

Working for a staffing company is never boring. We are a people business, so daily I hear tales of great candidate successes and every once in a while, shocking defeat. Last month we had to navigate a social networking snafu with a candidate. For most employers and employees, this is new territory.



Employers and recruiters are increasingly using social networking tools to sort through potential job candidates. CareerBuilder recently conducted a survey about employers and their relationship with social networking. The survey was telling. Twenty-two percent of employers said they used social networking sites when they were looking for or evaluating potential job candidates. Thirty-four percent of those that use social networking sites to screen candidates found content that convinced them to remove a candidate from their search. Ouch.

The internet is a public place. It is a permanent record of sorts. There is no doubt at this point, that usage will grow and employers will view a person's online image as a part of their personal branding.

Here are a few basic guidelines that we give to our candidates when we advise them about social networking:

✓ DO

- Google yourself
- Get rid of any online information you wouldn't willingly show an employer
- Make your public profile professional
- Show a wide range of interests
- List awards and recognition that you have achieved
- Communicate well and keep your profile current
- Monitor what your friends are saying - Block inappropriate comments
- Go private. If possible, set your profile to "private" - only the people you select will be able to view your profile.

✗ DON'T

- Say bad things about a previous employer
- Share proprietary information or sensitive information from past employers
- Lie about your previous experience ... or anything else
- Use an inappropriate screen name
- Post inappropriate photos, video or verbiage
- Use poor communication skills
- Post pictures or descriptions of yourself using illegal substances or drinking
- Join groups with questionable names
- Indicate that you are open to job opportunities if you are still employed

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