

How Online Social Activities Can Affect Your Job Search

You may think your Tweets, Tumblr profile, Instagram pictures, and Facebook entries are confidential and seen only by your social network. Not so!

Recruiters and hiring managers use Web search tools to check on candidates and what they list on their résumés, just to see what turns up.

The pictures you took on a crazy weekend with friends, your whiny or angry tirades, or bragging about how you outsmarted a teacher or employer can be impossible to overcome.

CareerBuilder.com conducted a survey that asked 2,303 hiring managers if, how, and why they incorporate social media into their hiring process.

- They found that 37% of employers screen the social networks of potential job candidates. Two in five companies browse your social media profiles to evaluate your character and personality.
- A third of employers who scan social media profiles said they have found content that caused them not to hire a person, including provocative photos or inappropriate information posted on a candidate's profile.
- Half of those employers said they decided not to hire someone because of evidence of drinking or drug use.
- Other reasons for not hiring were: bad-mouthing previous employers, bullying, and comments related to race, gender or religion. Lying about qualifications is a big job killer.



The good news is that hiring managers aren't screening just to dig up dirt. They're also looking for information that could possibly give you an advantage.

- In some cases, the employer got a good feel for the candidate's personality from social media.
- Others hired because the profile gave a professional image or showed great references.
- Still others liked the creativity and great communication skills displayed.

If you're looking to be hired for a job or admitted to a college, now is the time to take down inappropriate content and replace it with a profile that represents you at your best.

Action: Analyze your social media sites and list items you need to remove. Then list information you need to add.