Social Networking

The use of social media in career-related activities has increased dramatically in recent years. These relatively-new outlets can benefit you in several areas, including keeping you informed of trends and news, serving as a place to source jobs and internships, and allowing you to expand your network.

There is a wide array of social media sites that you can utilize, and the popularity of each will ebb and flow as technology and trends dictate. We recommend you consider the following:

- **LinkedIn.com** [1]? This professional networking site provides you the opportunity to establish a professional online identity, participate in conversations on relevant topics, and make connections with professionals in your industry or career path. **Key tip:** To get the most out of LinkedIn seek out and participate in ?linkedin groups? of interest.

- **Twitter.com** [2] ? This microblogging site may be most widely known for its use by media outlets and celebrities, but can also be a great way for you to interact with people of similar professional interests from across the globe. Additionally, companies are increasingly using Twitter to promote jobs and internships. **Key tip:** Use ?hashtag? searches (e.g. #jobs or #internships and) ?follow? companies of interest to find opportunities.

- **Facebook.com** [3] ? This social networking site likely needs no introduction or instruction on usage. But, be sure that your activities on Facebook won’t give prospective employers ?red flags? about you as a candidate. Check your photos, videos and comments for professionalism. **Key tip:** Utilize Facebook?s privacy settings to disallow public viewing of tagged photos, wall posts and other aspects of your profile (or make your profile entirely unsearchable).

- **Instagram.com** [4] - As with Facebook, the popularity of Instagram has drastically increased in the past 5-7 years. Instagram is another social media outlet where you can professionally showcase your brand, engage, and network. Instagram is also another tool that can be used in your research during the job search process. For creative based industries, Instagram is a way to let your creative portfolio shine.

There are a variety of other tools and sites that you can use to develop your personal
brand and incorporate into your job search strategy, including blogging (Wordpress.com [5], Blogger.com [6]) and participating in sharing networks (Slideshare.com [7]). But, like most career-related activities, you should initiate these as part of a larger strategy that emphasizes your personal skills and values. UCS counselors can help you explore opportunities and decide what avenues are best for your goals.

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