



# Online Career Development

How to utilize social networking  
for online career development  
and effective work-search

facebook®

Linked in.

twitter

A compilation by  
TQM Consulting in association with  
the Kamloops Work Search Centres and Amanda Farough  
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## Posting Information Online - Do's and Don'ts

Social networking opens up a world of possibilities for social and professional connections through websites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and MySpace. Although these websites are relatively secure when users utilize the websites' privacy and security settings, there are still concerns with posting information online. It may seem secure and you may feel protected but one must always be cautious of the possibility of invasion of privacy and identity theft.

Sharing contact information online has been a hot topic among experts in the field for many years and now that social networking has broken into the mainstream, there will continue to be issues with identity theft, security breaches, and phishing (the main device of identity theft). There are many ways to protect yourself online, including the omission of private information like your age, social insurance number, current address, or any other information that you wouldn't readily share with a stranger on the street.

The following hints should help you stay safe while posting and sharing personal information on the Internet:

### Do

- Create accounts with strong passwords that are not associated with your identity in any way
  - For example, use passwords that have capital letters, lower case letters, numbers, and special characters
  - Make a phrase out of the characters so that you'll remember it
- Post your resume and generic cover letter on many **reputable** work-search websites
- Create a Twitter account for work-search related activities
- Create a LinkedIn account for networking within your field of expertise
- Be careful about which sensitive information you post in your resume, cover letter, and profile information (on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn)
- Continually build your network of contacts on Twitter and LinkedIn
- Create offline meetups with your network of contacts **in a public place** within your region so that you're meeting people in person
- Contribute your wealth of knowledge to the Twitter network through references and links
- Enjoy connecting with different kinds of people from all over the world

### Don't

- Write your passwords down; try to remember your passwords by choosing phrases associated with the passwords
  - Be aware: if you write your password down, make sure you write it down in a notebook and store it only off of your computer
- Be paranoid about posting your resume on the internet. Although there are many security concerns (not the least of which is identity theft), there are strong security measures taken by the work-search websites and social networking websites
- Leave your resume online if you're no longer looking for work
- Get caught up in the internet culture of social networking and spend hours a day on Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn
- Create offline meetings with your network of contacts in someone's house or a non-public place
- Use online social networking and work-search as a replacement for interaction with the job coaches and employment advisors at the Work Search Centres

### Sharing Information Online: A Cautionary Tale TO DO

It's a razor-edge that we're walking on when it comes to sharing our information online. On the one hand, it's good to utilize social networking to share one's personal anecdotes, resources, and information. On the other hand, when sharing becomes over sharing, you're crossing lines you probably didn't even know existed. In a recent article from the San Francisco Gate, journalist Verne Kopytoff comments that "there's really no good way yet for people to let one another know that they are being too revealing [online]".



## 5 Tricks for Using Twitter as a Career Development Tool

It's difficult to describe Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com>) to a person who's never seen it before but by definition, Twitter is an online micro-blogging platform that allows its users to create communities and groups based on similar interests and hobbies. When it launched in 2006, Twitter asked the simple question: "What are you doing?" in 140 characters or less. From the question came many answers that became the beginnings of a larger community with groups that focused on resource pooling in the form of links and advice. By following and being followed by other users in the online Twitter network, users were able to update (or "tweet"), connect and communicate concisely in 140 characters or less. So how can a micro-blogging platform -- used primarily by internet savvy twentysomething freelancers -- be useful to the average person for their career development?



### 1. Join/build communities and groups based on similar career goals and interests.

When you first sign up for a Twitter account, you won't have any friends (people whom you follow) or followers. The best way to find people to connect with is to utilize the service called "Twellow" (<http://www.twellow.com/>). Twellow finds users that have related career goals/interests so that you can decide whether or not you'd like to follow their updates.

### 2. Fill out your profile with keywords so that others can search for you on Twellow and/or Twitterel (<http://www.twitterel.com>).

Let's say that you're a person working in the health care industry who's interested in learning more about getting into social services. Your profile should read something like this: "Health care professional interested in learning more about careers in social service who loves cats, ice-cream, and cloudy afternoons." By wording your profile with keywords, such as "health care", "professional", "careers" and "social services", you'll be opening yourself up to connecting with other Twitter users who are searching for your keywords on

Twellow and/or Twitterel

## 5 Tricks for Using Twitter as a Career Development Tool Continued

### 3. Search for and follow profiles that are dedicated to career development, job skills, and work search

Use Twellow to look for Twitter users whose goals are to provide resources and useful information for users who are interested in career development, developing job skills, and other work search related activities. If you're looking for region specific information (ie., the Kamloops area, Interior BC, the Lower Mainland), be sure to include that in your search. Once you start to build your network of contacts in Twitter, you'll be able to reap the benefits of useful links, resources, and information.

