

## Using your online identity to get hired, not fired!

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In a world where 91% of bigger employers use social networks to screen their candidates, what does your digital identity say about you? The **right one can get you the job** you are looking for. The **wrong one can get you fired**.



Social networks have become an awesome avenue to share your creative side - photos, videos, blogs. They connect us to world and to each other. There is no reason why you shouldn't be able to share your bikini photos from your vacation as long as they go to the right audience. That said, some posts should probably be kept to yourself.

From Time Magazine "A FindLaw survey found that 29% of social-media users ages 18-34 have posted a photo, a comment or personal information that they fear could have repercussions at work."

Here are ten rules everyone can follow to make sure your online identity lands you the job you want and doesn't get you fired from the one you have!

### HOW TO STAND OUT

- **Use proper grammar.** When a company sees your tweets with consistent spelling or grammar errors then that says a lot about your ability to communicate well. Unless you attend the *Centre for kids who can't read good and want to do others things good too*.

- **Be creative!** Creative expressions in Pinterest, Instagram or Tumblr, could help you stand out to a prospective employer. Especially in a creative professional. These accounts become an online portfolio.
- Keep your **LinkedIn resume up-to-date**. You never know when some great job is right around the corner but if you don't have your profile filled with all of the wonderful things you can do, then recruiters won't find you. And yes, they look there often!
- **Be positive**. Finding a profile full of complaints could turn employers off so try not to use your public forums for venting and instead use them for sharing good news.

### HOW TO BE YOU AND NOT GET CAUGHT

- Most important ... **Set your privacy settings!** All the searches that employers do are on your public profiles. If your status, tweets or pictures are for *friends* or *friends of friends*, then an arbitrary search will not turn them up.
- **DO NOT post offensive material**. This one should go with out saying but watch for words or images that can be deemed discriminatory or insulting. One woman recently lost her job for posting a photo of herself dressed as a Boston Marathon bombing victim. It was in terribly bad taste but it was the fact that she Tweeted it that cost her the job. Read the [Buzzfeed article](#).
- **DO NOT talk about your current or past employers in a negative way**. This is one of my top rules and I keep reiterating it because it is so important. If you don't get fired for doing this then you may be ruining future recommendations.
- **Watch out for the overshare**. Be careful not to give away private information about your financial status or even your health. Though a company could never legally hold it against you, they might have second thoughts about someone who is constantly home sick with a migraine or who is pictured always partying hard.
- Always **tell the truth about qualifications**. Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive. And how much worse that web is when it is of the world wide variety . If you announce on LinkedIn that you programmed the code for launch of the last space shuttle, when all you did was program *hello world*, then an ex-coworker could catch you in that lie. Bad recommendations can spread just as virally as good ones.

A reminder again that your digital identity is your Binary Tattoo. Though you can choose to show it to your friends and hide from coworkers, the bottom line is that it is always there, to be found, so be aware of what you are posting and how you are defining it.