

Using Social Media for Jobhunting

Careers & Employability Service

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In the same way that you can use networking events, friends and family to find a job, you can use online social media sites such as Twitter and LinkedIn to find useful leads, hunt for vacancies, and market yourself to prospective employers. Using social media you should be able to:

- Identify the main players in the career sectors that interest you and the projects they are currently working on
- Find the key contacts in each organisation
- Access job postings
- Build your own personal online presence or brand

Employers use social media to recruit because:

- It is cheaper than other methods, has better coverage and reaches more relevant candidates.
- They look for people with a professional image, good communication skills and who seem to fit both personally and professionally with the job requirements.

Read about how employers use social networks to recruit on the Inc. website <http://www.inc.com/guides/2010/04/social-media-recruiting.html>

LinkedIn

(www.linkedin.com)

This is a professional networking site, (others to try are: **Xing** www.xing.com and French based **Viadeo** www.viadeo.com, where you can build up a European network) which provides opportunities to network with professionals from all kinds of employment sectors, regional groups and institutions. Use the six graduate guides to LinkedIn <http://grads.linkedin.com> to get started. LinkedIn will give you:

- A chance to see the latest topics being discussed within your sector and to contribute your own
- The means to search for professionals by job and sector for speculative approaches for both work experience and employment.
- Access to job postings
- Opportunities to network with professionals

The most important part of LinkedIn is your personal profile – your profile is how you get found on LinkedIn and how you connect with other people. It is where you build your brand. You need to include your education, experience and skills and pay attention to your spelling and grammar.

Facebook

(www.facebook.com)

Many students use Facebook to network for personal or social reasons, this is different from the professional networking you will be doing to make contacts and find jobs. Employers and professional groups use Facebook to promote their graduate programmes or their brand and this can provide useful information for you for applications or interviews. But beware, employers sometimes view the Facebook sites of prospective candidates, so set your privacy settings at the highest possible and make sure that your profile photo is suitable for an employer to view. Make sure that your online presence does not lose you the job.

Blogs

Blogs are a good way to get insight into an organisation; some larger organisations let their graduate trainees, work placement or intern students blog about their experiences.

To find suitable blogs make a Google search with the name of the company and then blog e.g. BP blog or the name of the career you wish to go into e.g. sport development blog. Writing your own blog will demonstrate your enthusiasm for and knowledge in particular career area, as well as your communication skills (see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/guides/how-to-get-a-blog>).

Twitter

(www.twitter.com)

You need a completed profile before you can follow anyone on Twitter; this includes a short biography and a photograph. See 'How to use Twitter' <http://www.c4lpt.co.uk/140Learning/link.html>. You can also link to your LinkedIn profile so that graduate recruiters can find out more about you, but make sure you present yourself in a professional way. You can use Twitter to follow the companies and people that interest you and set up a feed to keep up-to-date and to get insight into current issues within relevant careers sectors. Use www.twitterjobsearch.com to look for posted vacancies, employers often tweet about job vacancies before the adverts are posted online. Use Twellow www.twellow.com where you can find lists of people by area of expertise, profession or other attributes as listed in their personal profiles on Twitter. See Reading University's page on how to use twitter for job search, <http://is.gd/OhDF8H> Also see 'Using Social Media for Job Hunting' <http://is.gd/oqUonx> a PowerPoint presentation from Delineo. Also look at 'Job Hunting Guide with Twitter' <http://is.gd/6poUhc>

Websites: Your own website

Your own website can act like an online portfolio where you showcase yourself and your talents, creative designers can post a few well chosen examples of their work or students can post a short video CV which demonstrates their enthusiasm and personality, but never include your home address on this video, just your professional email address. You can then include your website link on your CV, when making applications or speculative approaches to employers. See 'How to Build your own Website' <http://is.gd/Tplc0j> and 'The Website set-up Guide' <http://is.gd/tliacV> for help with building your own website.

The websites of employers and professional groups

Professional groups such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants and the Public Relations Consultants Association have created professional networking areas which are accessed through their websites and which students can often join. Get to know the people on the network, show that you are interested in their area of work, ask questions to find out more about the sector and the jobs within it and perhaps after three or four contacts you could let it be known that you are looking for employment. Links to professional associations can be found on the appropriate occupational profile http://www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm on Prospects web

Youtube

(www.youtube.com)

Use it to find information about graduate recruiters and to gain insights into what it is like to work for different companies. You can also find useful advice on applications and interviews. You may want to make a short video or video CV (no more than 2 minutes) to showcase your personality and enthusiasm, the value of what you can offer and your passion for the career you want. You can then include the link to this video in your CV, application form or speculative applications to help sell yourself to prospective employers.

A recent survey by SHL showed that less than 40% of graduates would consider marketing themselves online. In some industries such as creative media it is vital, in others it is not so important, but having a professional online presence does show your willingness to engage in new ways of working, does give you opportunities to network with people from relevant sectors and also gives recruiters more chance to find you and what you have to offer. So get started if you have not done so already. Once you have online profiles it is important to make regular updates. If you have a twitter account, you should tweet every day. Blog and website posts should be updated once a week. An out-of-date online presence is nearly as bad as none at all.

For more information see 'Social Networking your way into Work' in Employability Online, accessed through the 'Student Resources' area on [moodle](#).