

SOCIAL MEDIA & THE JOB SEARCH

Using Today's Most Popular Online
Communities for Job-Hunting



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Facebook and the Job Search



- Facebook is the most popular social network, in the U.S. and internationally.
- In October 2011, more than half of the world's Internet users (55 percent) engaged with Facebook.
- Around the world, approximately 3 in every 4 minutes spent on social networking sites were spent on Facebook and about 1 in every 7 minutes spent online took place on Facebook.

***Source:** "It's a Social World: Top 10 Need-to-Knows About Social Networking and Where It's Headed," comScore

This online community connects you to the world, but can you use it to find a job?

Think of Facebook as another opportunity to learn more about your desired career or employer and to network and present your best professional self. It is not a place to post a résumé, but the information you share could reach potential employers.



Facebook and the Job Search

- **Make sure you're Facebook friends with any and all family members, friends, and professional contacts** who could do any of the following: provide a reference, let you know about a job opening, introduce you to new contacts, and give job-hunting advice.
- **Tell your Facebook friends that you're looking for a job**—either in direct, private messages or a status update that will be broadcast to all of your Facebook friends. Ask them to keep you in mind when they hear about any openings; remind them of your skills and experiences.
- **Join Facebook groups that are relevant to your desired career path.** Introduce yourself to the group and use this as another place to network and make professional contacts.
- **Add your education and work history to your Facebook profile.**
- **Create a profile that you would feel comfortable with potential employers seeing**—that means keeping it professional with your photos and status updates.
- **If you don't want potential employers to see your Facebook profile, check your privacy settings.** Click the arrow next to “Home” in the upper right-hand corner of the page, then click “Privacy Settings”—you'll have the option to have new Facebook activity post to just your friends, to everyone (“public”) or to a custom list. You can still show some personality on Facebook, but make sure any questionable content does not show up to anyone you don't want it to. Remember, if you have posts set to “public,” when someone searches for your name online—which employers are likely doing—your Facebook profile and these questionable posts will be easy to find.
- **“Like” the Facebook pages of companies or individuals you would like to work for.** This will help you stay informed about company news—and possibly company job openings—and help you know useful information to bring up in potential job interviews. Potential employers may also notice that you're a Facebook fan and give you preference over similarly qualified candidates who have not become a fan of their page.
- **“Like” the Facebook pages of organizations that list job openings.** Any time they post a Facebook update about a job opening, it will appear in your Facebook newsfeed. Then you can tell your friends that signing on Facebook every day really isn't a waste of time!

BEST FOR: Letting friends and family know you're looking for a job. Learning more information about companies by following their company Facebook pages.

NOT A PLACE FOR: Posting full résumés or applying for jobs.

BE CAREFUL OF: What potential employers could come across on your profile.





Twitter and the Job Search

As of the end of 2011, 1 in 10 Internet users worldwide engaged with Twitter. Close behind LinkedIn, Twitter is the third most popular social network in the U.S. Twitter is often used as a place to report, react to, and engage with topics of national and international import, ranging from wars and natural disasters to elections and celebrity events.

Twitter is an online community that allows you to broadcast yourself to the world, but can you use it to find a job?

BEST FOR: Letting friends and family know you're looking for a job. Learning more information about companies by following their company Facebook pages. Discovering new information and trends in your industry.

NOT A PLACE FOR: Posting full résumés or applying for jobs.

BE CAREFUL OF: What potential employers could come across on your profile.

Twitter and the Job Search

- **Don't post anything you wouldn't want a potential employer to see.**

If you don't want a potential employer to find what you've written, check your **privacy settings**. Click your profile name/icon in the upper right-hand corner of the page, scroll down and check the box next to "Protect my Tweets" and click save. Anyone who wants to see your tweets will have to ask for your permission first.

- **Follow the Twitter accounts of companies or individuals you would like to work for.**

This will help you stay informed about company news—and possibly company job openings—and help you know useful information to bring up in potential job interviews. Potential employers may also notice that you're a Twitter follower and give you preference over similarly qualified candidates who have not become a fan of their page.

- **Follow Twitter accounts of organizations that list job openings.**

Any time they post a tweet about a job opening, it will appear in your Twitter newsfeed. Then you can tell your friends that signing on Twitter every day really isn't a waste of time!

- **Use the Twitter search box to find tweets about, and Twitter accounts for, job industry news, job openings and companies you're interested in.**

You may be surprised to tap into many new resources you'd never considered before.

LinkedIn *and the Job Search*

The second most popular social network in the U.S., LinkedIn is used for keeping track of and growing a professional network, finding and applying for jobs, posting and viewing online résumés, giving and receiving recommendations, learning more about companies, tracking industry news and moves, and more. There are premium (paid) accounts for job-seekers and recruiters, which give those who pay for the services more insights into the robust analytics LinkedIn is privy to about applicants, job openings, and companies.

LinkedIn users with free accounts can:

- Post their résumé online.
- Find and add professional contacts.
- Find and follow companies to receive important updates about job openings, company news, and more.
- Create and join online professional networking groups by industry, location, age, and educational background.
- Find and apply for jobs.
- Give and receive recommendations.
- Post public messages—status updates similar to Facebook or Twitter, but these are typically professional in nature.
- Send private messages.
- Find out how many times their profile has been seen.
- Post a digital portfolio.
- Ask for introductions to their contacts' contacts.

