Still got that Picture of Yourself Chugging a Brewski on Facebook? Better listen to us and take that Pic Down! - A Look at when Social Networking Sites and Human Resource Recruiting Collide

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ABSTRACT

This article will discuss the popular trend of Social Network Sites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com and focus on how employers are screening job applicants via these sites. The pros and cons of material on these sites will be discussed as well as discussion about the legal and ethical issues involved with employer snooping. These sites are very popular as one in five Americans are using them, so discussion will be had about cleaning up the "dirt" on a personal site, and the information users can display on their sites that will be helpful instead of harmful. EEOC and FCRA documentation will be reviewed as the reader will have to make a decision on whether employers have a right to the "public information."

INTRODUCTION

Social Network Sites are becoming one of the most popular phenomena on the information highway since the inception of the World Wide Web; but are these sites helping to build the coffins of job applicants' career opportunities? Believe it or not, but one in five Americans have a social networking site, according to a recent study by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Pew Internet and American Life Project. (Valle, 2008) Social Networking sites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com have become a virtual playground for friends and foes alike. Many people use sites such as these as a way to keep contact with old friends and acquaintances as well as an avenue to make new friends and create online social connections. But oh "Beware", your friends aren't the only one perusing your site. Over the last few years employers have come to the realization these sites are another way to screen job applicants. These sites provide useful information and offer sometimes and employer's validation whether to interview certain job candidates or make a final hire or not hire decision. Many companies believe they are entitled to get as much information as they can about job candidates, and that reviewing these personal Web sites is fair game to find out who will be the "best fit" for their organization according to Paula Marks, vice president of the executive search firm Gilbert Tweed Associates. (Anonymous, *Managing Accounts Payable*, 2006, 4)

Traditionally, when screening job applicants, employers contacted previous employers and performed reference checks to either weed out applicants or to make final hiring decisions. Social Network Sites

such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com have provided another avenue to the types of background checking performed by employers. This process will pose concerns to some applicants, while others may have no concerns at all. Those not concerned may find later that maybe they should have been concerned after all. In many cases these sites cause employers to dismiss the candidates for consideration while in other situations employers solidify their choice to hire the candidates. It may be asked, "Is it legal for employers to review applicant's social network sites?" Regardless of the answer employers are going to look, so how can information found be harmful or how can it be helpful? Also, how can harmful information be erased or sanitized from a social network sites? These questions are answered along with advice on the do's and don'ts of maintaining a social network site and the ongoing reminder that information posted on online profiles is no longer private and forever will be public. Would you hire the person you have portrayed on your personal site?

BACKGROUND

Not too long ago assessment of job applicants came via resumes, references and first impressions when employers were determining candidates to interview. After the interview employers would base hiring decisions on the way information was presented before, during and after an interview. Career experience and presentation usually provided most of the information a future employer would need to know about the applicant. Information obtained before, during and after the interview made up the ingredients of an almost final decision. Prior to offering a candidate a position with the company employers will typically make the decision after necessary reference checks and background checks. But, oh how the system of background checking has changed in just a few short years. Technology, and the thought knowledge is power, employers have found a new way of researching applicants. (Reddin, 2007) Employers now can find information about job applicants, sometime much more than they would ever need to know or want to know with the touch of mouse and access to the World Wide Web. With a few keystrokes many potential job applicants have mounds of information on personal websites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com.; their life has become an open book.

The trend of social networking on the web began with people wanting to reconnect with lost school friends. Then it expanded to sharing messages, music, and videos with people sharing pieces of their culture and life interests. So what are these social network sites everyone is talking about? Social Network Sites have been around since the 1990's but the most popular such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com have popped up since 2003. These are just two examples of social network sites that will be discussed in this article. A social network site works very similar to social interacting one might do at a meeting, a bar, a club, a church or any event for that matter. Users or members introduce themselves with profiles, tell about their hobbies and interest and learn about others. Sites such as Myspace.com and Facebook.com are the most common of these sites where their users, people and businesses for example, create and maintain their own web page or profiles with ease. As someone builds their profile they are allowed to upload pictures, videos, personal information, and interest that allow them to personalize their profile. The ability to add pictures and video to a profile can be a very intriguing aspect for many users. Everything from mothers showing off family photos at the beach, to guys bragging about the new wheels they got for their car. The ability of these social networking sites to "shrink the world" is amazing; placing everyone around you just a mouse click away has forever changed the internet and the way we use it.

