



Social Networking TIP SHEETS

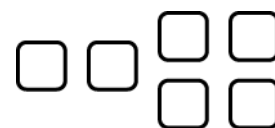
CODE	TITLE
SN - 1	What is your Online Image?

Navigate this document in several ways:

- use bookmarks
- use page icons
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- use buttons:
the Table of Contents has buttons to each chapter (mouse over heading and click),
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WHAT IS

Your Online Image



The term online image refers to all of the information that is available on the Internet about you. “Digital Dirt” has become a very popular term for negative information or opinions that can be found about you online.

When you are job searching, your online image becomes even more important. The online information an employer finds about you can positively or negatively impact on your job search. More and more often, employers and recruiters are looking online to learn more about job seekers. Increasing numbers of recruiters are using the Internet to research job seekers and many admit that they have decided not to hire a job seeker based on what they found online.

Where is my Online Image?

Search engines, such as Google, make it very easy for employers to learn about job seekers on the Internet. It is very important to keep a positive image online by ensuring that everything that appears online about you is positive. This includes: information from social networking websites (e.g. Facebook), personal websites, bulletin boards, chat rooms, video posting websites (e.g. YouTube), personal blogs, and anywhere else information about you can be accessed online by the public.

How do I find my Online Image?

1. Choose a popular search engine such as Google
2. Type your first and last name into the search box using quotations (e.g. “Jane Doe”)
3. Press enter to begin your search
4. If your search ends up finding too many results that are not what you are looking for, think about entering
5. more information into the search box (e.g. location, name of employer)
6. Repeat the above steps using several of the search engines and people search sites listed below:

Popular Search Engines & People Search Sites:

Google google.ca
 PIPL pipl.com
 WINK wink.com
 XANGA xanga.com
 Zoominfo zoominfo.com

Ways to Maintain a Positive Online Image

- Do not post anything online that you would not want a potential employer to know about or would not want to have to explain in a job interview.
- Avoid posting negative comments online, especially about work-related situations.
- When putting information about yourself online, remember that anything posted about you on the web can be viewed and could affect your job search.
- On a monthly basis, enter your name in a number of search engines (e.g. Google) or people search websites (e.g. PIPL) to find out exactly what information is available about you to potential employers.
- Make a good impression with employers who search for you online by participating on message boards, industry blogs or online groups related to your field of work.
- Erasing Unwanted Information about you from the Internet
- Contact the webmaster or website owner and ask them to remove the information. It is up to them to decide whether or not to remove information from their site.
- Apply appropriate privacy settings on social networking sites so your information doesn't show up to employers or completely remove your profile from the site.
- As a last resort, you can hire a lawyer to help you protect your online reputation.

If You Cannot Erase Your Negative Online Image

- Post some current positive information which is as complimentary as possible, so that the bad information will appear further down the page.
- Create a LinkedIn profile that confirms your resume information.
- Create a job related blog (e.g. www.webblogs.about.com). Search engines rank results by currency and frequency so therefore the blog will be located at the top of the search results.
- Build a simple website that displays your resume, articles and awards. Not only will the site serve as an electronic portfolio of your experience and success, it will get noticed by "Googling" recruiters. Leave off your address for safety reasons.