

For Candidates...

Social Media:

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS TO HELP YOU BOOST YOUR CAREER

Social networking can prove a useful tool for finding a new job or moving forward in your career. Here we look at the pros and cons of five key platforms:



- Link up with LinkedIn - Professional social network LinkedIn now has 150 million users globally, so it's essential you are using all of its features correctly. Your profile acts as a live CV so make sure you optimise it by adding your relevant skills and experience.

Think about the key words a hiring manager might use to search for talent and add these to your summary. And ensure you are connecting with as many people you know to expand your network and visibility.

This is perhaps more important than ever for temporary or contract workers – by building up a good pool of contacts can make the chances of securing future assignments that much easier. Join industry related groups – you have the ability to join up to 50 - to further extend your network.

Not only will this put you in touch with fellow professionals, but it will also allow you to comment on discussions and start to be seen as an expert in your field. Follow companies you are interested in working with in the future to see when vacancies in the business become available.

- Tweet on Twitter - Although not designed as a professional networking tool, Twitter can prove useful when looking for employment. Follow companies you are interested in working for and consultancies that might be able to help find you work. Expand on your profile so people know who you are and what you do and start engaging with fellow users.

Twitter can also keep you in the loop with regards to upcoming events – and whether it be networking meetings, or career fairs, these will put you in front of the relevant individuals that can assist you with your career now, or in the future.

- Google+ - There is much debate as to whether Google+ is a viable platform for career enhancement. Google's CEO Larry Page has announced this year that Google+ has crossed over the 170 million user mark, but research suggests that connectivity is perhaps lower than expected.

Despite this, you should still spend time completing your profile and adding colleagues, potential employers and professional associations to your circles.

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By laying the groundwork now, you will be one step ahead of the competition if Google+ is the social medium of choice for a company or professional you wish to engage with. And if its popularity increases, you won't miss the boat.

Google+ has the real advantage of keeping private and professional contacts separate by segregating them into circles. This enables users to address just one group at a time when posting updates, giving the platform the potential to be an ideal medium for professional connectivity.

With a more active user base, Google+ could prove the ideal solution to managing your private and professional online presence – as such, it's certainly worth exploring.

- Take an interest in Pinterest - Pinterest is not a networking platform in the traditional sense as it does not allow direct communication. However we're seeing increasing numbers of businesses using it.

By creating boards, you can demonstrate your knowledge, organisational skills, and creativity to potential employers. Create boards which relate to specific skills-sets you have and use it as a portal to link to any work you may want to showcase – like an online portfolio.

Pinterest is perhaps unlikely to replace Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn, but used alongside established channels it has the potential to add real value to your online presence.

Updating and maintaining social media accounts regularly may seem time consuming and unrewarding. But cultivating and controlling your professional online presence will allow you to demonstrate the skills and attributes potential employers desire - and may just lead to the opportunity you have been looking for.

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