DEVELOPING YOUR ONLINE BRAND

Your online personal brand is your presence in social media and networking websites, and it communicates your professional (or lack there of) potential and fit to prospective employers.

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Employers "Google" applicants, and the information they gather can make or break their decision to hire you. You are better served to put forth an effort to proactively and carefully develop your online presence and brand.

Prepare Social Profiles

These outlets (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, blog) become your virtual résumé and business card. Establish a consistent profile across each website. Pay attention to privacy settings and control strangers' ability to view information. Use correct grammar and spelling to convey a level of professionalism and maturity even on purely social sites. Always interact with your career in mind - what you post in college, may cause trouble in the future.

LinkedIn is a professional networking site that allows you to share your virtual résumé and demonstrate your expertise as you follow companies, join groups and communicate with professionals. *Maintain a professional presence and ask for introductions.*

Facebook is a social networking site that allows you to communicate your personality, interests and values. *Review pictures, postings, pages you follow/like and use correct grammar.*

Twitter is a professional and social networking site that allows you to follow companies and industry leaders and engage by sharing information and participating in the conversation. *Participate often and professionally. Remain relevant.*

About.Me is a website that allows you to tie your social media presence together on one site.

Pinterest, **YouTube** and **blogging** outlets may also allow you to communicate your interests, creativity, skills.

DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGY

Assess your current presence on networking websites by Googling yourself. Consider setting-up a personal Google Alert.

Decide what message you want your profiles and posts to communicate to employers and your network. Strive to strengthen and bring consistency to your profiles. Read and comment on career related blogs and articles and join professional groups. These two resources help you monitor and evaluate your on-line brand.

Zeebly.com analyzes your Facebook presence. Are you positive/negative? Do you use punctuation? What topics do you post about the most?

Reppler monitors your social media networks. It summarizes your online image, notifies you of any inappropriate content, warns you of any privacy/security risks and provides a snapshot of your online presence.

YOUR EMAIL

Communicating professionally through email is extremely important when building your network and job searching. Develop good habits so you don't accidentally use "text talk" in your emails, résumé and cover letters.

Brand Extension

While a student, using your murraystate.edu email is fine. As you transition into the world of work, transition to a professional email that contains your name if possible. e.g., firstname.lastname@domain.com.

Be cautious of your word choices. An email is void of body language, and a "tone" can be misunderstood. Always write in a professional tone, not conversational. Don't compensate attempts at sarcasm or humor with emoticons or exclamation points.

Content

Always include a subject line, salutation and closing. Remember, emails can be quickly and easily forwarded to others. Make sure the topic is not of a private nature. Adhere to spelling/grammatical rules. Proofread before you hit send.

Attachments

Check with the recipient to ensure that it is permissible for them to receive attachments. Ensure that the type of file you are sending can be opened by the recipient to maintain software compatibility. Keep file size as small as possible to avoid jamming the recipient's mailbox.

YOUR RIGHTS

Employers do not have a right to ask for your password