

**SOCIAL NETWORKING SAVVY TO PREVENT
WORKPLACE SABOTAGE: 5 TIPS**

By Rachel Wagner, May 2008

Clearly, Facebook and MySpace are great ways to network and communicate with friends. However, this rapidly growing phenomenon can also run the risk of undermining one's workplace credibility. Many employers commonly use search engines to gain more information about a potential or current employee. Would search results reveal anything that may cause embarrassment or sabotage your credibility? And, what if your boss requests to be your "friend?"

Here are five ways to enjoy social networking camaraderie and maintain integrity at the office.

Keep boundaries between your personal and professional life.

Avoid posting personal topics and images that you may not want your interviewer, your employer, or your coworkers to see. Also, steer clear of posting any negative comments about your job or workplace.

Use courtesy and respect. Avoid making people feel uncomfortable. Post information and images that make all feel welcome and are not offensive in any way.

Respect client and employer confidentiality. Avoid naming clients or exposing confidential client or employer information in your posts or on your pages. You want to maintain complete integrity and trustworthiness with your employer and clients.

Be cautious about who your "friends" are. Should your boss make such a request, it may be best just not to respond. It is more acceptable to be "friends" with work peers, but still be aware that personal information on your page can affect your credibility with them.

Use professional sites like LinkedIn for professional networking. LinkedIn—with more than 20 million global users, spanning 150 industries—is a business-oriented site mainly used for professional networking. As the world's leading professional network, it is a great option—versus Facebook and MySpace—for taking your personal business network online and reaching out to people in a very effective way.

Without a doubt, social networking is here to stay, and using these guidelines will keep your workplace credibility intact, as well.

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