The two premier social networking sites, Myspace.com and Facebook.com have woven themselves into the very core of the current culture of America and the World. These sites have allowed many people to establish and keep a large peer group even though they may have never actually met many of the people face to face that they choose to keep corresponding and engaging in conversation with. These sites

expand the people users meet by being introduced to friends' friends, their friends' friends and their friends' friend's friends. Myspace.com and Facebook.com have also allowed business the opportunity to advertise in a non intrusive fashion. Companies are creating customer loyalty with these sites, and the businesses have become friends of the users, just like an individual. Burger King and Chase are examples of two well known companies that use these sites for advertising. (Business Week, 2006) This has allowed Myspace.com to become one of the most successful web sites on the net today. Yet Myspace.com is not alone many similar sites such as Facebook.com, Match.com, and even Youtube.com, have become a integral part of the net and that is largely in part due to the social networking ability they provide. The ease of communication with others, and the ability for a big business to work its self into the social lives of its customers, has made Social Networking sites a mainstay in the world as we know it. As the early business pioneers step into the new social arena, they are pushing themselves to redefine applications and advertising in way that could, over time, reshape much broader business arenas. (Hagel, 2008)

Social Network Sites are growing by leaps and bounds since their inception just a few short years ago. As people learn of the many uses of these sites and the ease of using them they are having a hard time not signing up themselves. Myspace.com has over 114.6 million visitors and Facebook.com has 123.9 million visitors and both are growing daily, thus it is hard to argue their incredible success. (Musgrove, 2008) The success of these sites has even garnered the interest of big investors like Bill Gates who have bought into Facebook.com. With the wind in their sails and the world at their feet, these sites have no clears signs of slowing down, and a bright prosperous future ahead of them.

Originally MySpace.com and Facebook.com were both created for students on college campuses to communicate with one another. As on campus popularity grew so did the outside interest in such sites. While many people think sites like MySpace.com and Facebook.com are primarily for teenagers and those in their younger twenties, the reality is the more and more people of many different age groups have become privy to the abilities of such sites. As many things in life have a "trickle down" effect that allows knowledge to be passed down to the younger generation, social networking sites have seem to created a "trickle up" effect. Where as the parents of children and students that have pages on these sites have learned there are many benefits to creating a page for themselves. Users 35 years and older account for more than one half of Facebook's daily visitors and are the network's most rapidly growing demographic. (Hagle, 2008) These sites have made it possible for people to prepare for a 10, 20, even 30 year class reunion without missing a beat or forgetting a unfamiliar face. That of course is probably of the least importance to the younger generations but as time pass, expect to see more and more of this world's older echelon taking on these sites with full force.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE AND HUMAN RESOURCE RECRUITING

Although many businesses are using social network sites for advertisement and communications, more and more businesses are now using social network sites for screening job applicants. Of the many businesses using social network sites, Human Resource Departments large and small have seen that the personal pages of these sites provide a plethora of information on awaiting applicants. Employers have begun, in large numbers, to screen applicants through various social networking sites. An article in HRfocus stated that in a recent survey by CareerBuilder.com, it was found that 20% of employers use Social Networking sites to research prospective applicants, this is up from just a mere 11% in 2006. Yet among the over 3,100 employers surveyed only 34% said that the content they discovered caused them to reject the potential applicant. In addition another 9% of those surveyed stated that they are not currently using social networking sites to screen potential applicants but plan on implementing such practices in the foreseeable future. (HR Focus, 2008) On the other side of the employment coin are the applicants. On

November 11, 2007, The News Tribune of Tacoma Washington, stated that 57% of people seeking employment chose to edit their profiles when they began seeking new employment. Another 28% of people surveyed stated that they believe that information on their profile would be detrimental to their being hired if a prospective employer were to see it. The article also states 75% of all people surveyed were fully aware that potential employers may chose to view their profile. (Musgrove, 2008) Social-networking sites give a glimpse into "the real person", said Randy Johnson, vice president of human resources for Noridian Mutual Insurance in Fargo. (Finneman, 2008) Employers are scanning the internet for any information on an applicant that could potentially damage a company's reputation. (Valle, 2008).

