Employers are increasingly using social media to find qualified candidates for jobs and internships and to vet candidates before and during the interview process. In a 2017 survey, 70% of employers reported using social media to screen candidates before hiring them. According to a Harris Poll, when researching candidates for a job, employers who use social networking sites are looking for information that supports their qualifications for the job (61 percent), if the candidate has a professional online persona (50 percent), what other people are posting about the candidates (37 percent) and for a reason not to hire a candidate (24 percent). While it’s not unusual for employers to do Google searches and use a range of social media channels, surveys show that employers use LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter the most.

This tip sheet is meant to provide you with some of the basics to help you get started using these three social media channels for the internship and job search, but it is not an exhaustive list of all the steps you can take. For more information you can talk to a Peer Career Advisor (PCA) at walk in hours Sunday through Friday 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., check out our Getting Started Using Social Media Prezi here: http://ow.ly/Rm129, or get the book written by Brown alum Joshua Waldman ’00 – “Job Searching With Social Media for Dummies.”

Building Your LinkedIn Profile

With more than 500 million users in more than 200 countries and territories, and more than 75,000 Brown alumni and students, LinkedIn is an excellent tool to build your online profile, connect with people who can help you explore different career paths and find jobs and internships. It’s no longer a question of if you should use LinkedIn, but how. Below are some tips to get you started. Think of your LinkedIn profile as an interactive business card. It’s a summary of your professional experience, interests and capabilities that is designed to attract the attention of people who are searching for you online — recruiters, networking contacts, and grad school admissions officers.

Craft an Informative Headline

Your profile headline gives people a short, memorable way to understand who you are in a professional context or what you’re looking to do. This little 120-character section is prime marketing real estate. Think of the headline as the slogan for your professional brand, such as “Aspiring Urban Planning And Real Estate Professional” or “Passionate About Public Health Issues And Education Reform” or “Junior English Concentrator At Brown University Seeking Position in Social Media Or Graphic Design.” Check out the profiles of students and recent alums you admire for ideas and inspiration.

Display an Appropriate Photo

Remember that LinkedIn is not Facebook or your personal blog. If you choose to post a photograph, (we strongly recommend that you do), select a professional, high-quality, head-and-shoulders headshot of you alone. It doesn’t have to be fancy — you can use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don’t forget to smile.
Show off Your Experience, Education and Activities
List the jobs and internships you’ve held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. You can include photos or videos of your work. List organization and volunteer and campus activities and include details about tasks you performed and what you accomplished for each. Be sure to include information about all the institutions you’ve attended. Include your concentration as well as highlights of your activities. It’s also appropriate to include study abroad programs and summer institutes.

Develop Your Summary Statement
Your summary statement should be a concise articulation of your goals and qualifications. Describe what motivates you, what you’re skilled at and what you’re aspiring to do next. You can include internships, volunteer work, extracurriculars and key areas of expertise that are relevant for the kind of work you’re seeking, plus your aspirations. Present your summary statement in short blocks of text or bullet points for easy reading.

Additional Items: List Your Skills, Optimize Your Profile, Get Recommendations
Your “Summary” and “Skills and Expertise” sections are the places to include keywords and phrases that a recruiter or hiring manager might type into a search engine to find a person like you. Try to list at least five key skills to start. Not sure what key skills to list? Check job listings that appeal to you and the LinkedIn profiles of people who hold the kinds of positions you want. To increase the professional results that appear when people type your name claim a unique URL for your profile (for example: www.linkedin.com/in/yourname). Ask for recommendations from past internship supervisors and colleagues, employers, and professional mentors.

Get Personal and Build Your Network
Start by adding your friends, family and colleagues from your past jobs, internships and activities. Accept LinkedIn requests from people you know, have worked with, or who have been introduced to you by a mutual friend or contact.

As you build your connections on LinkedIn, always customize your connection requests with a friendly note and, if necessary, a reminder of where you met or what organization you have in common. Don’t just send the default “I’d like to add you to my professional network” message that LinkedIn suggests. You’re allowed 300 characters to write an introductory note to a potential contact. Use the “Advanced” search to find connections at companies you’re researching and visit linkedin.com/alumni to search amongst all Brown students and alumni who have profiles on the site.

Search for Internships and Entry-Level Jobs
You can search for internships on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/jobs/internship-jobs/ or for entry-level jobs at linkedin.com/jobs/entry-level-jobs/. When you apply for positions through LinkedIn, the employer will be able to view your full profile.
Getting Started: Using Social Media for the Job and Internship Search

Using Twitter to Research Companies and Find Jobs and Internships

About 47% of employers surveyed use Twitter to showcase their brand to potential employees and to post jobs and internships.

Create A Professional Account and Follow the Companies That Interest You

Pick a professional username, add a picture and write a short bio, (this can be a shorter version of your LinkedIn Summary). Follow the companies that interest you to learn more about their work. This will make it easier for you to build networks and, when it’s time to apply, to write strong cover letters and résumés. Some examples include @hrw, @CondeNastCareer, @socialmediajobs, @McKinsey.

Use Hashtags

Use hashtags to search for jobs, internships and other information. Some examples include: #internships, #hiring, #joblisting, #employment. You can also try combining those with hashtags for your field or employer. For example you could search #internships, #media or #jobs, #NASA.

Protecting Your Privacy and Finding Connections on Facebook

About 55% of employers surveyed use Facebook to generate referrals and post jobs and internships and many employers use Facebook to vet candidates. It’s not unusual for a company to reconsider a candidate based on what they see on Facebook.

Check Your Privacy Settings

Use Facebook’s Privacy Check Up feature to check your settings. Check past posts and pictures with Facebook’s Who Can See My Stuff tool. Review posts, pictures & comments before approving tags. Don’t badmouth past or current employers.

Activate Your Community To Find Opportunities

Let your friends know about the kind of positions that interest you. Type “People Who Work At [Company Name]” in your main Facebook search bar to find friends and friends of friends who work at companies that interest you.

CareerLAB Social Media

Connect with us for up-to-date information regarding opportunities, resources, programs, and more:

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