### 4. Utilize third party applications and services that help you to maintain your network of friends and followers, such as Tweet Deck, Mr. Tweet, and Twitter Search.

There are many third party applications and services available for Twitter and while many of them are great, there is only a few that are truly exceptional.

- Tweet Deck (<http://www.tweetdeck.com>) allows users to create groups, organize how tweets are displayed, and keep up with many contacts at any given time.
- Mr. Tweet (<http://www.mrtweet.com>) is a great resource for building your network of contacts. Once you follow Mr. Tweet's Twitter profile, he'll find you a list of potential contacts that are influential and important in the network that you're building. For example, if you're building your network around people who are interested in health care and social services, Mr. Tweet will find other people who have similar interests/goals and suggest them to you.
- Twitter Search (<http://search.twitter.com>) is a built-in search engine for Twitter. It allows you to see what the top trends are for tweeting and allows you to search for keywords in tweets. By utilizing Twitter Search, you can find people who may not be suggested by Mr. Tweet or Twellow and may potentially be the kinds of people you'd like to network with.

### 5. Be an active member in the Twitter network by providing useful information, links, and personal anecdotes.

It takes time to build a network of contacts through Twitter so this isn't a process that will happen overnight but that doesn't mean that you need to put in hours and hours of work either. Take a few minutes a day to check Twellow, Twitter Search, and Mr. Tweet to see if there's anything new going on. Even if there isn't, you'll make checking your Twitter account and Twitter contacts just as common as checking your email or Facebook profile.

## Building Your Professional Network through LinkedIn

LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)) is an incredible resource for any professional in any industry. It combines the ease of use that one might find through using Facebook with the professional quality that one would find on a pay-site for niche professionals (particularly Information Technology).



LinkedIn provides users a place to update their profile, which reads like an online resume, connect with other professionals from their field, and expand their network to include people from all over the world, instead of all over the city/province.

Like Facebook, you can choose the level of security for your profile, depending on your comfort level for putting personal information in the great expanse of cyberspace. Your personal information (address, phone number, email, etc.) are kept private until you connect with the user through an online introduction.

Once you've been introduced to the user online, you can either choose to connect with this person (based on qualities and qualifications that you have in your own mind) or to refuse the introduction and block that person from seeing the intimate details of your work history.

If you're a self-employed person or a freelancing contractor, LinkedIn is your window into the rest of the working world. As you're no longer part of an office environment, professional networking may be non-existing or shoddy, at best. But by using LinkedIn, you're able to network almost effortlessly and you're able to avoid noisy networking functions where you can barely hear, let alone carry a conversation.

Employers also have the option of setting up entire profiles for their company. This allows their employees to connect with one another and as a recruitment tool for potential employees.

As an employer, you can look up information and decide whether or not to contact this person for hiring opportunities, either through the LinkedIn messaging program (available only to Premium users) or through their email (if they're in your network already).

Finally, once you have your contact information, work history, and expertise all entered into your profile, you have the option of downloading the Virtual Card Information (or the VCF) or the PDF version of your profile; your information is formatted in Curriculum Vitae format, which can be altered in Microsoft Word, Open Office, or Adobe Acrobat. If employers have access to your information through your network affiliation, they can likewise download your information and pass it on to people who might be interested in hiring someone of your caliber.

Unlike Twitter which can require months of effort to build a suitable network, a LinkedIn network can be built in a few weeks. Putting in the initial time to search for contacts within your field (and region) doesn't take long but by putting in the time to begin with, you're starting your network off the right way.

## Use Your LinkedIn Profile as a Resume

### The Importance of Your LinkedIn Profile

One of the most important parts of LinkedIn is your profile. That's what you use to connect with people in your network and your profile is how you get found on LinkedIn by potential employers. In addition, your LinkedIn profile can increase your visibility online and help you build your professional brand. By entering your name in the Google search engine, anyone looking for information about you can find everything they need to know at a glance - skills, employment information, recommendations, etc.

