

## Using Social Networking Sites for Job Searching:

Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace are a popular way to keep up with friends and family and make new friends with similar interests. However, these sites can be used to further your career as well as your social life.

### Different ways you can utilize social networking sites in a job search include:

- **Advertise yourself:** Social networking sites are a great way to build an online presence and market yourself. Like a resume, you can control most of the information you present in your profile on a social networking site. So make sure the information in your profile presents a positive image for prospective employers.
- **Networking:** You can search for people who currently work at a company that you would like to work for and contact them. Like regular networking, this can help you find information out about the company and whether or not there are any openings. You can join groups related to your career and interests, and get connected with people within your field. You can also look up former coworkers and classmates who may be able to give you a referral.
- **Blogging:** Most social networking sites have some capacity for blogging or microblogging (brief posts, including “status updates”). You can use these blogging features to demonstrate your knowledge in your career field, or keep your contacts updated about your job search. Remember that future employers may see this, so keep content appropriate and use proper grammar.
- **Job Searching:** Most social networking sites have job boards. Myspace has Myspace Jobs, which contains jobs listed on SimplyHired.com. At Facebook, you can look at the Marketplace application for jobs in your area. LinkedIn has a job search tab. Many companies post openings on their Twitter page, so you can choose to follow companies you are interested in. You can also follow job feeds such as **@indeed** (listings from the job board Indeed.com) or **@jobshouts**.

### Some general tips on using social networking sites for job hunting:

- **Don't give up on job hunting the old fashion way.** While social networking sites may help you to get referrals, connect to people in your field, and even search for jobs, it should not be the only way you look for jobs. Continue to monitor job boards and aggregators such as Monster and CareerBuilder, look for want ads in the local newspaper and on the websites of professional organizations, and network in person.
- **Join only as many networking sites as you can regularly maintain.** That means that you should be able to update it on at least a weekly basis. You should update Twitter at least once a day.
- **Make sure materials in your profile are appropriate, whether or not you are using it to job search.** Many companies check potential employees' profiles on social networking sites. Make sure that the content on your social networking sites are something you would want potential employers to see. Edit out questionable pictures, content, and statements by friends. You might also want to Google your name and see what information turns up. If you don't want people to be able to see your social networking profiles, make sure to edit the privacy of your accounts.

## Exploring the different Social Networking:

To help you decide which sites to use in your job search, here is a guide to four of the most popular sites and what features they have available for job hunting:



**Website:** <http://www.linkedin.com/>

**Cost:** Free basic service. However, there is a charge to upgrade to a business account, which allows for larger networks and more services.

**Users:** Used primarily by professionals and those seeking professional careers. There are around 46 million users worldwide, including executives from all Fortune 500 companies.

**Focus:** This social networking site is primarily used for business networking. Companies will often look here to recruit new employees. If you are looking for a professional job, LinkedIn is the best social networking site for you to use in your job hunt.

**Starting an account:** When you create a LinkedIn account, you will fill out a profile that contains much of the same information as your resume (current/ past positions, education, professional experience & goals, etc.). Once you fill out your profile, *LinkedIn* will make recommendations of people you may know from your former jobs and education. You can send invitations to these people to become one of your connections.

### Cool features for job hunters:

- You can import your resume to your profile.
- **Recommendations:** You can ask some of your *LinkedIn* connections to recommend you on the site. Their recommendation will show up on your profile page, so recruiters looking at the page will know that you do quality work.
- **Groups:** You can look for a professional organization in your field or a group that shares your interests. This is a great way to connect to people in your field and who share your interests.
- **Job postings:** You can browse job posting posted directly onto LinkedIn as well as gathered from other job sites on the web. You can apply for jobs directly through the website. You can also see if you have a connection who can give you a referral for the job.
- **Companies:** You can search for companies you would like to work at and see a listing of people currently employed there. LinkedIn has company profiles that include information on the company such as common job titles, top schools attended by employees, and average age of the employee that can give you background on the environment of the company.
- **Answer boards:** If you have a question about your job search, you can post it on the answer page. Other *LinkedIn* users can then respond to your question. You can also answer questions that others have asked. A great way to interact with other users and show your business expertise!

### Further Reading:

"LinkedIn Job Search," Alison Doyle, *About.com*.

<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/linkedinjobsearch.htm>



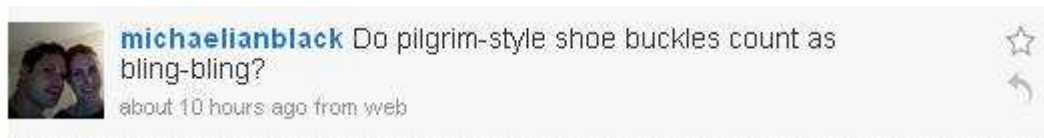
**Website:** <http://twitter.com/>

**Cost:** Free.

**Users:** Twitter doesn't publish the total number of users, but it's estimated to be in the low millions. Twitter users run the gambit from celebrities, to business professional, and companies.

**Focus:** Twitter is a microblogging site where you can post messages of 140 characters or less. You can choose to follow other Twitter users and they can follow you. Twitter is a great place to create an online presence for yourself and network, especially if you are looking to start a career in IT & computer services, public relations, media, or library and information services.

