



## Is Social Media Affecting Your Career?

The number of employers using social media to screen candidates has increased by over 500% in the last decade. It's become common practice to research potential candidates on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, and seeing as 69% of employers have rejected candidates based on what they've found on these sites it's worth spending time ensuring your online reputation isn't affecting your professional life.

Employers and recruitment consultants aren't just sifting through your posts for gossip; they're looking for specific information that could alter their decision to hire you. For example, they often look for...

- ...background information to ensure it matches with the job specification
- ...details about your personality and whether it's a good fit with company culture
- ...suggestions that you're a well-rounded person with a wide range of interests
- ...evidence of good communication skills

This doesn't mean you have to treat your social media accounts as extensions of your CV, but it does mean you will have to be mindful of what you publish. Always think before posting and ensure that you don't share provocative, inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory content. You should also refrain from criticising your previous company or colleagues and ensure your grammar and spelling is correct at all times.

As well as protecting yourself from possible misjudgement by being attentive of what you share, it's also a good idea to speak to your friends and family about how they interact with you online. You can't expect everyone you know to appreciate the importance of your online reputation unless you tell them. Change your privacy settings so that you can approve any content associated with you, such as tagged photos and videos.

Every now and again Google yourself to see through your prospective employers' eyes. If you find something you wouldn't want them to see locate the source of the material, approach the person who posted it and ask them to delete it. If you can't find the source or the person you've contacted refuses to take down the content, you can contact Google or ask the administrators of the specific website you're visiting to do it.

To some this may seem like a lot of unnecessary stress and you might be tempted to remove your social media presence from the internet entirely, but this could also prove detrimental to your career. The removal of social media is not problematic as such but it can be frustrating for employers and consultants trying to get to know you. You could also be losing out on a lot of opportunities and valuable resources, such as the chance to join industry groups to demonstrate your commitment, interest and expertise in your specific field.

Remember that although it can be useful, social media isn't the be all and end all when it comes to your career. It's a handy tool that can boost your chances of landing your dream job, but you should also look for opportunities outside of it. There is a lot of scaremongering and horror stories on the subject but with common sense it will always be more of a help than a hindrance.

For more advice on improving your online reputation or to find out about our latest roles, [contact your local branch today.](#)