

Don't Get "Blocked" From a New Job Because of Social Media

Majority of Employers Now Screen Social Media to Gain A 3D Perspective of Job Candidates

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

TORONTO, ON, Oct. 14, 2020 – Nearly 7 in 10 Canadian hiring decision-makers agree that looking at a candidate’s social media profiles is an effective way to screen applicants, according to a new survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

Furthermore, 68% believe employers should screen all applicant’s social media profiles, while the majority (65%) say they use social networking sites to research potential job candidates— with 2 in 5 saying they do so for every or most candidates.

Seventy-seven per cent of Canadian hiring decision-makers believe employees should maintain a “work-appropriate” social media presence.

For those who use social networking to research candidates, more than half (52%) have found content on a social networking site that caused them not to hire a candidate.

HIRING DECISION-MAKERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA



SAY LOOKING AT SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO SCREEN CANDIDATES



SAY EMPLOYERS SHOULD SCREEN ALL APPLICANTS' SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES



FOUND CONTENT ON A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE THAT CAUSED THEM NOT TO HIRE CANDIDATE



Source: The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 21 and May 6, 2020, among 501 Canadian hiring decision-makers.

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Social Media and Recruiting

Dan Purdy, Express franchise owner in Abbotsford, British Columbia, thinks that the resume and interview process, combined with social media is a great way to “gain a 3D perspective of the candidate.”

“Prior to social media, employers struggled to fully understand the character, personality traits and behaviour sets of those they wished to hire,” Purdy said. “There used to be greater formality at work, higher expectations and stark lines between the personal and the professional. Now decades later, candidates freely show their true colours, display their passions and reveal their personal identity.”

Brent Pollington, Express franchise owner in Vancouver, British Columbia agrees.

“A comprehensive search is often undertaken to identify different platforms where a potential candidate may have posted,” Pollington said. “I think it’s an effective way to gain more information about who the candidate truly is.”

Purdy and Pollington agree that they have elected not to pursue an interview or hire a candidate because of that person’s social media presence.

“Something as simple as typos in social media posts could cost you an interview,” said Bruce Hein, Express franchise owner in Sarnia, Ontario.

Job Seekers Lacking Social Media Accounts

In the Harris Poll, nearly a quarter (24%) of hiring decision-makers say they are not likely to consider a candidate that does not have an online presence.

Express franchise owners, however, agree that they would still hire a candidate without a social media profile or presence.

That being said, Pollington notes that “it’s becoming less likely for senior-level professionals to not have a LinkedIn profile. I would argue that not having a LinkedIn profile as a job seeker is likely hindering the chances of securing employment.”

Cleaning Up Social Media

With the country continuing to reopen from the COVID-19 shutdown, Express experts say now is the ideal time for job seekers to clean up their social media accounts to avoid losing out on employment opportunities.

Purdy notes that employers consider a job seeker's total online presence "fair game," and he advises the following in order to clean up one's social media:

- 1) Remove any comments or posts in which a job seeker is complaining, ranting, swearing, bullying or otherwise communicating in a harsh manner towards others. The reality is that most workplaces are challenging, demanding, dynamic and tough. The message those kinds of posts send to outside observers, however, is that you easily lose your cool and can't diplomatically resolve conflict amongst diverse opinions.
- 2) Delete those racy and saucy pictures from Cancun. If you wouldn't want grandma to see it, then take it down. Your coworkers, superiors, vendors, suppliers and customers can't "unsee" you in that outfit, at that party or behaving in that way. Your reputation and credibility are all that you really have in the workplace.

Pollington advises against posting anything on social media that would negatively affect an employee's professional life.

"New job seekers might want to go through old images or posts to ensure they align with the image they are currently looking to portray," Pollington said. "Images with drugs and alcohol may give the wrong initial perception to a prospective employer."

Hein suggests that job seekers and those already employed "remember that even outside of work, you represent your company. Inappropriate posts have caused employees to be disciplined by their employer and even terminated."

"While social media is meant to be a fun place to connect with our family, friends and community, a wise rule is not to post content you wouldn't want your boss or coworkers to see," Hein said.

"Social media can be a great tool for connecting with others, but it's important to remember that potential employers are looking at your accounts, too," Express CEO Bill Stoller said. "Take the time now to clean up your online presence to avoid the heartache later of losing out on the job."

In all job applications, Express Employment Professionals abides by federal and provincial human rights laws.

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 21 and May 6, 2020 among 501 Canadian hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in Canada who are employed full-time or self-employed or have been laid off, furloughed, or given a zero hour schedule in the past 60 days but worked full-time or were self-employed full-time prior, work at companies with more than 1 employee, and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data

were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Adria Minsky at (416) 620-7111 or email adria@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK, the international staffing company has more than 825 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa, and beginning in 2020 will expand to Australia and New Zealand. Since its inception, Express has put more than 8 million people to work worldwide.

About Express Employment Professionals

At Express Employment Professionals, we're in the business of people. From job seekers to client companies, Express helps people thrive and businesses grow. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK, our international network of franchises offers localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve, employing 552,000 people across North America in 2019. For more information, visit www.ExpressPros.com.