



## Social Networking Tips

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# These days, the internet is playing a significant role in the hiring process.

According to a 2008 Careerbuilder.com survey:

- 22% of hiring managers use social networking sites to screen candidates.
- 25% of hiring managers “Google” the names of possible candidates to research the candidate’s background.

**63% of these hiring managers made the decision to not hire someone based on something they found out on the internet.** So, what can you do to make sure your internet presence makes a positive impression on potential employers? **Here are 3 simple steps to get you started:**

**#1: Do Your Research.** You need to know what information potential employers can find about you online. Type your name, enclosed in quotation marks (e.g. “First name Last name”), in an internet search engine. Once you see what comes up, you will be able to see what—if anything—you may need to address or adjust.

**#2: Review Your Profile(s).** A great profile page can make you stand out from other candidates—and a not-so-great one can knock you out of the running. Look at each of your social networking profiles from the perspective of a potential employer. Is there anything that needs adjusted? Based on feedback from hiring managers, here are some tips for making sure your profile helps you succeed.

## Do . . .

- Evidence great communication skills.
- Present a professional image (screen name, profile picture, etc.).
- Ask professional and personal contacts to post references about you.
- Show your range of interests.
- List awards, accolades, and accomplishments.
- Exhibit creativity and an upbeat attitude.

## Do not . . .

- Post information about drinking/drugs.
- Share inappropriate photographs or information.
- Bad-mouth previous employer/coworker.
- Make discriminatory remarks related to race, gender, religion, etc.
- Use an unprofessional screen name.
- Disclose confidential information from previous employers.

**Did you know?** There are social networking sites—such as [LinkedIn.com](#) and [Spoke.com](#)—designed specifically for professional use.

**#3: Adjust Your Privacy Settings.** Every social networking site lets you choose how private or public your information is. (Sign in to each of your accounts and look for a “Settings” option.) If you have a profile you don’t want viewed by potential employers, then you need to adjust the settings on that profile to a higher level of privacy. On the other hand, you may find that a profile you wanted to be public is actually set to not show up when your name is searched. It pays to make sure all your settings are where you want them to be.