LinkedIn and the Job Search

- **Add any and all family members, friends, teachers, mentors, and professional contacts on LinkedIn.** These contacts could potentially become references, let you know about job openings, introduce you to new contacts, and give job-hunting advice. LinkedIn will prompt you to search for contacts at current and previous jobs as well suggest you search for classmates.
- **Completely fill out your LinkedIn profile with your contact information, job and education history, skills, awards, and activities.** LinkedIn will prompt you to complete your profile if you have left fields blank.
- **Ask for professional contacts to recommend you on LinkedIn.** Sure, you can provide references during or after an interview, but that's assuming you get the interview. LinkedIn recommendations could give you the edge you need to secure interviews!
- **Tell your LinkedIn connections that you're looking for a job**—either in direct, private messages or through a status update that will be broadcast to all of your LinkedIn connections. Ask them to keep you in mind when they hear about any openings; remind them of your skills and experiences.
- **Find jobs by clicking on the “jobs” link at the top of LinkedIn.** This will allow you to search for job listings by industry, job title, region, salary, and more. You can apply to the job directly through LinkedIn—and LinkedIn will notify you if your application has been viewed. Note: LinkedIn also offers a paid job-search service. Review the features of the free and paid services and see which one best meets your needs.
- **Browse your LinkedIn connections' connections—they may be connected to companies you're interested in working for.** If you find someone you would like to get to know, you can ask your LinkedIn contacts to connect you to individuals who are outside your professional network.
- **Join LinkedIn groups that are relevant to your desired career path.** Introduce yourself to the group and use this as another place to network and make professional contacts.
- **Follow the LinkedIn accounts of companies you would like to work for.** This will help you stay informed about job openings and news and information you can bring up in potential job interviews. Potential employers may also notice that you're a LinkedIn follower and give you preference over similarly qualified candidates who have not become a fan of their page.
- **Make sure you use the right words in your profile.** Monitor the words used in job listings posted to LinkedIn. Do you use the same words in your profile? If not, your résumé may not be given the same preference as individuals with similar experiences but who have used words that are a better match to the job description.
- **LinkedIn will notify you of who's viewed your profile.** Considering messaging these people if you think doing so could lead to a job interview or opportunity to network.
- **Keep tabs on changes to your contacts' profiles.** You'll be notified when they change jobs or industries or when they have new connections. This information could be useful to you!

BEST FOR: Posting your résumé online, asking for recommendations, discovering industry news, finding job openings, applying for jobs.

BE CAREFUL OF: Leaving out important information fields. The more relevant information you share, the more likely it is your profile will be seen.



Google+ and the Job Search

Google+ offers a unique way of connecting with your various contacts, allowing you to send group messages to particular social circles you designate, such as “family,” “coworkers,” and “friends.” Google+ gets that you act and communicate differently depending on the setting.

- **Make sure you’re connected with any and all family members, friends and professional contacts** who could do any of the following: provide a reference, let you know about a job opening, introduce you to new contacts, and give job-hunting advice.
- **Add your education and work history to your profile.**
- **Follow the Google+ accounts of companies you would like to work for.** This will help you stay informed about job openings and news and information you can bring up in potential job interviews. Potential employers may also notice that you’re a Google+ follower and give you preference over similarly qualified candidates who have not become a fan of their page.
- **Follow Google+ accounts of organizations that list job openings.** Any time they post an update about a job opening, it will appear in your Google+ stream. Then you can tell your friends that signing on Google+ every day really isn’t a waste of time!
- **Search for companies or industries on Google+.** You will then see all individuals who work for a given company or industry and you can add them as a contact. You can also see any and all Google+ accounts associated with the company or industry, as well as any and all Google+ posts that have been written about the company or industry. You may discover invaluable information.
- **Join Google+ hangouts.** Hangouts are online webchats that take place within Google+. Though Google+ hangouts are new, many are being used for networking. This site is a fairly comprehensive index of the Google+ hangouts out there: <http://gphangouts.com/> (happening at specific times/dates) and <http://gphangouts.com/hangout/extras/> (permanent/ongoing).
- **Don’t post anything you wouldn’t want a potential employer to see.**
- **If you don’t want a potential employer to find what you’ve written, check your privacy settings.** Click the wheel icon in the upper right-hand corner of the page. From there, click “Profile and privacy” on the left-hand side of the page and make the changes you see necessary to the default settings.

BEST FOR: Letting friends and family know you’re looking for a job. Learning more information about companies by following their company pages. Discovering new information and trends in your industry. Attending virtual networking events.

NOT A PLACE FOR: Posting full résumés or applying for jobs.

BE CAREFUL OF: What potential employers could come across on your profile.

More Tips for Social Media and the Job Search

Finding Online Communities by Industry

Use Google.com or other search engines to search for online communities in your area of work experience. For example, Mediabistro.com is a website for media professionals—it lists job openings, interview tips and networking opportunities for media professionals only.

Tips: Search for the name of your desired career, industry or job title plus online community, social network, or networking.

Identified.com <https://www.identified.com/>

Using the information about your work and education history you've made available on Facebook, this website compares your competitiveness for potential job openings against your Facebook peers—ones from your industry and ones who attended your same school(s). It shows you the changes you can make to your profile to make you more competitive among peers from similar backgrounds.

Glassdoor.com <http://www.glassdoor.com/index.htm>

Use this website to learn about job openings, potential interview questions, company culture, and salaries of all major companies and organizations. You'll find:

A database of job openings

Reviews of what it is like to work at various companies from past and current employees

Statistics on what salaries various companies offer (for specific job titles, where possible), based on real salary information provided by past and current employees

Interview questions, based on real past and current employees' interviews at various companies

Meetup.com <http://www.meetup.com/>

Meetup.com is an online community centered around local groups and events. It's free to join and users can search by topic of interest. Depending on where you live and your desired career path, you may be able to find industry groups and events to help you make important connections during your search.

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