

Step 2: Facebook and Your Job Search

Facebook is the biggest social networking site on the internet with 2.23 billion monthly users worldwide. In January 2018, a snapshot of worldwide demographics was published, revealing 87% of users are aged between 18-29 years old, while 68% are college or university educated.

In 2018, a Sensis social media survey of 1100 Australian businesses found that 51% of small businesses, 58% of medium-sized businesses, and 85% of large businesses were using social media. Facebook is the most popular social media site for Australian businesses with a social media presence.

With these statistics, it's crucial to be aware of your posts, past and present. Your posts and comments, by default, are visible to you, your friends, and friends of your friends, while your friend's list is set to public. It's important to also note that public profiles can be recorded by search engines such as Google and Bing.

Data protection

Since your data is on Facebook, it can be misused for information gathering, including influencing whether you decide to purchase a particular product. Default ad-targeting settings allow Facebook to use your app and browser history to decide which ads to show you. This is why it's important to become more active in controlling how much of your information is being shared on Facebook. Whether you are job searching or not, you should be on guard with your online profile.

When you are job searching, you tend to spend more time on Facebook, looking actively for potential recruiters, job listings and sending messages, increasing your activity. When more people see that your account is active, it connects you faster to potential employers but also sets you up for questions and scrutiny.

Using Facebook during job searches The danger of Facebook during your job search is that over 80% of employers use social media websites and search engines to conduct background checks. Up to 50% of recruiters also judge whether to offer you a job or not by looking at your social media, online presence and activity.

If turning off Facebook for a while does not appeal to you, then consider these few things:

Use privacy settings

Privacy settings make Facebook appealing to users who are worried about who sees their content. You can set who sees your posts and videos. Whoever you are, whether you are job-searching or not, go through these privacy settings monthly, if possible. Facebook is notorious for changing the criteria of privacy settings. More still, Facebook's privacy settings cover a lot of aspects. For instance, you can decide not to be found on any search query.

Making use of privacy settings will save you a lot of embarrassment. If you are voicing your opinions on controversial issues like politics and religion, it's best to adjust your settings so only your friends see your personal posts.

Backtrack and clean up

Everyone has history. Even potential recruiters. Times when you partied hard and had fun trying out new stuff. No one should be punished for it, but people get fired from jobs and lose out on opportunities because of many of these past mistakes. That is why you have to backtrack and clean up.

Companies don't want to be associated with bad PR and if they find any offending photos or material of you in the past, it can affect your reputation and position within the company. So, it's a good idea, to get those videos and wild party pictures off Facebook and save them elsewhere, preferably on Cloud or on an external hard drive. If someone else has posted photos of you that you want to be taken down, ask them first. Most people will accommodate your request. However, if they refuse, you can report the image to Facebook and ask them to remove it permanently.

Put your professional foot forward

On Facebook, be as professional as possible. If you have a professional page set up, regularly put up eye-opening and informative posts related to your industry. Engage in intellectual discussions. Type words correctly and proofread before hitting the post or share buttons.

Don't discuss office conversations and meetings on Facebook

If you currently have a job, you might be tempted to go on Facebook and talk about that "very interesting conversation you had with your colleagues the other day". This will put a bad light on you when potential employers see posts like these. It shows that you cannot be trusted when it comes to keeping office and work matters confidential.

Don't slander or insult a colleague on Facebook. If found or reported, you will most likely face repercussions such as losing your job, leaving a red mark on your record.

Understand company social media policy

More companies are adding social media rules by the day. When accepting a job, you should read and fully understand the things you can and cannot do on social media.

Even before getting a job, most companies have policies against discriminating based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. If in one act of haste, you break any of the policies on Facebook, there is a good chance that you might not get the job at all.

Don't use work computer or WIFI for Facebook

The essence of getting a job is to keep it right? Why get a job—your dream job—and lose it because you could not keep your work computers off Facebook. Managers have ways of monitoring the way employees use work WIFI or computers so avoid exploiting it for personal use.