Applicants should always anticipate their sites will be reviewed by potential future employers. Students looking for jobs or applying for internships have more to worry about than perfecting their resume. Students are also being warned not to post anything on their sites that could make them look immature or irresponsible, such as posting pictures or comments about partying, drinking or sex. Article after article reminds us that information on the web "Is out there forever." (Wardle, 2007) Steve Rothberg said "I think of social networking sites much like a tattoo, it seems like a good idea at the time, but you have to live with it for the rest of your life." (Hancock, 2006:18) According to Gina Hernandez, pictures and comments posted on social-networking sites such as Facebook.com and MySpace.com can cost people their current or even future jobs. Lance J. Richards, global practice leader & consultant with Kelly Services says, "People need to think about the impact of anything they put on the web. If there's something you wouldn't want your parents to know about, by all means, don't do it" (Hernandez, 2007:49) This is a good rule of thumb when thinking about the repercussions of the information we post online.

Employers have many reasons for checking the profiles of prospective applicants. Robyn Greenspan, editor in chief with ExecuNet, said she has spoken with many job candidates who have lost out on employment opportunities because of what recruiters dug up online.(Baird, 2008) Many people let their guard down when it comes to building their profile. It almost as if they do not understand the ramifications that may occur if some information were to end up in the hand of their current employer or future potential employer. Acts such as use of illegal drugs, the participation in activities such as vandalism or robbery, the abuse of alcohol, outlandish photographs, and any other manner of incompetence and immaturity are regularly posted on users' profiles. To a potential employer this information is priceless. This information allows employers to weed out bad seeds early before they have the opportunity to infect the entire corporation. Extensive background checking affords employers the ability to find employees that fit into the business culture and that seem to fit the company's current structure.

Collin Bannon's Facebook profile, includes disrespecting police and chasing pills and liquor. When he is asked about this he says, "I just kind of made it a joke." This is what can be so damaging to individuals. What seems to be cool at the time can ruin a persons chances later. Vonder Heide, a consultant for U.S. Trust in Greensboro reminds us that online perception can be reality for employers. (Jarboe, 2006) In other words, the information users put on their profiles will be taken serious by many of those perusing the site, and we are accountable for what we post.

The following is a chart of top areas for concern among these hiring managers according to a survey from careerbuilder.com: (HR Focus, 2008:9)

- 41% - candidate posted information about them drinking or using drugs
- 40% - candidate posted provocative or inappropriate photographs or information
- 29% - candidate had poor communication skills
- 28% - candidate bad-mouthed their previous company or fellow employee
- 27% - candidate lied about qualifications
- 22% - candidate used discriminatory remarks related to race, gender, religion, etc.

- 22% - candidate's screen name was unprofessional
- 21% - candidate was linked to criminal behavior
- 19% - candidate shared confidential information from previous employers

We must also not forget the information found on personal profiles can also be helpful when looking for a job. Sometimes the final decision to hire is determined from the site rather than the decision not to hire. Qualities such as good communication skills, organizational skills, professionalism, information about previous activities and club memberships as well as jobs recently held are common information that can be found on ones profile. Awareness of these things may entice an employer in to hiring someone just as the finding of the negative information may sway the employer against them. That proved to be the case for Jean Syverson, 42, principal of Grace Lutheran School in Fargo. She found positive information online about one job candidate and ended up hiring the teacher.(Finneman, 2008)

If we think about a possible scenario or two we can better see how social network sites can help job seekers. John graduates from college and spends most of his adult life participating and organizing humanitarian type projects, such as Habitat for Humanity. Many of John's charitable contributions may not likely be part of the application process and his deep involvement is not always easily explained in a resume either. If a potential employer of John's were to visit his site, they would uncover this wonderful information about the candidate. They would also see pictures of John helping to repair and replace home in hurricane ravished cities. This may entice the employer into seeking John as an employee, because this type of person is great for the company, especially if they meet the job requirements. Qualities such as leadership and good ethics may not convey on the application in the same way as the social network site. All of this information is readily available on one's profile, and can allow an employer to really "get to know" John before he ever steps in the front door.

