntary work that you have recently undertaken.

So, if in doubt about how to present yourself on social media, here are three tips to get you started:

1. Have a look at your profile and think about what you publish and how it might affect your potential to secure a good job – if you were a recruiter or hiring manager, would you employ yourself?
2. Use it to your advantage – now you know that potential employers are going to be looking at your profile make it the best you can. Think about what is going to make you stand out from the crowd. If you have any additional interests or voluntary work linking to an industry you're aspiring to work in, it's your time to shine!
3. Social media is a fantastic tool to gain information to give you an edge. It's easy to browse a company website before a job interview and reel off a few stats, but if you start following a company you will be kept up to date with recent news, changes and relevant information. This will make you appear passionate and pro-active in the interview.

Overall, it's important to ensure you're reflecting the best version of yourself. Tidy up photos and content, and adjust privacy settings if need be. What you may think is an acceptable photo may not be viewed well by an employer (think selfies that show a little too much skin). If you are unsure, ask someone in a senior position or someone that recruits for staff, get them to look over your social media profiles and provide feedback.

Your personal brand is how you promote yourself. It is your unique combination of skills, experience, and personality that you want the world to see. It tells your story, and how it reflects your conduct, behaviour, spoken and unspoken words, and attitudes. Make sure your personal brand creates a positive impact.