

# Employee Social Media Guide

# Contents

<b>Part 1 ~ Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
→ <i>Review your social footprint</i>	4
→ <i>Public realm</i>	5
→ <i>Professional self vs. personal self</i>	6
<b>Part 2 ~ Make your social media private</b>	<b>7</b>
→ <i>Facebook</i>	8
→ <i>Twitter</i>	10
→ <i>Instagram</i>	11
<b>Part 3 ~ What to watch out for</b>	<b>12</b>
→ <i>Comments</i>	13
→ <i>Endorsements</i>	14
→ <i>Photos</i>	15
→ <i>LinkedIn</i>	16
→ <i>Profile photo</i>	17
→ <i>Headline</i>	18
→ <i>Summary</i>	19
→ <i>Experience</i>	20
<b>Part 4 ~ Conclusion</b>	<b>21</b>

# Overview

What was your last tweet?

What Facebook photos can you see?

What does your social media say about you?

Research indicates around 70% of employers use social media to screen candidates before hiring. What they see could make the difference between you getting the job or not.

Hiring Managers are looking for information that may or may not show them that you're a good fit for the job and their company. It's hugely important that your social media, and your online presence as a whole, doesn't throw up any red flags with Hiring Managers which may prevent you from getting that job.

In this guide learn how Hiring Managers search, what they're looking for, how to keep your accounts private and how to turn social media to your advantage.

# Review your social footprint

Start by typing your name and city or other variables such as employer into Google and see what comes up.

## What does your online brand look like?

If you're on Facebook, LinkedIn and/or Twitter, there's a strong chance your social media account(s) will be on the first search page. This applies to other online mediums also, so review in the context of your usage. You may also be surprised by what you find – it could be out-of-date selfies or old comments you left on online forums.

If you find images of yourself in Google images, they will probably be profile photos from your various social media accounts, including the ones you no longer use. If you don't like the look of them, you will need to delete them directly from your social accounts.

Just because your accounts and images may not appear on the first page of a Google search, doesn't mean you should do nothing. A diligent Hiring Manager will look through multiple pages to find you. By searching for yourself on Google, you will be able to see how you appear to a Hiring Manager and what, if any, issues they may have with you and your online presence.

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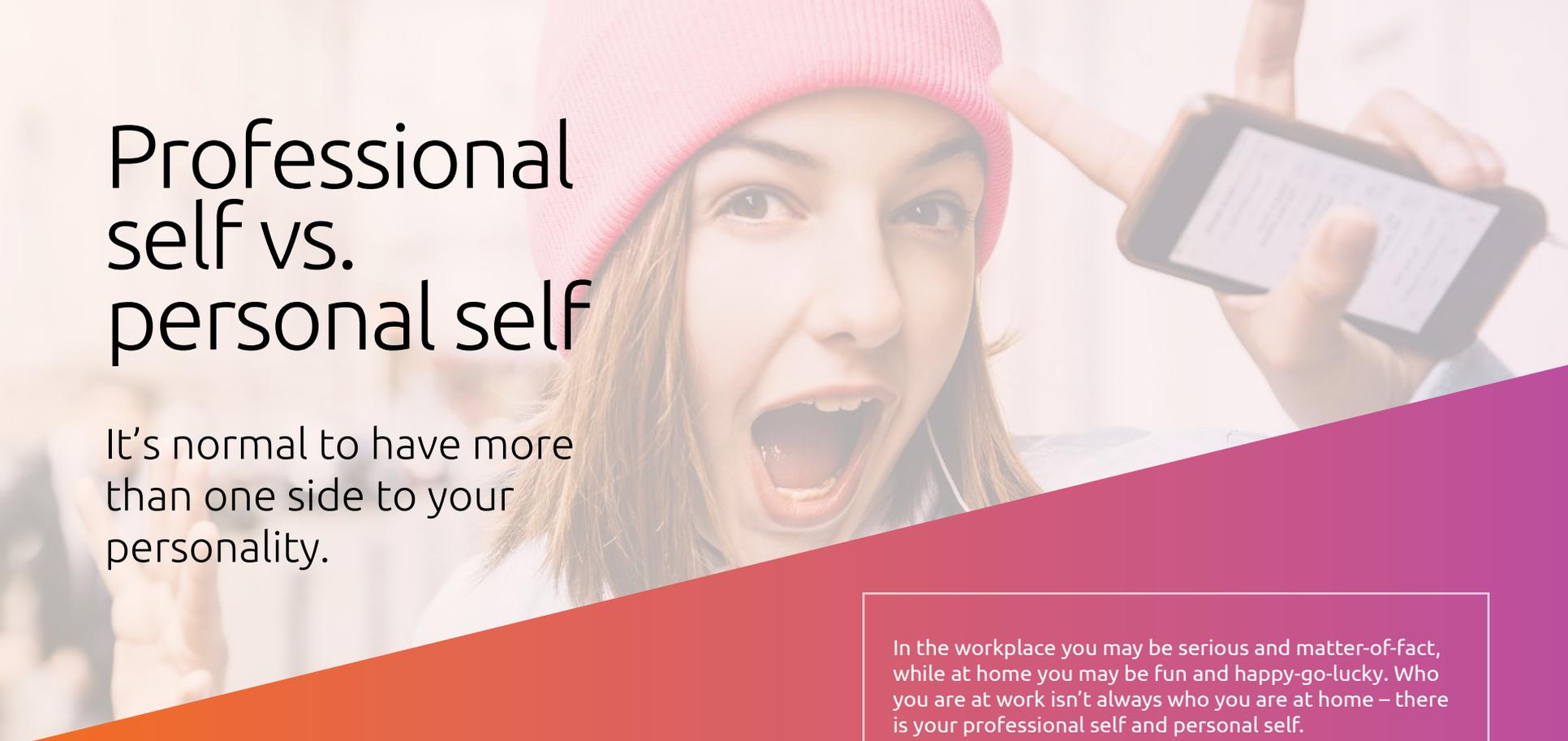
# Public realm

