granted

SOCIAL NETWORKING SNAFUS & YOUR JOB SEARCH

Do you have a photo of yourself posted proudly on your personal social networking page? No, I don't mean that professional portrait you framed and gave to your grandma last Christmas. I'm talking about that night two weeks ago when you and 20 of your closest friends decided to play beer pong on the roof of a abandoned petrochemical facility and Bob captured the moment on his phone... In that handy "personal information" section of the same profile did you list the following dislikes?:Working, collating, filing,bosses, HR departments and wage slavery? Before you send your resume out to the employer of your dreams (or lets face it in this economy, any employer) you may want to tighten the privacy settings on your Facebook/MySpace/Social Networking Site of Your Choice and other personal ephemera floating around out there on the 'net. Prospective employers do treat these resources like a free background check and they will judge you by what they find. According to research done by the Career Builders website 53% of potential employers will research you online. 43% of those who do research you rely on common search engines and 12% go directly to Facebook to check you out. According to Career Builders, two in five employers found information during such a background check that dissuaded them from hiring a candidate. One third of employers said that an online search of candidates qualifications proved said candidate lied about his or her qualifications. Once you're hired you need to be careful too. 28% of employers reported firing an employee over material they posted on the web. In most cases this material was derogatory towards an employer or another employee. It is important to realize that the internet is a memory monster, all those blogs you wrote when you were 16, those wild beer pong photos, political affiliations, likes, dislikes, music and friends are out there once you put them out there. The best solution is to never give out personal information over the internet. If you do, use a pseudonym and don't post identifying photographs. Many people live a great deal of their lives on the web so this may be an impossible option. As an alternative, protect the flow of information. Go into your account settings and crank up the privacy. Plug your name into a search engine and read your results. If you see any issues try to fix them if that is possible. Also remember that Social Networking can be used for good. You may be able to make employment contacts or employers may reach out to you. Make your best impression! Don't put your name or identifying information to anything online that you wouldn't want your grandma to read...unless your grandma belongs to a motorcycle gang (Hi Grandma!).