

THE BRIGHTON GROUP

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HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO FIND JOBS

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Bellevue – April 15, 2010 – Social networking websites are being used more often to make connections that can lead to job interviews and jobs, according to OI Partners-The Brighton Group (Bellevue), a leading global talent management firm.

"Social networking websites are an increasingly valuable way to keep networking contacts up to date about your career status, to make new connections, reconnect with old ones, and increase your visibility," said Lee Foote, managing partner of OI Partners-The Brighton Group (Bellevue) (www.oipartners.net).

"However, social networking is not a replacement for regular networking. It should be considered a supplement to and a means for making face-to-face contact, and should not be where you spend most of your time," added Foote.

A June 2009 survey by CareerBuilder.com reported that 45% of employers are using social networking websites to screen potential employees - more than twice as many as the 22% that did so in their survey the year before.

29% of the more than 2,600 hiring managers responding to the CareerBuilder survey said they use Facebook, 26% use LinkedIn, 21% use MySpace, 11% search blogs, and 7% follow candidates on Twitter.

18% of the managers said they were encouraged to hire candidates due to social networking content. Half of them were able to determine that a person would fit in well with the organization's culture, while about 4 out of 10 said online profiles helped to support candidates' professional qualifications, showcase their creativity, and highlight their communications skills.

Also, be cautious of what your online presence comprises. 35% of hiring managers in the CareerBuilder survey said they found content on social networking sites that caused them not to hire candidates, including provocative or inappropriate photographs, bad-mouthing a previous employer, and bad spelling and grammar.

Consultants from OI Partners-The Brighton Group offer these tips for getting the most from using social media in a job search:

- Compile a complete profile with searchable key words that detail the full range of your experience. "Use a descriptive headline that catches attention. List your accomplishments so potential employers can get a better sense of your career. Include a good-quality photo to personalize your online presence," said Foote.
- Spread the word about your career status, especially if recently unemployed or in transition. "Update your social networking websites at least weekly. Include any freelance, contract, and part-time work you are doing, along with appropriate examples or links. Specify what types of career opportunities you are open to," said Foote.
- Find out more information about a potential employer, the types of people they hire, and the secret requirements for a job. "Job postings rarely spell out entirely or exactly what a hiring manager is seeking. Locate a connection at the company who can get information about what really matters for the job. If you don't have an inside connection, look at profiles of the people who work at the company to determine their backgrounds and which companies they came from to help you discern what the company is looking for in new hires," said Foote.
- Post recommendations from current and former employers, clients, bosses, and colleagues. "Managers and executives should also get recommendations from people they have managed to highlight their leadership qualities," added Foote.
- Create a personalized website address on social networking sites that includes your name, and put this on your cover letter, resume, and business cards.
- Use social networking to uncover start-ups to work for. "Great start-ups are difficult to get a handle on, and social media websites will enable you to narrow these down by industry and other categories," said Foote.
- Practice good netiquette. "Be courteous and respectful of others' time. As in traditional networking, when someone you know or want to know connects with you online, you should always reciprocate and see how you can help that person, too," said Foote.
- Join online groups that are active, have a lot of members, and will enable you to validate your expertise. "Be diligent in providing good answers to questions that are asked in the group and solutions to problems, and start discussions of your own," said Foote.
- Pay close attention to proper grammar and spelling in order to put your best foot forward.

About OI Partners

OI Partners is a leading global talent management firm that helps individuals find new careers and employers to improve the performance of their employees and organizations. OI Partners is comprised of certified career management professionals who specialize in executive and group outplacement, executive coaching, leadership development, workforce planning, and talent management. The company was established in 1987 and is now located in 200 locally-owned offices in 27 countries with more than 100 U.S. offices. Please visit www.oipartners.net or call 800-232-5285.