**Sample Tweet:**



**Starting an account:** Signing up for Twitter is much shorter than LinkedIn. You just give it basic information (your name, email address, and whatever password you would like) and choose the design of your page. You then can fill out a short biography (160 characters or less) and upload a picture of yourself. After you create an account, you can search for people you may know on Twitter. You can also search for companies you may be interested in working in and sign up to follow their Twitter streams.

**Tips for job hunters on Twitter:**

- **Tweet on your chosen career field:** If you are applying for professional jobs, odds are that you probably all ready have some background and training in the field (even if you just graduated). Perhaps you regularly read blogs and/ or magazines relating to your field. Tweet on trends and issues affecting your field. This will show employers that you stay current and informed.
- **Follow other people in your career field:** This will help you stay current and well read in your field. Also, you can interact with them and ask them questions about their profession. If you read professional blogs, try looking up the names of the bloggers you tend to read regularly. You can also do topic searches to identify people in your field.
- **Tweet about your job search:** If you are looking for work, don't be afraid to let people know that. However, keep your comments positive and don't tweet exclusively about your job search.
- **Follow companies you would like to work for:** Not only will you be kept up to date on company news, but companies often post job openings on their Twitter page.
- **Follow job feeds:** Twitter doesn't really have a search engine for jobs. However, there are job feeds that you can follow. To look for job feeds, you can check out the Twitter Job Feeds Directory (<http://twitter.com/jobfeeds>)

**Further Reading:**

- "How To: Find a Job on Twitter," Sarah Evans, *Mashable.com*. <http://mashable.com/2009/03/13/twitter-jobs/>
- "Tweet Your Way to a New Job," Caroline M.L. Potter, *Yahoo HotJobs*. [http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-tweet\\_your\\_way\\_to\\_a\\_new\\_job-893](http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/career-articles-tweet_your_way_to_a_new_job-893)



**Website:** <http://www.facebook.com>

**Cost:** Free.

**Users:** Facebook has over 300 million users. It started out only being available on college campuses; however, now more than 2/3 of users are outside of college. Many businesses have Facebook pages and some even have their own networks.

**Focus:** Facebook is primarily used for socializing. You can post pictures to share with family and friends, send out event invitations, and write messages on friends' walls. However, many businesses are starting to use Facebook as a way to interact with their customers and promote their products. Facebook does have job ads posted on the Marketplace application which can be a good place to look for a job, especially for recent college graduates and people interested in IT and computer services jobs.

**Starting an account:** Liked LinkedIn, when you sign up for a Facebook, you will complete a profile. However, it is more about your personal interests (favorite movies, music, quotes, etc.) than your work experience. There is an option to include information about employment and education, if you want. Don't feel obligated to fill out every field. In fact if you are planning to use your page primarily to network for jobs, you might want to skip categories such as political views, religion, or "interested in." After you fill out your profile, you can search for friends within your networks, as well as people who share similar interests or background.

**Cool features for job hunters on Facebook:**

- **Status Updates:** you can use these like a Twitter account. Make short, brief posts about your job search or demonstrate your knowledge about current trends/ issues in your career fields.

**Sample Status Update:**



- **Notes:** If you would like to make a longer post or something you'd like to stay on your page for a longer time, you can create a note. You can also tag certain friends that you would like to read your notes.
- **Marketplace:** This application is very similar to traditional classified ads or Craigslist. You can browse job ads by category or you can search them.

**Tips for job hunters on Facebook:**

- Make sure the content on your profile is presents a professional image. Remove the tags on photos of yourself that might be questionable and delete inappropriate comments from your wall.
- If you have another blog, an online resume, or a different social networking sight, you can create links to your other pages in your profiles.

**Further Reading:**

- "Facebook and Professional Networking," by Alison Doyle, *About.com*.  
<http://jobsearch.about.com/od/networking/a/facebook.htm>
- *Facebook for Dummies* by Carolyn Abram, Wiley Pub, 2008. Call Number: 004.69 ABR



**Website:** <http://www.myspace.com/>

**Cost:** Free.

**Users:** Myspace is among the two largest social networking sights (along with Facebook). It has a wide range of users from companies to musicians and comedians to most likely many of your friends and family.

**Focus:** Myspace is primarily used for socializing. However, it also a good place for musicians and comedians to find a following by posting their music, videos, and stand up routines. Many companies have Myspace pages as well.

**Starting an Account:** Like Facebook, Myspace profiles tend to be focused on your interests in pop culture. However, you can fill in career and education information as well. You can also look for friends in your area, or people who may have similar interests or background.

**Cool features for job hunters:**

- **Myspace Jobs:** Has listings from SimplyHired.com.
- **Blog:** You can create a blog on your Myspace page.
- **Blurbs:** Allow you to give a quick pitch about yourself and who you'd like to meet. A great place to sum up your career goals.
- **Bulletin boards:** Here you can send a message to all your friends on Myspace. You can post your resume on here or ask for referrals.

**Further reading:**

*Myspace for Dummies*, by Ryan Hupfer, Wiley Pub., 2008. **Call Number:** 006.7 Hup