

Using Social Media and LinkedIn for Your Job Search

Social media and the web are essential networking and information gathering tools for your job search.

There is the potential to market yourself and make contact with employers that can help you find job opportunities and work experience.

The big three players in social media are Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn but there are also other social networks that can be useful in your job hunting and careers research. Having your own blogging and online portfolio sites can also be important particularly in the media, art, design, graphics and IT sectors.

In this leaflet you will receive information about the various social media platforms and how to maximise their use for job hunting. We will also cover managing your online reputation.

Facebook

One of the most likely places an employer will find information about you is your Facebook profile. Facebook content about you will figure highly in Google search results.

One tip is to make sure everyone can see your 'Contact' and 'Work and Education' information so people can find out about you and get in touch. And make sure this information is up-to-date.

You can also take proactive job hunting steps through Facebook and 'like' companies that you are interested in and involve yourself in their online communities by commenting and asking questions. It doesn't have to be just companies you engage with – there will be interest groups on Facebook in the career area of your choice.

If you do make professional contacts through Facebook make sure your updates are relevant – you can demonstrate your knowledge on a topic or your ability by keeping informed of what's currently happening in their world.

Twitter

Dismissed by some as a lightweight social media network focussed on celebrities and gossip, [Twitter](#) can be a very important tool in your job hunting armoury.

There is a strong argument that having an active presence on Twitter is essential in industries such as the media, design, marketing and the web.

Your Twitter Bio

You only get 160 characters to describe yourself in your Twitter bio so you need to choose your words carefully! Try and summarise the kind of job you're looking for or what your skills and interests are. Your avatar should be generally be professional looking but should suit the careers area you're interested in.

Follow

Most major employers are active on Twitter and more importantly so are their graduate recruitment teams. Twitter is used by employers to advertise opportunities and recruitment events and also communicate with job potential applicants i.e. you! Make sure you 'follow' influential figures in your industry. Individuals at companies might be more responsive to information requests than corporate accounts.

Hashtags

Hashtags such as [#loughborough](#) help organise information on Twitter as well as spreading it. One use of hashtags is by conferences and events to make it easier to track related tweets.

They're also used by recruiters to make job opportunities easier to find. You can explore hashtags such as [#ukjobs](#) for up-to-the-minute vacancies. They'll also be hashtags specific to industries, for example [#marketing](#) and [#socialmedia](#).

Lists

If you follow lots of people on Twitter your twitterfeed can quickly become clogged up and make it easy for you to miss a vital tweet. Lists are a great way of organising companies and people you are interested in – you don't have to follow them and lists allow you to organise accounts into a specific context i.e. 'arts' and 'film'. You can share lists or keep them private. You can get help with setting this up on support.twitter.com/articles/76460-using-twitter-lists

Search

As well as making Twitter contacts with employers and individuals in your sector you can search for jobs and opportunities. Twitter's own search tool is not always the best and another option is to use Google to hunt down the most appropriate Twitter account for the company you want to follow.

Twitter Management Tool

To make the most out of Twitter we'd recommend using a Twitter client such as [Tweetdeck](#) or [Hootsuite](#) that will make it easier for you to monitor hashtags, lists and search terms.

Remember that Twitter is an open network, so unless you lock your account (which will make you and your tweets undiscoverable), the whole world can see what you tweet. Be careful about the nature of your tweets and bear in mind that they could be viewed by potential employers.

Where next with Twitter?

- <https://biginterview.com/blog/2015/03/twitter-jobs.html>
- <http://mashable.com/2013/02/09/twitter-job-search/#plhQ3plyugq1>
- Google 'Job hunting on Twitter' for more articles and resources

LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is widely known as the 'professional' social media network with more than 150 million members including employers, graduates and students. As well as networking with employers you can connect with alumni and join groups focussed on the industry and specialist areas that interest you.

Profiles

Just like with Facebook you create an individual profile on LinkedIn. It's important that you create an effective profile as this is what employers and recruiters will look at and search on. Your profile is rated 0-100% in terms of completeness and you need to get as close to 100% as you can to improve your chances of appearing in search results and to advertise your skills and experience the best you can. You can access LinkedIn's help pages to get started and build your identity on: help.linkedin.com

Connections

Facebook has 'friends', LinkedIn has 'connections'. LinkedIn will search your email contacts and profile for people you already know who using the service. You can also search for fellow alumni or colleagues you've worked with. However it is important that you think carefully about whether you want all your email contacts to be invited to connect with you on LinkedIn.

Groups

Groups are a key tool for raising your profile, promoting your knowledge and interests and making new connections. LinkedIn will suggest groups to you based on your profile and you can also use the search function. Group membership can give you an insight into what issues are hot in the sectors where your interests lie, build your network, and give you a heads up on jobs in that area.

Companies

Companies will also have their own profiles that you can follow to get the latest news on job opportunities and industry developments. You may find that you have people in your connections or groups that work for that company.

Alumni

LinkedIn has a special Alumni function on which you can search for Loughborough alumni by what course they did, skills they have, what they currently work as, and what company they work for. This could be extremely beneficial to you to find alumni that are in a career you aspire to get into. You can connect with these individuals and network with them – who knows, it may just get you your dream job!
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/loughborough-alumni-374b5693/>

Managing Your Online Reputation

Your online reputation is content on the internet about you. Most often this means the results returned when somebody googles your name. Increasingly employers are using social media to get background information on job candidates – there are plenty of stories in the media about applicants being rejected due to their social media profiles.

To start the process of managing your online identity, Google yourself and see what comes up. Facebook features highly in search results so if you have a Facebook profile it's important you know what can be seen publically and not just by your 'friends'. Make sure you are fully aware of Facebook privacy settings to make sure any content you wouldn't want a potential employer to see is marked private. Did you know the default privacy setting for photo albums is 'public'? It is essential you change this if you don't want the world to see your pictures from a night out. Another essential thing is removing the ability for others to tag you in photos, or un-tag yourself from photos you really don't want a potential boss to see.