As a second scenario look at the example of an employer who has two great job candidates. Mary and Jane, both with great credentials and excellent interviews are up for hire in the marketplace. As an employer is reading their site profiles they will discover the very creative, full of color, and flashiness of Mary's site and the basic, yet professionalism of Jane's site. If the employer is a marketer or designer they may decide Mary is the best choice. If the employer is a major law firm, the firm may be likely to choose Jane because of the professionalism and less need of flare.

According to careerbuilder.com some social network site examples give the job seekers an edge over the competition by the following factors; (HR Focus, 2008:9)

- 48% - candidate's background supported their qualifications for the job
- 43% - candidate had great communication skills
- 40% - candidate was a good fit for the company's culture
- 36% - candidate's site conveyed a professional image
- 31% - candidate had great references posted about them by others
- 30% - candidate showed a wide range of interests
- 29% - candidate received awards and accolades
- 24% - candidate's profile was creative

As today's job market changes, and many companies choose to seek background information about potential employees through social networking site, personal privacy issues come into question. All Human Resource officers know there are certain questions that are off limits when reviewing a job applicants potential of being hired within an organization. (Reddin, 2008) Employers may want to consider the ethical and legal questions of looking at social-networking sites. (Finneman, 2008) Many parts of a person's personal life are exposed on social networking sites that normally are not privy to the

employer such as age, race, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, family life arrangements and disabilities. All of these things can be found on social network sites and may have an effect on the hiring decision if this information if exposed. For example, if an employer were to research a person's social networking profile and find out that the applicant had ten school age children, the employer may feel that the demands of such a large family may take away from the prospective applicant's ability to perform at the work place. If this information were to hinder an employee's ability to become employed, the potential employer may very well be in violation of laws. Employers' growing use of social networking sites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com to scrutinize job applicants could lead to charge of employment discrimination and litigation, experts warn. (Greenwald, 2008)

There is no law preventing an employer from checking Web pages on social networking site, but the Equal Employment Opportunity Law sets ground rules for the hiring practices of employers. (Security Director's Report, 2006) An employer may not discriminate against any persons of a protected class. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination against race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protect applicants with disabilities not be discriminated as well. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 protects those applicants over the age of forty years old. (EEOC Laws, 2008) While it is easy for an employer to conduct themselves properly at the beginning of the application process, employers may choose to use a social profile site search as a way of finding out things they cannot legally ask during the application process. If an employer were to research an applicant's profile and find information that could cause concern for the employer, they may choose to pass on the applicant, thus potentially violating the EEOC laws. Using someone social networking profile may lead to conscious and unconscious discrimination of potential employees. Nevertheless, companies may need to consider putting this background checking policy in the company handbook. As with all personnel issues, human resource managers need to be consistent and document when handling background checks. If employers are going to use sites to investigate job applicants, it needs to be performed for "all" candidates, not just a selected few.

Many people feel that without specific policies being put into action, many employers will be left open to charges of discrimination, based on the information they retrieve off one's profile. Attorney Matthew S. Effland from Indianapolis says employers should have a policy in place that "details what the purpose of the Internet search is," and that specifically spells out that the firm does not base it decision on race, color or national origin. As stated in Business Insurance, "Looking someone up on the internet is not illegal because the internet is public property". (Greenwald, 2008) While this is true, the potential of using information improperly is still on the table for debate.   For this reason there are employers who choose not to use social network sites when making decisions about job applicants. Donna Miller, Enterprise Rent-a Car's HR director, stated to People Management that using social networking sites to obtain information on job applicants is equal to "going into somebody's house and searching through their bedroom drawers." She feels the people's social networking profiles are personal and not appropriate for employers to use. She's said "I think alot of students use these sites to meet people and to share pictures with friends, and it is certainly not a way that people look for jobs."(Phillips, 2007:11) Some lawyers warn that using social networking sites to vet job candidates may hurt employers by turning off good candidates who don't want the company snooping on them without their consent. (Zeidner, 2007) Others may wonder what it is they have to hide.

The participation in Social networking sites can have many adverse affects on future employees. Outside of discrimination based on the EEOC law, it also can affect the overall view of ones future employee's views on a person as a whole. Many people boast about sexual conquest, estranged social ideas, show off pictures of tattoos, and even tend to bash previous employers. When a potential employer sees these thing it becomes easy for one to judge someone based on what they see on a person's profile. Many social networkers tend to be carefree and post readily on their profile with no regard to the potential of their information being found by the wrong person.

