



# BITE-SIZED CAREER STRATEGIES

## Social Media Audit for Jobseekers

Your online social media profile can positively or negatively impact your job search. This audit will help you evaluate whether your online accounts are helping or hurting your chances of employment.

More than half of employers say they have rejected an applicant because of what they have found on the jobseeker's social media profiles.

You may have accounts on multiple social media services — LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube, Instagram — and more. The most important, from a job search perspective, is LinkedIn. We will assess all your social media accounts, but there is a separate section for evaluating your LinkedIn presence.

In general, you want to avoid controversy on your social media accounts when you are in the midst of a job search. That means avoiding religious or political status updates or shares and “scrubbing” posts that show you engaging in anything that a prospective employer may find offensive or inappropriate.

Not only is it important to have some kind of social media presence, but you also want to evaluate what that social media presence says about you. Does it present a positive or negative impression of you? Does it establish you as an expert in your field, or a thought leader?

### 1 Google Yourself

Log out of your Google accounts (i.e., Gmail, YouTube, etc.) if you have them. Clear your browser cache. Then, Google your name.

Next, assess how many POSITIVE results you recorded. Are at least 70% of the results that are about you positive — or at least neutral?

If you have negative information about you on the first page of your Google search results, you will need to do some work on your online reputation management. One of the best ways to do this is to claim your social media profiles (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) and to publish content (i.e., writing articles, being published in periodicals associated with your profession, writing LinkedIn posts, etc.)

### 2 Assess Each Social Media Profile

Assess each of your social media profiles and determine if there is any information that could potentially be harmful to your employment search. Check for completion of information (especially in the “bio” section of each profile) and consistency in imagery and message.

Fill out one box for each social media profile — for example, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, Tumblr, Quora, and YouTube.



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If you have any controversial or inappropriate information on your profile, either delete the post (preferred) or set the setting for that post/picture to private. Remember, however, that once information is posted online, it lives online forever. And, even if you have your privacy settings set to "Friends Only," that doesn't mean that the information won't be shared. Any of your friends can take a screenshot of your information and share it.

Next, you want to make sure that you are active on all the platforms you have an account on. Delete — or make inactive — any accounts you're not currently using regularly.

Also, check your usernames — particularly on Twitter. Make sure that they are all in "good taste."

On Facebook in particular, it's important that you have some information that is public. Your profile photo and employment and education should be visible to all visitors, so make sure your privacy settings are set to allow that.

### 3 Evaluate Your LinkedIn Presence

LinkedIn is likely your most visible employment-related social media profile, and you should spend some time making sure that it represents you well.

Answer these questions:

- Have you set up your personalized URL for your LinkedIn profile?
- Does your profile picture represent you well?
- Do you have your contact information available on the profile? (phone number and additional email addresses)
- Have you included all the languages you speak?
- Are the key projects you've worked on including in your profile?
- Have you included all the courses you've taken?
- Does your information on LinkedIn match up with your resume information?
- Review your Groups — are there any "weird" ones in there you should remove?

You also want to make sure that your LinkedIn profile meets the site's definitions of "profile" completeness." LinkedIn has its own criteria for "profile completeness," which has changed somewhat over time.

- Your industry and location
- An up-to-date current position (with a description)
- Two past positions
- Your education
- At least three skills
- A profile photo
- At least 50 connections

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### 4 See If There Are Any Gaps

While it's not necessary to have accounts on multiple social media platforms, you need to identify if there are any industry-specific or job-specific social media accounts you need to have to boost your credibility as a candidate.

How do you know what profession-specific social media presence you need? Ask colleagues. Google others in your profession and see what social media platforms they use. inquire of your professional association contacts. Read industry trade journals and see what apps and websites are mentioned.

### 5 Assess Your Total Social Media Presence

The final step is to ensure consistency across all your social media profiles. For example, consider using the same professional photo on all your social media accounts (especially LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook) so it's easy for the prospective employer to see that is is your profile.



Nancy Segal  
[www.solutions-workplace.com](http://www.solutions-workplace.com)  
[linkedin.com/in/nancysegal](https://www.linkedin.com/in/nancysegal)



Ellen Steverson  
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