



Guide to Social Media

Social media has been fully integrated into every day modern life, with many people being active on a number of different social media platforms on a daily basis. With almost unlimited information at our finger tips, sometimes the amount of information can be a bit over whelming and it can be difficult to know where to start and which sources are credible.

This guide will provide some key information, from how to use it effectively, how to protect yourself online through to the different types of social media channels and their benefits.

How to use social media effectively?

Social media is a great tool and when used effectively will help you with your job search and build your professional network.

- Think about the companies that you are interested in working for and find out which social media platforms they are on
- 'Like' or 'follow' their pages to receive updates on your news feeds
- Begin to interact with them or their employees by liking, sharing or commenting on their content
- Send connection requests to relevant company professionals, where appropriate



Types of Social Media?

With so many different social media platforms it can be hard to know where to start. Each platform tends to have a particular feel or purpose. Below are some example platforms and how companies like to use them.



LinkedIn – companies tend to place their biggest focus on LinkedIn and will share stories, job vacancies and company news. This is a great place to start researching a company as this is likely to contain up to date information and content. It is also a great place to build a professional network.



Instagram – a platform for companies to showcase their products, services, employees and can give a real life snapshot into company life.



Facebook – tends to host mix content somewhere in-between the more formal approach of LinkedIn and the casual feel of Instagram. Also a good place to look out for job adverts.



Twitter – great for sharing short messages, announcements and pictures. Many companies will have multiple accounts for different areas of the business such as customer services, recruitment, technical support etc.



YouTube – hosts videos content which can include promotional material and more in-depth information/content about the company.



Protecting Yourself Online

- ✓ Check your privacy settings. Every social media platform offers ways to control what information you're sharing. Ensure you set your profile to **'private'** so that only you are in control of who can see your posts, pictures etc. Don't forget to check your settings regularly.
- ✓ Always think before you post; remember, anything you post could be shared or reviewed at a later date. Always make sure that any comments you make on company pages or posts are appropriate. If you are unsure about whether you should post a particular comment, it probably means you shouldn't!
- ✓ Only accept friend requests from people you know and that you are sure are from accounts that are genuine. If in doubt, do not accept.
- ✓ Report people and any inappropriate conversations they may have had with you. Tell your parent, carer, guardian or teacher. Also report to the site administrator of the channel via the 'help' or 'report' tab (if available) and always keep a copy of the conversation as evidence. Always report it!
- ✓ Protect your personal details – do not share your contact details, address, password or other personal details online.
- ✓ Be careful when checking in places or sharing your location. Remember you are essentially sharing your whereabouts with everyone who has access to what you are posting. Switch off any live location sharing on apps such as Snapchat and consider how someone could locate you from the locations that you are tagged in.
- ✓ Look out for suspicious messages and phishing scams.
- ✓ Keep an eye on your passwords and follow the guidance on password setting... always create a password that is unique.

For more useful information please refer to:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-media-guides>





Benefits for using Social Media

The opportunity to learn from others

Social media is a great place to share ideas, information, experiences and stories. It's also helps you to learn more about world events and current affairs that you may not be familiar with or aware of. Follow relevant and credible channels so that you can gain a better understanding or develop your knowledge on those topics that are of interest to you.

Our digital future

The digital world is such a key part of life and is of high importance in the workplace. It is of great benefit to learn how to communicate effectively online and to understand which channel is most appropriate for the content you wish to access or post.

Maintaining relationships and establishing networks

Staying connected is easier than ever. No matter how far apart you are from friends, family and colleagues, you can communicate with the majority of your social or professional networks whilst at home or when you are on the go.

Asking for support or help

There may be occasions when you need help or some support on how to approach a particular topic. Social media and the internet is a great place to source how to do things or where to get the support your need.

Support causes that matter to you

Social media can have a massive impact on effecting change on a global scale. If there is a cause or campaign that is important to you, then social media offers you the platform to have a voice and spread the message.

Use your social media account to showcase your skills and experience

It has never been easier to showcase your skills and experience and shout about what you have to offer. Many companies and individuals showcase their portfolio of work and products via platforms such as Instagram and sites such as LinkedIn can act as a virtual CV.





FAQs

Why should I invest time into social media when conducting my job search?

Company social media sites will usually host the most up to date information and real life stories and insights. You may also receive updates when job vacancies are posted or when recruitment campaigns go live rather than having to search for this information on the company's website..... keeping you ahead of the game.

Will potential employers look at my social media accounts?

The true answer is, maybe. Some employers sometimes screen social media accounts before inviting you to interview or offering you a role. Therefore, make sure that you consider what content you are happy share to be viable to potentially your new boss. Also, on sites such as LinkedIn, employers and recruiters may conduct a search for relevant individuals to approach directly for job opportunities.

Is it OK to send connection requests to people I do not know in order to build my professional network?

It is widely acceptable that you can connect in and build a professional network on platforms such as LinkedIn. On other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, look out for employees that have accounts for business use and connect with those rather than their personal accounts. However, when doing so, remember that they will then be able to see any private content of yours that may be more social in nature.

Remember to always protect yourself whilst online.

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Together we can make feel good happen

