BEYOND THE RÉSUMÉ OR CV: USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR WORK SEARCH

Social media allows you to reach out to thousands of prospective employers at once, and more and more employers are expecting you to have a professional online presence. This resource outlines some of the social media tools that can complement your traditional work search and application strategies.

1) LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a social network that lets you post your professional profile, where you can include your work history, skills, and projects. It also lets you connect with other professionals based on your common work experience, job titles, associations, projects and more. Plus, you can recommend your contacts based on past projects or experience, and ask for recommendations from your contacts. Many employers are searching for new employees using this network.

How to use LinkedIn effectively

Search LinkedIn University for videos about how to make the most of your profile, and follow these guidelines:

✛ Take the time to build your profile: It should take several hours to complete and you should aim for 100% completion if you want this to be an effective career development tool.

✛ Use keywords: Create a keyword-laden profile, using the areas of expertise, specialties and job description sections to highlight keywords related to your chosen industry (not sure about the keywords for your chosen field—Google it!).

✛ Pick the right photo: Your photo should be high resolution, professional in appearance and should reflect the dress code for your chosen field.

✛ Customize your URL: LinkedIn will give you a default URL that is long. Customize it to make it shorter and easier to remember.

✛ Use the URL: After you complete your LinkedIn profile, attach the URL to your email signature and insert it into the contact information on the letterhead of your résumé.

✛ Get recommended: Try to find one recommendation from each of your most recent positions, or from professors, or volunteer contacts. Don’t just rely on your friends!

✛ Join and follow LinkedIn groups in your professional sector: These help you learn about your industry, make connections and build your professional reputation and many groups allow employers to post jobs. You can start by joining UVic Co-op and Career’s group at http://linkd.in/uviccoopandcareer

✛ Join and follow LinkedIn groups for the companies you want to work for: You’ll be able to see who within your network works or previously worked for these companies, which could be your way in for an interview.

✛ Network: As you build your connections, reach out to your contacts through LinkedIn to arrange informational interviews.
2) FACEBOOK

Facebook is the most visited website in the world (for unique visitors and page views). The most obvious use for Facebook in a job search is to “share” the kind of job you are looking for and see if your friends have any ideas or helpful contacts.

How to use Facebook professionally

✚ Check your privacy settings and keep your profile professional looking. Employers WILL search for you on Facebook when they look at your résumé or application, and they don’t want to see photos that suggest you’re irresponsible or unprofessional.

✚ Join groups for companies that you’re interested in working for to engage with the employees and demonstrate that you’re a fan.

✚ Join groups related to your industry to find people with common interests and network with them.

✚ If you like Facebook better than LinkedIn, create a Facebook account that shows your professional work and use this profile to connect with your professional contacts. This could be a separate account from your personal Facebook profile.

✚ Employ a useful Facebook application called BranchOut, which pulls career related data from your Facebook account (100 friends = 10,000 career contacts) and allows you to see which companies you are connected to through your friends.

✚ If you have a large network, you may try going to your Facebook marketplace, which lists job openings or other opportunities in your network. When searching for jobs, you’ll be able to see who listed the item and then message the hiring manager directly.

3) TWITTER

Twitter lets you send and read 140-character messages in an instant. You can follow Twitter feeds from almost anyone, including individuals, companies and more.

How to use Twitter professionally

✚ Create a strong Twitter profile that outlines who you are and what you can contribute to employers, and be sure to add a URL to your LinkedIn page, professional blog or website.

✚ Follow companies to get links to the latest job postings.

✚ Follow TweetMyJobs to see postings from a wide range of companies.

✚ Send out your own tweets about the type of job you’re looking for and challenge yourself to write a pitch in 140 characters or less!

✚ Use Hootsuite to manage your Twitter feeds and create topic-based streams (e.g., set up a stream that shows you tweets with the words “engineering job posting” or whatever keywords you want to use. This will make it easy to aggregate information across the web.

✚ Keep an eye out for conversation opportunities with employers in your field—if one of them asks a question, go ahead and reply! You’ll make an impression on the employer.

4) GOOGLE ALERTS

Google Alerts lets you set up keyword searches that are delivered to your email inbox once per day. You can set up a search for “jobs in Victoria”, “engineering co-op job”, “marketing position” or whatever you’d like, and you’ll receive an email with any new news items or web content that was added to the web that day.
5) BLOGGING

Depending on your career interests and industry, blogging can be a useful way to provide evidence of your professional skills to potential colleagues and employers.

Word Press (www.wordpress.org) and Blogger (www.blogger.com) are two popular sites for hosting a blog. Some bloggers write articles about their industry or work, others might have visual information like sample blueprints or photos of their work. It all depends on whether you want to use the site to inform and advise others, or use it as an online portfolio space. If you choose to convey information using this format, make sure that you have permission to use the information you are posting. If you already have a personal blog, it would be a good idea to create a different one for your professional development.