That's why it's important to make sure that your LinkedIn profile is complete and detailed. In fact, you can consider your LinkedIn profile your online resume. It should have the same information that is on your resume and, if you're looking for a new job, you will want prospective employers to be able to review your credentials for employment, including your qualifications, your experience, and your skills.

### How to Use Your LinkedIn Profile as a Job Search Tool

- **Create a Profile.** Create a detailed profile on LinkedIn, including employment (current and past), education, and industry. Review your resume and copy/paste the relevant information into your profile. If you're currently unemployed list your current position as "Open to opportunities."
- **Add a Photo.** You can add a photo (a headshot is recommended or upload a larger photo and edit it) to your LinkedIn profile. Note that it must be a small photo - no larger than 80x80 pixels.
- **Professional Summary.** The Professional Summary section of your profile is a good way to highlight your experience. Select an Industry, because recruiters often use that field to search. Don't forget the Headline, because that's right at the top of the page when someone views your profile.
- **Keywords and Skills.** Include all the keywords and skills from your resume in your profile. That will make it easier for your profile to be found in search results.

## Use Your LinkedIn Profile as a Resume Continued

- **Contact Settings.** Your contact settings let your connections (and recruiters) know what you're available for. Options include: career opportunities, consulting offers, new ventures, job inquiries, reference requests. Even if you're not actively seeking a new job, it's beneficial to be flexible about your interests, because you never know when a good opportunity might come along.
- **Links.** The links section of your profile is a good way to provide even more information to potential employers and to your contacts. I have links to my company website, my blog, and my About.com site.
- **Public Profile URL.** Don't forget to make your profile public - that's how the world can find it. Also, customizing your URL will give you a link that's easy to share. Mine, for example, is <http://www.linkedin.com/in/alisondoyle>.
- **Create a Signature.** Create a LinkedIn signature to use in your email. That's another way to increase the visibility of your profile.
- **Update Your Profile.** Don't forget to update your profile when you change positions or companies. Your profile should be current and up-to-date.
- **Grow Your Network.** Connect with other members and build your network. The more connections you have, the more opportunities you have, but don't randomly connect with people you don't know. All that does is annoy them - you won't gain anything by attempting to connect with someone who never heard of you.
- **Get Recommendations.** To a potential employer, a LinkedIn recommendation is a reference in advance.
- **Use LinkedIn to Job Search.** Use LinkedIn as part of your job search strategy - it will help expedite your job search.



Source:

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/linkedinprofile.htm> and Alyson Doyle, about.com

## How Facebook Can Make (or Break) Your Career

When Facebook was originally created by Mark Zuckerberg and his fellow group of graduate students at Harvard University's Computer Science program, it was only to be used by graduate students at American universities and colleges. Since its inception, Facebook has undergone several evolutions. It has wormed its way into the very structure of our online interaction, allowing colleagues, friends, forgotten contacts, and family to stay in touch.

However, with the power of Facebook comes great responsibility! Many employers are using Facebook to look up potential employees and using things like drunken photos, crass language, and status updates to determine whether or not said potential employee will be suitable for the company. By creating a profile that's professional, as well as personal, you can help attract potential employers and network with other professionals in your industry.



### Sprucing Up Your Facebook Profile

- Set your privacy settings to “Only Friends Can See My Profile” so that no one but people in your network of friends can access your profile. This is a great practice for any person using Facebook as that limits who can see your photos, personal information, or location.
- Remove references to any inappropriate or unflattering photos. Your friends can still post pictures of you partying on a Saturday night but by removing the tag from the photo, you're no longer publically associated with it.
- Include your work history in your profile with descriptions that would be on your resume.
- Include meaningful interests, hobbies, and activities.
- Delete any status updates that might suggest that you don't enjoy working or that you're not interested in your current/past place(s) of employment.

## How to Network Professionally on Facebook

There are ways to turn Facebook into a professional networking tool, in spite of the draws of games, family photos, and other applications. By sprucing up your Facebook profile, you're already part-way there!

