



Online identity can make or mar a career

Many stories about how online profiles wrecked job careers are making rounds. Still people flock to social networking Web sites making the same mistakes. This is because everybody thinks that it won't happen to him. Obviously they don't know how a derogatory statement they just posted or indecent pictures of themselves online may mar their job prospects or even cost their jobs.

Some wise guys are trying to make their presence felt in the cyberspace instead of developing a profile that damages their careers. Some professionals are using the social networking Websites to find jobs or make key contacts to bolster their careers.

Of course, having an online identity has become a tool to establish your credibility and personal brand and get either career or business opportunities. Here are a few tips to help you create a profile that gets you a job.

How to get a job

Consistency on sites: Recruiters often get confusing accounts of job seekers based on their online profiles. For example, your profile on a Website makes you look like a go-getter with excellent sales records while on another Website your profile paints you as one who loves to lead the life like a rock star. Be sure every profile you post portrays the same person -- respectable, dependable and professional.

Brief but perfect bite: The 'About you' section of your profile is the best place to briefly describe your work history, strengths and accomplishments. It should make recruiters eager to know more about you.

Have a network that helps: Some may prefer to develop a networks consisting of hundreds of strangers from all corners of the world. Some others like to have a small network of friends and colleagues. A via media option is better. Just have a network of between 50 and 150 contacts through each site.

Your skills and links: You should include links to your blog relevant to your career. If you don't have any, consider including links to projects or work you might have handled and that can be viewed online.

Use keywords in the "Tags" section: Like keywords in a resume, this tool allows you to list



words that help others in your network and search engines can easily find you. These words can be of your expertise, job titles, industries, hobbies and anything that portrays you as a professional.

You profile may talk about a number of things that help you stand out in cyberspace. On the contrary, there are a number of socially embarrassing mistakes that many make too often. The following are some of the common wrong steps.

How to get fired

Post an indecent photo: You must be guessing what it is. It's the photo that exposes your hot bronze body in a thin bikini. It's the one showing you with a beer mug sporting a Bear's jersey. These profile pictures maybe amusing and may attract a few fans, but they don't go down the throats of your employers.

View or update your profile on company time: You have to do it because some of your friends want it. And you do it and you may say it's a harmless Facebook addiction. Anyway, your employer won't tolerate it.

Post information that's contra to your employer's values: Anything that you don't want to share with your manager or supervisor or your coworkers shouldn't find a place in your profile. This information may be about how you spend your leisure, how you feel about certain sensitive issues or experiences purely personal. Be careful of things that your friends post on your profile that may carry a negative impression of you.

Saying why you're lousy: Saying you took a sick day to hit the beach. You are supposed to work from home but your status shows that you spent the afternoon watching TV. Or a friend of yours may have left a comment that goes against you. If others can see these posts, how can you presume your employer won't?

Vent about your employer or job: Some social networking sites don't mind people include their work history. But posts giving a negative side of the job such as 'I'm being exploited' give the employer every reason to slap a pink slip on you.