

THE EXCHANGE

EXPERIENCE THAT MATTERS

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CONTROLLING YOUR ONLINE IMAGE

Protecting Your Online Image

Make no mistake: employers *will* google you when you are a job candidate, and often what they find first is your personal social media accounts. Try as you may, there are a number of ways hiring managers may view your Facebook or Instagram content. As such, it's important to keep an eye on all of your social media activity, including:

- Friends' posts on your wall and tagged pictures of you containing offensive or unprofessional material.
- Past posts, likes and comments of yours that may reveal personal information or inflammatory opinions.
- Questionable or explicit group memberships, or pages you like and follow on social media.



To protect yourself from negative repercussions based on your social media history, routinely scan your social media accounts and remove any materials that may imply the following:

- Politically or religiously inciting remarks or images.
- Any negative comments remarking upon previous workplaces, co-workers, classmates, or teachers.
- References to drugs or alcohol abuse, including underage drinking.
- Reckless behavior in general, or images/comments which may be misunderstood to imply recklessness.

Distinguishing Yourself from Others and Avoiding Negative Search History

Google your name. What do you see? For those with more common names, you may find search results bombarded with people who share your name. This can present a challenge for candidates wanting to stand out on the internet search page, or for candidates who may share a name with someone who has *negative* search results such as arrest records and/or viral social media scandals. For those seeking to distinguish their positive achievements from the drabble of (potentially negative) online search results, try the following tactics:

- Flood the internet with positive or neutral activity from your (appropriately monitored) social media pages. Make everything public and remain active on LinkedIn and your other accounts. The more public and frequently used, the more prominent the page will be on a search result, therefore upstaging other less desirable results.
- Include your middle name on social media and professional accounts/websites to distinguish yourself from others with your same name.
- List where you went to school and your current city of residence on your social media accounts to further confirm your identity if necessary.
- If there are private blogs or social media accounts with negative results pertaining to you, you may try asking the administrator to take down the post in question. This is likely not an option for news sites, unless they have misreported something and you are asking for a correction.

Why Create a LinkedIn Account?

- Contributes to your professional online branding
- Employers are already on LinkedIn looking for YOU!
- Allows for more detail and greater portfolio of work examples than a simple resume – no 1-2 page limit!
- Acts as a medium to meet contacts in your desired field and keep up with professional relationships for networking

When to Create Your Account?

NOW. Even if you're an incoming freshman, creating a LinkedIn profile early is key. Add everyone you know as a connection. Your professors, classmates, and supervisors today will be your business contacts tomorrow. Best to add them and formalize the professional connection early so you can continue keeping touch as your career develops and everyone goes in different directions.

How to Set it Up?

Start with Experience: Begin with the information on your resume. Where have you worked? Volunteered? Add your degree programs and anticipated graduation date if possible. You also may add high school, as this can help you find and keep in touch with other alumni. Feel free to describe these activities. Show how you contributed your unique skills to produce outcomes at these organizations. Did you have time away from your career caring for your loved one? Show how you contributed related skills toward the betterment of the household. Use quantitative and qualitative evidence to show how you rocked each experience in your one-of-a-kind career path.

Documents: When you're ready, you may also upload presentations and examples of your writing or even videos if applicable. Upload a current copy of your resume in pdf form, with your home address removed for privacy purposes if preferred.

Skills: List your skills and rank them based on which ones are your strongest, or which ones are most relevant to your desired field.

Headline: Construct a headline that's unique, says what your objective is, and captures your essence/strengths.

Summary: Write about yourself, your work history, goals, and passions. Remember that only the top two lines show up automatically on your profile – viewers must expand view to read the rest. So frontload the most important or interesting info.

Profile Picture: Make sure it's a professional portrait and you're well groomed and dressed professionally. No selfies with your pet allowed! Schedule a photo shoot with The Exchange today or visit one of our LinkedIn workshops for a professional portrait for your LinkedIn profile. Profiles with a photo are 13x more likely to be viewed! You may also personalize your profile with a background photo if you'd like. Make sure it's good quality and professional.



How to Optimize Your LinkedIn Experience

- Connect with Marian University alumni in your field, or who work in your home city, using the search function and narrowing your fields based on affiliation with Marian University.
- Join the Marian University Indianapolis group for updates about events, jobs, general career advice, and networking. Browse for other groups that may be appropriate for your industry or professional involvements.
- Reach out and continue relationships with professional contacts.
- Update your LinkedIn profile at least every time you update your resume.
- Share appropriate and professional articles and updates on your LinkedIn feed to keep active.
- Give recommendation notes for past supervisors/colleagues, and ask for recommendations from them.
- Customize your LinkedIn url for an easy web address to share on your resume or business cards.
- Find new employment opportunities in your field by searching for jobs and filtering based on industry, location, full-time or part-time or internship experiences, etc.