



Careers Newsletter

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7 Social Media Mistakes That Can Harm Your Career

Many courts have upheld the right of employers to see everything in your social media accounts. Employers even study the social media accounts of prospective new employees before they're hired! You can even be forced to log in and provide full access!

Avoid making social media mistakes that could result in the loss of your employment.

Use social media platforms wisely by avoiding these mistakes:

- 1. Posting about controversial topics.** Public comments regarding emotionally charged topics is always risky. You might not like the idea of same-sex marriage or have strong opinions about religion, but you never know whom you might offend with your stance. Proceed at your own risk.
- 2. Discussing work, interview opportunities, or job offers.** Does it seem smart to post to the world that you just had a great job interview with another company? You might be excited about the opportunity down the street, but it would be prudent not to announce your enthusiasm in a public forum.
 - ***Until you've accepted an offer and submitted your resignation, be discrete.***
- 3. Failing to understand the concept of "zombie" content.** While it may seem that you have the option of quickly deleting any inappropriate content, that's rarely the case. Once it's out on the web, it's there forever. It can keep coming back to haunt your future like a zombie rising from the dead.
 - That inappropriate picture or post may show up at the most inappropriate time. Perhaps right before an important job interview or offer.
 - Avoid ever posting anything you wouldn't want your boss or mother to see.
- 4. Posting content while you claim to be sick or injured.** There have been several instances of employees calling into work sick, only to post photos of themselves at football matches, the beach, or a party.



- All it takes is for your work nemesis to see it. ***You can be sure your boss will be informed quickly.***
5. **Combining personal and business contacts unskillfully.** It's likely your personal contacts will be bored with your posts regarding work. It's also likely that many of the posts your personal contacts would find interesting aren't appropriate for a work audience.
- Your old college mates might be impressed that you can still stand on your head and drink from a keg. But your boss might wonder if you're the right person to negotiate a contract with a US supplier.
6. **Adding content at the improper time. *We all slow down a little at 3:00PM, but that doesn't mean it's a good time to post to your social media accounts.*** Your boss and co-workers think you should be working. At best, your boss will decide you need a little more work to do. At worst, your boss will suggest that you find another job with another company.
- Posting too much can be nearly as bad as posting at the wrong time. What message are you sending if you post continuously on your time off? That's not the type of person that's given greater levels of responsibility in a professional capacity.
7. **Profanity, poor grammar, and nudity.** While the use of colourful language can help to get your point across, reconsider. Poor grammar can also send the wrong message. Modesty is usually the best policy when it comes to clothing.
8. **Bonus- How will it sound if read out in court?** Social media post are often an immediate response, rather than considered. This can lead you to say things you would not say after thought, or in a way that comes across badly. It may not come up in a real court, but might in a disciplinary hearing.

The various social media platforms provide an effective way to communicate with others. Use these tools to your advantage! Unfortunately, social media also can also cause a lot of harm to your career. ***Be careful of the image you present to the world.*** Take control of your social media presence.

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