Besides the clear cut cases of someone posting inappropriate information on their profile there is also the potential for fraud against the person. With abundance of information available on the net it is easy for someone to create a fake profile using the information of another. For example a jaded lover, or a disgruntled co worker, could build a profile filling it with damning photographs, and misleading information. When an employer decides to pursue researching someone's social networking profile they may come across this "fake" profile, and be led to believe that the information on the profile is true and be turned away from accepting that person as a viable candidate. If the information an employer learns turns out to be false, and it relies on it in making a decision, the company is in danger of being sued, according to Tim Best, president of Arlington, Texas-based PreScreen America, Inc., a background investigating service. (Greenwald, 2008)

The potential for fraudulent and inaccurate information brings up the thought of the employer's obligations under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). This act applies to a "consumer report" when selecting employees to hire, promote, reassign, or retain. The law defines "consumer report" as any communication by a "consumer reporting agency" bearing information on someone's creditworthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living.(Wright, 2001) The law goes on to say that employers cannot procure a consumer report without written documentation of the employer's intentions and written permission of the employee or applicant. In other words, it may be argued that employers have no right to view the social network site of employees or applicants without written consent and when information is found to be pertinent to a selection, the employer has the obligation to discuss the accuracy and explanation of the content. Sue Murphy, manager of N.H. National Human Resource Association says, "But where the liability starts to come into play is when people are making hiring decisions based on the information without coming back and talking to the applicant." She says "I think it is going to be tested in the courts."(Greenwald, 2008) Employers need to be very careful not to subject themselves to harm later. "Great care must be taken by employers who conduct Internet background investigations of potential employees not to violate the FCRA." (Holland, 2008:50) Employers need to be ever mindful that not necessarily is the information factual. (Bzdega, 2006)

Upon further review the terms and use of these popular sites emphasize they are not to be used for commercial use. Employers need to be aware of the terms and use advisory on these websites. (Maltby, 2008) If an employer should decide to create a profile on the site and then use this site for hiring selections the argument could be posed that they are using the site for commercial use which is a violation of the site. According to the Facebook.com terms and use section users agree when accepting the terms and services that "the Service and the Site are available for your personal, non-commercial use only" The site also warns against impersonating as it states not to use the site to "impersonate any person or entity, or falsely state or otherwise misrepresent yourself." (Facebook.com, 2008) Employers are taking great risk if they should present themselves on the sites under false identity. If the employers wish to use the public domain they should definitely not put themselves at risk or their company by posing as someone else. Employers must use caution because they may not be able to change their thoughts once they find information online. (Maltby, 2008)

IMPLICATIONS FOR JOB APPLICANTS

Job applicants should also beware of "Google" searches. There is a growing trend in the number of employers who are Googling candidates to research for additional information. (Huard. 2008) Googling is becoming a popular way to obtain information on potential employees. (Conlin, 2006) Google searches will bring up anything on an applicant that is in the public forum. The information can bring up

newspaper articles, memberships in groups, legal proceedings, and sometimes late payments to local, state and national governments. This kind of information may be embarrassing, but more importantly be damaging. The laws state that being charged for a crime is not committing a crime, so if you are not convicted this information does not have to be placed on job applications. But if an employer is snooping, they may very well find where the charges were brought and to their impression that may be all it takes to set aside the applicants file. Users may also not realize that the information they include on their websites may also be linked to a Google search. It would not be a bad idea for all of us to Google ourselves to see if any detrimental information should appear.

In Jason Hancock's article "Looking Deeper Online" he writes about a gentleman named Tien Nguyen who at age 22 had good credentials yet could not find a job. Everything about him looked good or so he thought until a friend suggested he Google himself. His search found a link to an article he had written a year earlier on how to cheat the system to make employers have a better impression of you and how to get away with it. "Overall, it was simply for humor," but if you were to Google his name this is what you would find. Nguyen immediately pulled the article from the Web and ironically two weeks later he was called for two interviews and offered a job with a Fortune 500 company. (Hancock, 2006)

John Kerzmann of Preference Personnel says "Whether it's right or wrong, people are going to go out there. Employers want to find out all the information they can about a person, just like employees want to find out everything they can about an employer." (Finneman, 2008) MySpace.com themselves even remind the users of the potential risk of the social network site. The users are reminded in the safety tips and settings portion of the myspace.com website of the following: (MySpace.com, 2008)

- Don't forget that your profile and MySpace forums are public spaces
- People aren't always who they say they are
- Don't post anything that would embarrass you later. Think twice before posting a photo or information you wouldn't want your parents, potential employers, colleges or boss to see!

