

Social Media: Must-Have Strategies In Your Job Search

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I recently returned from attending and speaking at the Direct Employers conference. If you haven't heard of DirectEmployers.com, let's just say that the more than 670 member companies in the organization have had a significant impact on the way that job seekers engage with employers, principally in the space of digital and on-line recruiting. For years they have been way ahead in the digital recruiting front, developing strategies and technical tools to help connect those seeking employment to the employers that have openings in the most seamless and organic way possible. In addition to customizing experiences for member companies, they have also provided support to a large number of state workforce agencies, disabled workers and most notably connecting veterans with improved career opportunities and actively encouraging their hiring.

Employers at the meeting described how they are utilizing social media and other digital platforms in order to engage and target candidates with the skill sets they are seeking. The growth in how organizations are using social media to recruit talent – entry level as well as experienced – is staggering and, as experts from around the globe discussed, is no longer just a U.S. phenomenon. There is no doubt that social media is emerging as a vital tool in how employers recruit talent to their organizations. Consequently, it's essential that job seekers learn to understand and effectively navigate the "social space" in order to improve their chances of getting noticed by employers and ultimately enhancing their job prospects. Whether you are looking for an internship or full-time job, or just thinking about a job change, here are some important things to make sure you are leveraging in the social media space:

1. As simple as it sounds, look at all of your digital profiles and make certain that every one of them is complete and professional. This includes a professional looking headshot and timely updates to your profile information. Recruiters repeatedly mentioned at the conference how turned off they were to "the silhouette" – a reference to LinkedIn and Facebook profiles that don't contain an appropriate headshot.
2. Make sure to post content relevant to your career interests and passions. Recruiters follow relevant trends and your insightful engagement in trend discussions might get you noticed and result in invitations to consider employment opportunities.
3. Fully use all of the capabilities that LinkedIn has to offer. Whether you are an experienced professional or college student, LinkedIn is quickly emerging as one of the most important professional networking platforms available to job seekers. If you are a college student, visit your career center, as most are offering services to help students build their on-line brand. For more experienced job seekers there are many free on-line tutorials to help you maximize the capabilities of LinkedIn.
4. Increasingly Facebook is positioning itself in the jobs space. This might be your largest network and you should consider how to use this incredibly powerful platform in your job search. Be careful to use the privacy settings correctly, so employers do not find content that you are not interested in sharing.
5. Twitter has also emerged as a very powerful resource, but you need to master the 140-character limit to include clever, but professional observations and hash tags of career interests that are trending to help you get found. You should also follow important leaders in the companies and fields you are interested in. Employers are tweeting links to job posts and other job seekers are sharing jobs through sites such as Tweetmyjobs.
6. Google is well established as the most powerful search engine on the planet, but Google plus and hangouts provide additional modalities to engage with people and organizations and more importantly be found by potential employers.
7. Although, there were differing viewpoints at the conference about whether blogs are an effective strategy for job seekers, writing interesting posts in your field can attract readers with similar interests and they may be recruiters or others who can help connect you professionally. You can also read blog posts of leaders in

different industries and comment when you have something to add to the conversation that may help you engage with new contacts.

8. Search employer web and mobile sites to keep up with important developments, such as new clients and projects as well as job opportunities.

Although it may seem overwhelming at times, today's job seekers have many important new ways to engage with employers, get noticed, and unearth new job opportunities. The use of the social space to recruit qualified talent will only increase and the faster you perfect your digital strategy, the faster you will find a great position.