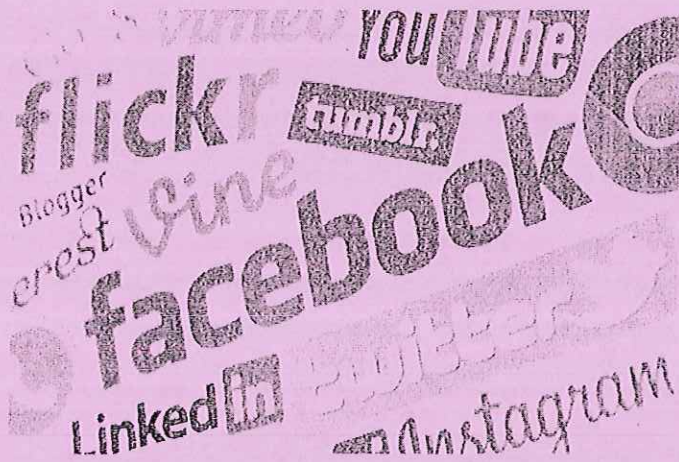


CAREER REALISM

BECAUSE EVERY JOB IS TEMPORARY



The Definitive Social Media To-Do List For Job Seekers

The job market has changed significantly over the last 20 years, and with it, so too have the hiring methods of employers. Traditionally, it's been newspapers, industry publications, recruiters, and job boards that have provided the 'lion's share' of new hires for employers. However, since the advent of social media, social networking tools have transformed approaches to recruiting and they are now a primary source of new hire leads for employers and recruiters alike.

The ability to research a candidate market and approach desired hires directly is an approach that corporate recruiters really love – and see produces great results for their business. While this doesn't mean that you should abandon looking at job boards and industry publications, it's ever more important that you also **incorporate a social strategy into your job search and work on your personal brand management.**

The four key networks that you need to have a presence on in my opinion are **LinkedIn**, **Google+**, **Twitter**, and **Facebook**. However, it's also worth bearing in mind that any social networking site and forum where you post personal information and set up a profile may be publicly searchable. Recruiters these days are using 'People aggregators,' which are essentially specialized search engines, **allowing recruiters to search hundreds of sites for potential hires.** With that in mind be sure to **keep your profiles safe for work and tailored towards your respective role or industry.**

In this post, I am going to cover the main benefits of joining the 'big four' social networks to help you improve your job search and networking capabilities. Bear in mind that like any job search strategy, maintaining a presence on a social network can take some time and it's up to you to decide where you want to spend yours.

LinkedIn

In my opinion, having a presence on LinkedIn is an essential first step into the world of the 'social job search.' In the UK alone, there are 13 million LinkedIn users and the majority of the UK's corporate businesses have a presence on LinkedIn. In the past, LinkedIn was mainly seen as an online repository for CVs. However, in the last couple of years it's really repositioned itself as a function-rich networking site connecting individuals, recruiters, and employers.

Recent research from Econsultancy actually suggests that LinkedIn is now responsible for 64% of visits to corporate websites from any social media site. That's an astonishing statistic, and it really shows how a company's presence on LinkedIn is helping them to attract the attention of potential hires.

Most corporates that are present on LinkedIn will either have a LinkedIn pro license or access to LinkedIn recruiter, which allows them to search through the entire LinkedIn membership. Even if you're not looking for a job right now, having an up to date and detailed LinkedIn presence means that employers can find you and may well reach out to you direct if you look like a fit for their current openings.

Helping employers to find you on LinkedIn

To ensure that those employers looking for potential hires with your skills will be able to find you, you'll need to make sure that you have the skills listed that they are looking for. To do this, I suggest trying a little LinkedIn 'reverse engineering'!

The first step is to find some jobs that you might be interested in applying for in the future. Once you've done that, explore the types of skills and keywords that they mention in their job posting. This is essentially a recipe for the ingredients that you'll need to put into your LinkedIn profile.

Firstly, focus on the keywords – often employers will use a variety of similar keywords that describe what they are looking for. If you notice this, be sure to mirror this throughout your LinkedIn profile.

Secondly, you'll need to focus on including the right skills in your skills section. The overall goal here is to ensure that whenever you are a match for a role that a recruiter is looking to fill, you've written your profile in a way that maximizes your chances of appearing as a candidate match. For more info on getting this right, check these [step-by-step LinkedIn instructions](#).

Join groups and add insight to discussions

Another strategy for attracting the attention of potential employers or recruiters is to join industry groups or groups hosted by target employers. Look for discussions where you feel you can add useful insights to show to employers that you know your stuff. Whether this leads to a direct approach or just helps you to get on their radar, it's definitely a worthy step to help add to your job search efforts. Looking at the profiles of other group members may also trigger them checking on your profile, through the "who's viewed my profile" function on LinkedIn that many recruiters regularly review for candidate and client leads.

Google+

Once you've built your LinkedIn profile, I'd suggest replicating this on your Google+ profile. The main benefit to having a Google+ profile is that they rank very highly on Google searches. This will allow you to get a representation of yourself that shows you in a good light high up in Google searches. This can be particularly useful if a potential employer Googles you to get a little bit more information on you. Your Google+ profile will more than likely appear above other sites or profiles, ensuring that they see a professional representation of you, rather than one that shows you in a less favorable light or profiles of others with similar names muddying the waters.

Use Circles

Google+ also has some handy features that you can utilise when networking. Find employees and hiring decision makers that already work at target companies and add them to an employer specific circle. Once you do this, you'll be able to start getting involved in discussions or commenting on their content. If done right, this will help you to attract their attention – whether it leads to an opportunity or helps when an opportunity eventually comes up.

Twitter

Twitter offers one of the easiest ways to network with potential employers. Most organisations worth their salt will have a presence on Twitter, as will their individual recruiters. Before you start following and engaging with them, it's a good idea to build up a profile/brand that shows your interest in the area that you are trying to get work in. Use relevant keywords in your bio to show your particular specialty and follow and engage with other professionals and organizations relevant to your target industry/role.

* Follow and engage with target employers and decision-makers

Once you've built up a reputation, start following employers and decision-makers and monitor their activities, corporate culture, ethos, and upcoming opportunities. Every so often, you may find that they post content that you can engage with, whether that is by Retweeting, Favoriting, or by adding an insightful comment or one

that sparks conversation. Make it a regular habit to do this and you'll be well on your way to prompting the types of conversations that generate job leads and career conversations.

Facebook

While Facebook may not be the first place that comes to mind when thinking of your job search, your profile may be picked up by recruiters using people aggregators. In addition, it is often the first place that employers will advertise in order to reach the target demographics they're interested in for new job opportunities within their business. Ensure that you have filled out your work history, education, and professional skills information on your Facebook profile so that relevant adverts are shown to you and so that you appear in Facebook search results.

Like potential employers' pages and engage with them

Similar to LinkedIn, Google+, and Twitter you may be able to connect with employers pages by liking them. This can show to an employer that you are interested in what they are doing and that you're keeping up to date with any developments. It will also allow you to engage with their page if and when there is something that you can add insightful comment to. So, don't discount Facebook as a career move tool.

Hopefully these tips will help recruiters and employers to find you and will give you the chance to impress if and when there is an opportunity to engage with them. Social media gives you an opportunity to manage your brand and connect with those who can help your career. The question is, can you afford not to have a social media presence?

This is a guest post.

[Orla / Shutterstock.com](http://Orla/Shutterstock.com)