How to Use Social Networking

Social networking is an effective way to use technology to reach out to the people you know – and the people who have the ability to hire you. It is increasingly common for employers to tweet information, recruit candidates through LinkedIn, and check out potential employees on Facebook. You know how to connect with your friends, but are you ready to take social networking to the next level for your job search?

**LinkedIn** – This is the best site for connecting with professionals and advancing your job search. Build your network wide enough and you might find a contact with your ideal employer! Use these tips for creating a strong profile and network:

- Upload a professional photo of yourself
- Complete and update your profile, using key words to describe your accomplishments
- Provide and request recommendations
- As you meet professional contacts, invite them to your network with a personal note
- Join groups (but only those in which you can actively participate), including SLU alumni groups in various cities

After you’ve built a network, consider these tips to research and connect with opportunities:

- Search for appropriate contacts at targeted employers; if someone in your network is connected to the employer (even through their contacts), ask for an introduction
- Search to find background information on employers before your interview
- Create status updates to keep your name visible in your network
- Ask questions by going to More…Answers (e.g., Do you know an advertising professional who might be willing to provide information about the field?)
- Include your LinkedIn profile address in your resume and email signature

**Facebook** – Think about it: Where else do you have such a wide group of people in one place? Send messages to your friends: “Know someone who is a sports agent?” “I’m looking for an internship – anyone know where I can buy a decent suit with low funds?” “I want to help kids, where should I volunteer my time?”

**Twitter** – Are you interested in a particular company or organization? Find out if they have a twitter account: what messages are they spreading about their project? How are they engaging with their customers? Know this, and you’ll appear more knowledgeable in an interview!

**Blogging** – View blogging as an online portfolio; in particular fields, you can demonstrate your talents in writing, photography, technology, art – you name it, you can blog it!

**Caution:** Be careful with the information you are putting out there. Clean up your online presence. For help with social networking and your job search, visit with a career counselor.