



Successful Job Search Using Social Media

Companies are now using social media to publicise what they do, how they do it and when they recruit. They use social media to share information and communicate with students about placements and graduate jobs and to proactively search for potential recruits.

Why use social media for job search?

- increase your networking opportunities
- make useful contacts with professionals in jobs and industries that interest you
- market yourself positively and professionally to potential employers
- research organisations and identify those you wish to target in your job search
- research jobs to find out how people get into their roles and typical career paths
- find out about job responsibilities and tasks
- follow recruiters to keep up-to-date on their opportunities
- find jobs not advertised elsewhere

Being online leaves a digital footprint

Your digital footprint is everything on the internet that is about you and much of this content is freely available to view.

This could include:

- social network profiles
- photographs that you, friends and family have posted online
- anything you've written or that has been written about you

Social media can create opportunities and open doors, however it can also negatively affect your chances of employment if professionalism isn't maintained. Some employers are also using social media for screening candidates, so what you say and do online (or not, if you don't have a presence at all) could prevent you from getting an interview.

Before you begin to search and apply for jobs using social media, it's important that your online presence says the right things about you.

Managing your online reputation

The best way to evaluate your online presence is to Google yourself. Use other popular search engines such as Yahoo and Bing. Look at the results and ask yourself the following questions:

- is what you've found professional? (photo, email, content)
- would you want an employer to see this?
- will the information support or contradict what you've put in your CV and applications?
- if you found nothing, is that really helpful to your professional reputation?

Managing your online reputation - useful tips

- learn how to use the privacy settings on all of your social media platforms
- anyone can view your present and past online content so start posting more professional and relevant information
- monitor what other people post on your wall and your tags. It's easy to control those settings within Facebook and Twitter
- ask others to remove photos or inappropriate mentions of you from social sites
- close down any old and unused social network accounts such as Bebo
- don't lie about your qualifications/degree classification or work history
- don't make negative or personal comments or jokes about people or organisations
- use a professional looking photo of you (no one else in the photo!)

Online tools to help you manage your online reputation

- **Google Alerts** google.com/alerts is a good way to find anything new about you that is added to the internet.

- **Hootsuite** hootsuite.com/en-gb lets you manage your social networks, schedule messages and engage your audiences.
- **Tweetdeck** tweetdeck.twitter.com a Twitter tool for real-time tracking, organising and engagement.
- **Tweetdelete** tweetdelete.net helps protect your privacy by automatically deleting posts older than a specified age from your Twitter feed.

Most popular types of social media used for job search

The three main social media platforms are LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.

- **LinkedIn** – is a professional networking site. As well as networking with employers you can connect with GCU alumni and join groups focussed on the industry and specialist areas that interest you. LinkedIn is a good starting point and a positive way to create a professional online profile to complement your CV.
- **Twitter** – is a microblogging site and allows users to connect and follow just about anyone. You can keep up-to-date with what's happening in a sector or company. Use it to engage with companies, professional bodies and individuals. Although more informal than LinkedIn you still need to make sure you present yourself in a professional way, as well as being interesting.
- **Facebook** – a social networking site which is now increasingly being used by companies as a useful marketing tool, for networking, customer service and recruitment. 'Like' those companies that you're interested in working for and the professional bodies for the career area that interests you to get updates such as job vacancies and events.

Other social media platforms

The following online portfolio sites can enhance your job search techniques particularly in the fashion, media, communications and marketing sectors. Some companies will use them as part of their recruitment process e.g “ produce a 2 minute YouTube video telling us why we should recruit you”.

- **Blogs** – writing your own blog will demonstrate your enthusiasm for and knowledge in a particular career area, as well as your written communication and creativity skills. Sites such as Wordpress, Tumblr and Blogger have made it much more accessible to write a blog. Blogs can be time consuming as you should be posting on a daily basis to keep it interesting. Research company and personal blogs for your area of interest to get ideas and find out what works well and what doesn't.
- **Videos** – a more advanced technique mostly used in the creative industries. If you are good at talking to a camera and confident using a webcam you can create videos of Vlogs. This can increase the number of your followers simply because people often prefer watching videos rather than reading lots of text.
- **Personal website** – having your own website acts like an online portfolio and is most popular for those setting up a business or going into media related jobs.

Your next steps

Research and planning are important tactics in using social media as part of your job search and to make sure people are noticing you for the right reasons.

- Think about your overall job search strategy
- Decide which form of social media is best for your job search
- Do further research about protecting your net reputation and types of social media that are appropriate for you

Summary

- Social media can be a powerful job hunting tool if planned and used in a professional way.
- Use social media to complement, not replace traditional job search methods.

- Build a positive online presence – make sure your achievements, success stories and good qualities are obvious for potential employers to see.
- Once you have set up your online profiles it's important to make regular updates. An out-of-date online presence is nearly as bad as none at all.

Advice and guidance

Our professionally qualified Careers Advisers can help with your career planning and study options, including advice on job search, CVs and applications, interviews, selection tests and assessment centres. We offer a number of ways to speak to a Careers Adviser – book online via the Careers Service website gcu.ac.uk/careers

Careers Clinic (15 minutes): For quick career enquiries that will focus on:

- Sections of your CV, covering letter, application, personal statement or LinkedIn profile
- Understanding aspects of the recruitment process (applications, interview techniques, assessment centres and tests)
- Part-time, internship and placement job search
- Change of course or withdrawal

Please be realistic about what can be discussed during a 15 minute clinic session.

Careers Appointment (45 minutes):

These can be used to explore your career options and for in-depth discussions on:

- Detailed review of only one of: CV, covering letter, application, personal statement or LinkedIn profile. Please bring a paper copy to your appointment.
- Career planning and decision making
- Further study, including postgraduate options and applications
- Graduate job search and recruitment process
- Work and Study abroad

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Practice Interview (45 minutes):

Designed to give you the chance to practice your interview skills and receive feedback to help you prepare for the real thing. You will be asked to email your CV or application as a Word document at least 3 working days in advance of the appointment, along with the relevant job description.

Resources and further information

There are lots of online articles and guides about using social media as part of your job search. LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook also have information and guides on their websites.

- Your Career Starts Here student.linkedin.com/uk- video guide for students
- LinkedIn Grad Guides (1-6 videos) on YouTube



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