While it may make you uncomfortable to know that Hiring Managers are searching for information about you from your social media, it's not an invasion of your privacy, not if you've made it available to them.

When you post a public tweet, it can be read by anyone, including non-Twitter users.

Every tweet, Facebook comment and Instagram photo that you make accessible to Hiring Managers reflects who you are, and whether or not you would be a good fit for the job and their company.

For many Hiring Managers, they believe the information they've gained from social media is no different to that which they've gained from a resume or an interview. If you've made that information available to them, then it's fair that they use it as part of their assessment.

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a pink beanie and a white top, is looking directly at the camera with a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression of surprise or excitement. She is holding a smartphone in her right hand, which is raised towards her face. The background is a blurred crowd of people. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing text.

# Professional self vs. personal self

It's normal to have more than one side to your personality.

In the workplace you may be serious and matter-of-fact, while at home you may be fun and happy-go-lucky. Who you are at work isn't always who you are at home – there is your professional self and personal self.

Before social media, it was very hard for Hiring Managers to know what kind of person you were, outside of what they learnt about you from your resume, interview(s) and/or references.

Now Hiring Managers are able to search for you online and potentially discover a wealth of information about your personal self, ranging from what sort of friends you have down to what you like for breakfast.

# Make your social media private

With constantly changing settings and new ways of engaging online, the best way to keep your social media private is to be diligent, informed and reflect on a post or comment before posting.

We understand that your social media use may span many years. It is therefore important to take the time to review you socials and online footprint to ensure privacy.

# Facebook

Many Facebook users aren't aware of what strangers can or can't see of their profiles.



If you don't want any Hiring Managers to be able to find your Facebook let alone view it, you'll need to change your privacy settings. Fortunately, it's pretty simple to adjust your **Facebook privacy settings**.

You can view and adjust your [privacy settings](#) at any time. To view and adjust your privacy settings.

1. Click  at the top right of Facebook and select **Settings**
2. Click **Privacy** on the left column

For other things you share on Facebook, you can [select the audience](#) before you share.

