

Using social media for professional gain

While the ideal is still to meet people face-to-face, networking with social media is the next best thing for getting your name in front of influential people – such as hiring managers.

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Networking through social media is a great way to learn more about companies where you want to work and to find out about opportunities even before they are advertised to the general public. Word of caution: Don't put anything on your LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or other personal site you wouldn't want written on a billboard outside your house.

LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is a great resource for professional networking. Joining groups relevant to your industry or educational background can be good ways to expand your network of potential professional contacts. In CareerSearch, on each company details page, you will see a LinkedIn icon. Clicking this icon will display individuals in your network that you can connect with to find out more about a company or to give you a reference before or after you apply or interview.

Facebook

New [Facebook](#) applications allow you to leverage your social network for professional purposes. The "Who Do You Know" app can be installed on your Facebook account and will scan your friends and your friends of friends to see where they work and what opportunities are available at their companies.

Many companies also have Facebook pages where you can obtain up-to-date information about events and initiatives that can be valuable before an interview. More and more companies are setting up pages dedicated to current job opportunities.

Twitter

[Twitter](#) offers a different way of staying current on company news and events as well as new job opportunities at companies. Using [TweetMyJobs](#) you can identify channels dedicating to updating you on job opportunities by industry, geography or both.

Signing up to follow a particular channel will notify you any time a new job opportunity becomes available that meets your specific criteria so you can be first in line to apply for the position.

Learning what types of positions a company is recruiting for and staying current on the happenings at the company is valuable regardless of where you are in your job search. Use this information as background for setting up informational interviews or for planning your future outreach to a particular contact to create your own position.