- Set your “Looking for” to include “Networking”. You can find these settings in the “Information” tab of your Profile. This way, when people are searching for networking opportunities, your name will show up in the search.
- By using Facebook’s built-in search engine, you can search for keywords in other users’ profiles. For example, if you’re looking to network with other people in the health care industry, you can type in keywords like “health care” and it will come up with a list of other people who are interested in health care either professionally or personally.
- Message people that you’re looking to network with on Facebook to make sure that you’re not just adding them out of the blue. Most users on Facebook are adverse to cold-networking but if you send them a message letting them know that you’re interested in talking to them about their professional experiences, they’ll be more inclined to add you as a Facebook contact.
- Maintain your network of professional contacts in the same way you might keep in touch with friends and family. Send them a message every now and again, asking them how their work is going or if they’ve heard anything new and interesting about the industry that you might not have heard of. In return, offer up your own professional tidbits of information.

The benefit of networking on Facebook is that many people are already familiar with how the Facebook website works. Facebook now has over 30 million active members worldwide on their networks. The opportunities for professional networking all over the world are practically limitless and by practicing professional networking habits, you’re bound to attract the attention of employers on the prowl and of other professionals in your industry.

## 10 Ways To Use Facebook Professionally

Facebook has to be the most talked about, and the most misunderstood, web service/platform right now. If you haven't gotten drawn in by the hype, it may surprise you to learn that many people have already found Facebook to be an essential addition to their web working toolbox. Why?

Because the Facebook social networking experience can be precisely what you want to make of it. Think of Facebook as a professional tool, and that's what it is. It doesn't matter how millions of high school and college students are using Facebook to get out of doing homework. You can make it into whatever you want, even your own personal media broadcasting channel.

Let's look at 11 ways Facebook can benefit the web worker, particularly those who are home-based. The more connected you are to your co-workers and clients without being intrusive, the better your working relationship.

*Note: you may need to have an existing Facebook profile to follow some of these links.*

### **1. Think of it like personalizing your desk.**

You can't help it. When you walk by someone's desk, your eye is drawn to the pictures and the way they have personalized and organized their space. You pick up on clues to their lives without realizing it.

Therefore only display on your profile what you'd put on your desk. Just because Steve owns a picture his buddy took of him getting sick after an all-night party doesn't mean he's going to frame it and put it out for his co-workers to admire.

Don't add anything to your profile that you wouldn't display for your supervisors, co-workers and clients to see as they're walking by your work environment.

### **2. Look for old co-workers and current connections**

I found more contacts on Facebook this way than I did on LinkedIn. Former colleagues have "Googled" me, and after a few emails to catch up we don't communicate again. By adding these people to Facebook, I feel more connected to them without having to actively maintain a conversation via email. Look for business opportunities out of shared interests.

### **3. Add friends selectively**

Contrary to popular belief, Facebook isn't about "collecting" friends. There's no reward for quantity, and you can have a rich experience on the platform with only a handful of connections. The quality of your Facebook experience will be based on the quality of the people in your network. Create a limited profile for those people that you are on the fence about whether to include. By default your limited profile contains everything in your full profile, so take the time to edit it down.

### 4. Add applications (apps) selectively.

**(Applications are computer programs designed to help people perform an activity)**

Right now, there are over 2000 apps you can add to your Facebook profile. The temptation may be to try them all. Don't. Just because you can add Love Quotes to your profile, it doesn't mean you should if you want Facebook to be a professional tool for you. Pick apps that won't waste your time when you visit your Facebook home page, so avoid those that involve playing games.

Read the app description carefully and know exactly what you're getting, and what the privacy settings are before you go. It helps to see how your contacts are using the app first. But never fear, worst comes to worst you can remove an app as easily as you added it. Think of your apps in two ways...what do you want to see (that will appear on your Facebook home page) and what do I want the world to see (that will appear on your profile)? You might consider adding an app that you don't display on your profile at all, but it uses the collective wisdom and usage patterns of your network to provide you with valuable information. Or, if you visit your Facebook home page often it can help keep you organized having nothing to do with your friends' actions.

**5. Edit your news feed preferences.** You don't necessarily have to know the moment someone adds a new picture, but you may want to know when they've made a new connection you may have in common. Click the "preferences" button on your Facebook home page and use the sliders to give preference to the type of information you want. The more you fine-tune this information, the less time you'll waste sifting through useless updates.

### 6. Edit your profile and security settings.

Give careful consideration to exactly who sees your profile and when. Don't take the default settings which tend to expose more information than you may be comfortable with. Take the time to go through each link in the Privacy area and make necessary adjustments. Maybe you don't want people who are casually searching

to know who your friends are or "poke" you. Maybe you don't want a public profile (accessible to people who are not on Facebook). Facebook can come back to bite you. This is especially true if your primary network is geography-based. It's one thing to share your full profile with everyone who went to the same college or high school you did, it's another to share your profile with your whole community.