## Privacy Settings and Tools

<b>Your activity</b>	Who can see your future posts?	Friends	<a href="#">Edit</a>
	Review all your posts and things you're tagged in		<a href="#">Use Activity Log</a>
	Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or Public?		<a href="#">Limit Past Posts</a>
<b>How people can find and contact you</b>	Who can send you friend requests?	Friends of friends	<a href="#">Edit</a>
	Who can see your friends list? <small>Remember that your friends control who can see their friendships on their own timelines. If people can see your friendship on another timeline, they'll be able to see it in News Feed, search and other places on Facebook. If you set this to Only me, only you will be able to see your full friends list on your timeline. Other people will only see mutual friends.</small>	Only me	<a href="#">Edit</a>
	Who can look you up using the email address you provided?	Friends	<a href="#">Edit</a>
	Who can look you up using the phone number you provided?	Friends	<a href="#">Edit</a>
	Who can look up your Timeline by name?	Friends	<a href="#">Edit</a>
Do you want search engines outside of Facebook to link to your Profile?	No	<a href="#">Edit</a>	

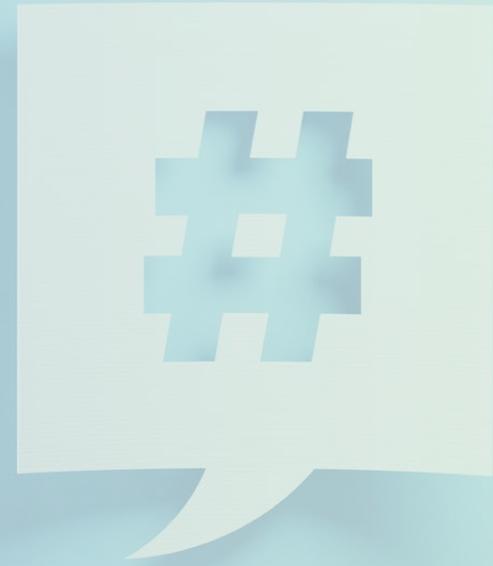
# Facebook (cont.)

Be proactive so you have control over your profile and what people can see.

If you really wish to keep your Facebook account private, we have provided a few suggestions for your consideration:

- *Do not connect with clients or colleagues on private accounts.*
- *Do not be too easily identifiable – for example replace your surname with a nickname, initial, middle name or maiden name*
- *Use a more obscure profile picture*
- *Delete old profile pictures*
- *Use a personal mobile phone number and email address so you can't be searched on this basis*
- *Remove 'About Me' information such as education or places you've lived that will allow people to find you by cross referencing with your LinkedIn profile*
- *Review what external people can see on Facebook – they may be able to see all previous profile images, everything you are following and your groups.*

# Twitter



When you sign up for Twitter, your tweets are public by default.

Anyone can see them, including non-Twitter users.

If you would prefer only your Twitter followers view your tweets, you need to change your account settings, as per **Twitter's instructions**.

To set your tweets to private from Twitter:

1. Go to your *Privacy and safety* settings.
2. In the Tweet privacy section, check the box next to *Protect my Tweets*.
3. Click the *Save* button at the bottom of the page. You will be prompted to enter your password to confirm the change.

However, it can never be fully private – you are publishing and tweets can go viral.

# Instagram

While many Instagram users are careful to curate their content so they present the best version of themselves, there may be photos and/or comments that a Hiring Manager may deem inappropriate.



To guard against this, you can **set your photos and videos to private** so that only your approved followers can see them.

To set your posts to private from the Instagram app:

1. Tap  to go to your profile, then tap 
2. Tap  *Settings*
3. Tap *Account Privacy* then tap to toggle *Private Account* on.

# What to watch out for

Hiring Managers are trying to find out what sort of person you are.

In order to do so they are likely to look at your comments, endorsements, photos and anything else

that helps them to get a better idea of who you are and whether you're a good fit for the job and their company.

# Comments

These days, many people tend to say things online that they wouldn't dare say off it.

This tendency to speak fast and loose, particularly on Twitter, has got many people in trouble in recent years. When reviewing your comments, Hiring Managers will look to see if you have:

- *Regularly used profane language, particularly in public forums*
- *Made discriminatory remarks e.g. racist, sexist, homophobic etc.*
- *Spoken poorly of previous employers, co-workers etc.*
- *Spoken poorly of your prospective employer*
- *Made comments that contradict your resume*

# Endorsements



Give some consideration to who and what you 'like' and 'follow'. You may not have thought twice about some of the individuals, companies and/or groups you like or follow, but a Hiring Manager will.

