

## 10 Tips for Using Social Media in Your Job Search

By Lindsey Pollak

According to a recent survey, nearly 92 percent of college seniors have a social networking profile, but less than one-third have used social networks in their job searches.

If you are looking for a job and not using social media to help you, you may be overlooking another avenue to employment: Many employers have a social media presence, and many use social networks to screen job candidates

To make sure you use sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in the most effective way possible, follow these 10 tips.

1. **Develop a professional presence.** What do people find when they Google you? If the results aren't professional, take down those party pics and create a professional persona. Set up a profile on LinkedIn, which is a 100 percent professional network, and add professional details to your Google, Facebook, and Twitter profiles.
2. **Fill your profiles with keywords.** All of your social media profiles should include key words and phrases that a recruiter or hiring manager might type into a search engine to find a person like you. The best place to find relevant words is in the job listings that appeal to you and the social media profiles of people who have the positions you want.
3. **Use LinkedIn to find your path.** Not yet sure what career is right for you? Take a browse through LinkedIn. Comprised of more than 65 million professionals, LinkedIn offers a huge data base of other people's career paths from which you can gather ideas about companies, job titles, or professions that might be a good fit for you.
4. **Get personal.** When you're looking for a job, your online network can and should include friends and family. Parents, classmates, professors, neighbors, and other close contacts are the best people to provide you with "war" referrals to the contacts in their networks. The bigger and more authentically your network grows, the more access to opportunities you'll have.
5. **Be a joiner.** Another way to for valuable relationships is to join online communities with which you already have an affiliation. This might include your university's LinkedIn group, the Facebook fan page of a nonprofit you support, or an industry association listserv. Once you're a member of a group, you can comment on discussions, meet people who share common interests, and find exclusive job listings.
6. **Tweet.** Twitter is an amazing tool to research and connect with recruiters, industry experts, and potential employers. Even if you set up a Twitter profile to "listen" more than you tweet, you'll get enormous value out of the information you'll discover. Plus, many organizations are now tweeting out their job postings- don't miss this new source of opportunities!

7. **Blog.** Consider staking your own ground in the social media world. You can blog in writing or video about your career interests, campus life, travel, sports, activities, or anything else. Blogging (as long as you keep it clean) can demonstrate your knowledge and passion to a potential employer. If you're not interested in your own blog, comment on the posts of industry bloggers you admire. You might just catch the eye of a reader who is hiring.
8. **Share.** One of the best ways to maintain a strong professional network is to support other people by sharing helpful information like articles, blog posts, and YouTube videos. A small, helpful gesture like forwarding a link is a great form of networking (and the recipient will likely help you in return).
9. **Keep people up to date.** Status updates are another smart for of networking. Update your LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter status with information about events you're attending, books you're reading, or other career news. To remind people that you're job hunting, post updates such as, "I had a great second interview this morning- cross your fingers for me!"
10. **Use social media to ace interviews.** Before a job interview, study the LinkedIn profiles, Twitter feeds, and blogs of the people and organizations you'll be meeting. The more preparation you do, the more confident you'll feel- and the more likely you'll be to make a great impression and land the job!

**Finally, as important as social media is, remember to step away from the computer once in a while. Online methods should supplement, not replace, in-person job-searching techniques.**

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