#### Privacy Overview

Facebook wants you to share your information with exactly the people you want to see it. On this page, you'll find all the controls you need to set who can see your profile and the stuff in it, who can find and contact you on Facebook, and more.

#### Profile

You are in two networks and you can control who can see your profile, contact information, groups, wall, photos, posted items, online status, and status updates.

Edit Settings 

#### Search

You can control who can find you in searches and what appears in your search listing.

Edit Settings 

#### News Feed and Mini-Feed

You can control what actions show up in your Mini-Feed and your friends' News Feeds.

Edit Settings 

#### Poke, Message, and Friend Request

You can select which parts of your profile are visible to people you contact through a poke, message, or friend request.

Edit Settings 

#### Applications

You can edit your privacy for applications you have added to your account, applications that you have used on another website, and other applications built on Facebook Platform.

Edit Settings 

## 10 Ways To Use Facebook Professionally Continued

Google Reader Shared Items  
Robert Scoble's shared items

Lifhacker Top 10: Top 10 Unofficial Gmail Apps and Add-ons Downloads, Email, Email apps, Feature, Firefox Extensions, Gmail, Lifhacker Top 10, Top	Lifhacker 2007-07-18
Search All Official Google Blogs Technology, Internet, Google, Search	Google 2007-07-17
Top 10 Facebook Apps: Media Facebook Week, 16-20 July 2007	Read/WriteWeb 2007-07-18

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in part 3 of my top 10 Facebook applications series, I will be looking at the top 10 apps that have to do with media. For the most part, these are apps that let users watch, display, look at, and remix video, audio, and photo content. This is a completely subjective list, so not everyone will agree with our picks and I encourage you to debate them in the comments.

This post is the third in a 5-part series that will identify the top 50 Facebook apps (10 each in 5 categories). Be sure to check out Part 1: Work and Part 2: Play, as well.

**Video**



Video is an official app from Facebook that allows users to upload videos, post videos directly from mobile phones, or record them from web cams. These videos are pretty high quality, can be posted to your profile or friends' Walls, or sent via the inside messaging system. One of the more interesting features is per-video permission that let you decide on a video-to-video basis who sees each clip.

**7. Incorporate the tools you're already using into your profile.** Web workers like playing with all the latest toys. Do you blog? Do you Twitter? Do you read feeds? There are Facebook apps available for all these services. If you have already used these tools professionally, why not add them to your Facebook profile? After you add the respective app, you simply do what you were already doing and let the app do the work. You can see the Twitter updates from your Facebook contacts without necessarily following their updates in Twitter itself. If your blog is on WordPress.com, you can add the WordPress app and your posts will automatically be pushed to your Facebook profile, along with recent comments. If you don't host your blog with WordPress.com, you can easily use the built-in Notes application to post your blog feed as you publish. It will let your contacts know through your mini-feed when you've posted a new entry. Since your friends can edit their news feeds as easily as you can, they can control how much of your life they really want to see.

### 8. Limit time wasted on Facebook.

Facebook can suck you in easily. Remember, you have work to do. You won't help your career if you fall behind on projects because you were too busy playing. If you find that you're spending too much time reading Facebook message boards or reading about your friends' favorite book selections then set limits for yourself. Facebook is a black hole. In order to get the most of Facebook, you have to be *on* the platform. Consider the Facebook toolbar for Firefox which will notify when you have a reason to go check the home page. You can also work with Facebook from your mobile phone, so think about babysitting your profile while you're waiting in line or otherwise bored and not being productive anyway.

**9. Be philanthropic.** And look good to your friends while doing it. Can Facebook change the world? Probably not. But you can do your part and show it off. You can add the Causes app to specifically benefit nonprofit organizations. You can join groups that stand for actions you believe in. Use your Facebook profile to show the best side of you to your contacts, and if the environment or a cause benefits from your actions then all the better.

**10. Ask Questions.** Tap into collective intelligence with the [My Questions app](#). Don't know the best resource for a particular problem? Maybe your network can provide some insight. Many of us have used our blogs for this very purpose. Asking your question on Facebook instead filters out the general public, and doesn't leave a trail for Google to follow.

Source: <http://webworkerdaily.com/2007/07/24/12-ways-to-use-facebook-professionally/> by Judi Sohn