By liking or following them, you're endorsing them and all that they represent. This is particularly relevant if they are:

- *A political party, group or movement*
- *A public figure (i.e. a politician, academic or religious figure)*
- *A controversial company (i.e. one that has had unfavourable press)*

Ask yourself 'Could this individual, company or group be deemed inappropriate?' If you even have to think about it for more than a few seconds, they probably are and you should consider 'unliking' or 'unfollowing'.



# Photos

As the saying goes  
'a picture paints a  
thousand words'.

A single photo can say more about you and your suitability for a job than all of your comments and endorsements combined. With your online photos, you need to ensure you're not:

- *Engaging in illegal activity (e.g. taking banned substances)*
- *Engaging in provocative behaviour (i.e. performing or endorsing sexual or violent acts)*
- *Associating with controversial individuals (e.g. well-known criminals, public figures)*

If there are photos of you doing any of these and/or anything else that may bring you and your prospective employer into disrepute, you need to remove them ASAP.

# LinkedIn

An aerial view of a city, likely New York City, with a speech bubble icon overlaid on the image. The speech bubble contains two horizontal lines, representing text. There are four such speech bubbles scattered across the cityscape.

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional social network with more than 570 million users worldwide. It is the most important social network for candidates and Hiring Managers.

As a job seeker, it is the only social network that you have to have, especially if you want to have greater success in your job search. Used correctly, LinkedIn can be of significant benefit to you.

If you don't have a LinkedIn profile, we recommend you create one. If you are on LinkedIn, optimise your profile by editing the following sections:

- *Profile photo*
- *Headline*
- *Summary*
- *Experience*

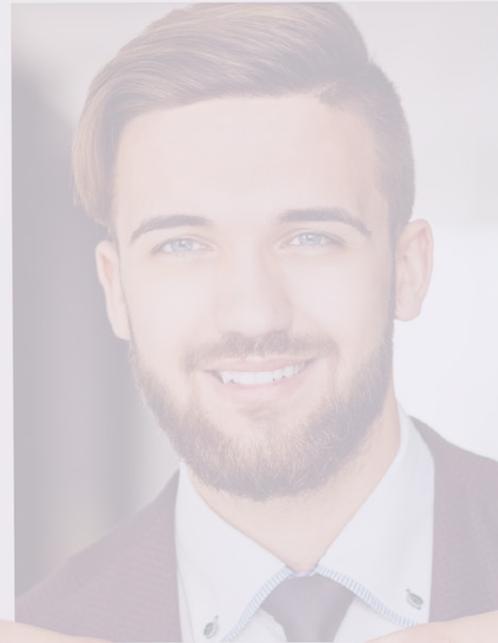
# Profile photo

Make sure you have a professional-looking profile photo.

You should be groomed, well-dressed, smiling and looking directly at the camera. Many people are carefree with their profile photo. Typical examples of inappropriate profile photos include:

- *Holding a glass*
- *Bare shoulders\**
- *Wedding photo*
- *Obviously cropped couples shot*

*\*By this we mean make sure you can see some clothing. As the LinkedIn format is circular, some tops won't show on screen which can make it look like you're naked!*



# Headline



Your headline doesn't just tell the rest of the world what you do, it tells them how you see yourself.

If you're interested in roles in Business Development, say you're a Business Development professional, or at least say you're interested in roles in Business Development.

You can either choose to have your title and company, or alternatively list your key skills and/or strengths (i.e. Strategist, Non-executive Director, Mentor).

# Summary

Your summary may well be the most important section in your LinkedIn profile.

It's not just about what you do, it's about why you're good at it. As it's a summary, you need to be succinct. Try to say as much about yourself in as few words as possible.

# Experience

What work experiences are relevant to your desired role?

Show in your experience section that your current and/or previous roles fit in with your desired role.

Try and be succinct, and don't write too much about experiences that are of little or no relevance. Make sure it is consistent with your resume.

# Conclusion

It is better to keep personal social media private, using LinkedIn for your professional brand.

However, as we live in a digital age, you may need to take steps to achieve this.

Hopefully this guide helps you to make more informed decisions about your online brand.