So is your career life over once you have posted information on your social network site? Experts say there are ways to clean up the "digital dirt".   The first steps are to remove pictures, content and links that could send out the wrong messages. Add to your profile accomplishments in the workplace and outside the workplace. If possible block comments from others and if not monitor those comments on a regular basis. Talk to your friends and ask that they do not post lewd photos or derogatory comments about you and others on your profile. Also if you have more than one social network site have consistent and matching information on both sites. Don't be Superman on Myspace.com and Batman on Facebook.com. It also important to not join groups that have ties to any beliefs or values you would not support publicly and in the workplace. If you are an animal rights activist there is nothing to be ashamed about, but be aware that applying for a job in a testing facility that works with animals in the testing lab, may prevent you from the hiring roster, especially if you post this online and more so if you have very strong opinions about the subject matter. It seems very awkward for the human resource manager to accept the fact that this would be a good candidate when the labs are constantly using animals to conduct research. Even if the candidate is not necessarily an animal rights activist but they may have friends and blogs on their profile of others who are. This too may hinder possible job offers at a plant such as this. The most obvious suggestion for cleaning up a profile is to go private, be discreet.   Myspace.com and Facebook.com allow the user to be private and no one can see their information except the guest they have invited or approved. In keeping with this, remember a person could pose as a friend; so be very careful.

In an article in the Charlotte Observer, Anandn Chauhan while looking for a new job has been "un-tagging" photos of himself on Facebook, including a shot from a Chapel Hill bar with just too many

plastic cups of beer in the frame. In the same article Ashley Dewitt a graphic designer "scoffs at post from old acquaintances depicting drinking and partying. She feels "It's like, aren't you a little old to be putting up stuff like that?" (Valle,2008) She doesn't want to be viewed as immature and childish. She, like many others, would like to be taken serious and respected by her business peers. Many like her feel this type of publicity would prevent her from gaining respect of her business associates. She constantly reviews her profile and keeps material of this nature off of her site.

Remember to Google yourself as you may be surprised at what is brought up. If you have concerns after Googling there are now companies who can clean up your dirt. Andy Beal, founder of a Raleigh-based online reputation management company, Trackur does just that. For a fee, Trakcur can cleanup your online act by keyword placement and linking. Reputation management companies say they can shift down the negative news, placing newer information at the top of a search. Beal reminds us that, "In their real-life world, they've corrected the situation, but it still lingers on Google and has a negative impact." (Caron, 2008) Unfortunately many fail to consider the information they post on the internet is often harder to remove than it is to remove a tattoo. (Holland, 2008) In article about cleaning up the web of damaging information, one author calls it your "Webutation." Another company, ReputationDefender.com, will scour the Internet for mentions of your name and then contact various sites to remove incriminating material. Fertik, CEO of ReputationDefender.com , reminds users, "There are two different things going on. One is stuff about you ends up on a Web site, and you don't like it. The other one is when you voluntarily put stuff up." (White, 2007)

CONCLUSION

All in all, social networking has forever changed the landscape of our world culture. It has provided people with ways to communicate and meet each other that just a few years ago would have been impossible. The incredible growth of these sites and the continuing loyalty of their users will assure these web sites a long and prosperous life. From time to time they will be put in the spot light and scrutinized for the way some people or businesses choose to use them, but over all their impact has done a great deal to bring us all a little closer together. Virtual communities are a way of life today, so users should not necessarily avoid being part of the communities; they should just make smart decisions when they are posting online. (Wagner, 2006)

For at least the next few years we will probably hear horror stories about how employers using social networking sites have discriminated potential employees and very few stories about how someone's profile helped to land them the job of their dreams. Let us not forget the way the world works; people talk about the bad and stifle the good. Social Network Sites have the same ability to help job applicants as they do to hurt job applicants. In the nature of this ever changing world it is those that do not embrace change that get left behind, the growth of these social networking sites has made a lasting impression on the work place as we know it. It is up to us to choose to use them wisely.

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