

Using today's technology for advantages in networking

Today's high tech world has seen a vast increase in all kinds of knowledge. Much of this information has been organized in ways to be able to find it in clusters, and to be able to find rather reliable topic-specific information, too – with links to even more – creating vast networks of information.

For instance, information about medical topics can be found at places like MediLexicon, community specific information can be found at Craigslist, and business information can be found at websites like Business.com.

The Internet has also given people the ability to reach out to other people anywhere in the world – instantly. This vast network of information on the Web has also made it possible for communities of like-minded people or friends to be able to contact and communicate with one another much more easily. Nowadays finding, developing, and communicating with people globally who have similar interests is much simpler than it ever was.



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At one time, networking had a totally different meaning. Social networking meant attending a PTA meeting, getting referrals from acquaintances or friends at church or a Rotary meeting, or simply hanging out at your kids' sporting events, or at a country club. That was the way it used to be – and honestly these methods should not be overlooked while adopting new methods.

ELECTRONIC NETWORKING ENABLES INSTANT AND WORLDWIDE CONTACTS

The new possibilities that the Internet brings to the average business or individual, however, can enable you to do so much more. You can easily communicate with people around the world and you can highly specialize your interests and the people you communicate with – all making it absolutely necessary to learn how to use the Internet tools that are available today.

The available tools online continue to evolve, and those who know how to use them can gain a quick advantage over businesses that do not use them. Finding the time in an already busy schedule to add social networking as a sourcing tool may seem like too much for some people. Using it in your workplace may seem like an unnecessary task, but it is one that can prove very effective – and many large corporations are currently

using social networking very successfully.

The good thing about social networking in an electronic environment is that it can easily be delegated to someone else. All you need to do is to make sure that systems and procedures are set up correctly, and then it can almost always be automated after that

ANYONE CAN LEARN TO USE SOCIAL NETWORKING

One very successful oil and natural gas explorer – T. Boone Pickens – has also discovered the value of social networking. Even though he is now over 80 years old, he has successfully used every form of social networking site to source a steady flow of young talent into his businesses. He also uses it fervently to promote his latest cause of using wind and solar energy instead of fossil fuels. If a man as old as Pickens sees the value of social networking, and takes the time to learn to use it successfully, then it obviously has some real value for you, too. Pickens has learned to adapt to what works in today's electronic age – and so should you – if you want to see the same level of success that he has already enjoyed from it. Do not let your age, busyness, intimidation of new things, or preferred methods keep you from employing social networking in your sourcing efforts – because it works! Remember, too, that it is not only readily available, but that your competitor will be using social networking even if you do not.

MUST HAVE COMMON SOCIAL WEBSITES TO START YOUR ONLINE NETWORK

If you do not already know where to start, then you need to be aware that some social networking sites will be of greater value to you and your company than others – depending on what type of talent you are looking to hire. By reviewing each one, and with

regular usage of the sites, you can determine which ones are most valuable to your company and which ones will give you the best results.

LinkedIn

This is a website for business professionals, and it enables them to post a summary of their experience and specialties. It also provides an easy way to maintain contact with friends, keep them updated with current projects, training, activities, and plans.

Members (currently over 100 million) can join various groups of like-minded professionals. Using LinkedIn for the healthcare field – On the LinkedIn website, there is a group called Hospital & Healthcare. This would be a great place to start your search for top talent. There are more than 700,000 people involved in some way in healthcare. You will find that a number of them are in HR or in recruiting for the healthcare sector. As an example, the top 20 results of a recent search revealed titles such as: VP of Strategic Marketing, Recruiter, Chief of Medicine, Medical Administrator, VP of HR, and Dir. of Pharmacy Ops. Many other consultants, industry service people, and vendors also network here as well. Because there are many management roles, it would be easy to obtain leads for marketing/sourcing.

Plaxo

This website serves as a convenient way to keep all your addresses and social network information together and up-to-date. It has over 50 million members and enables them to stay in contact with important people that matter to you by providing current contact information and sharing it. When you make a change in your contact information, it also automatically updates your information in other Plaxo users' accounts – letting them maintain contact with you. This is a powerful tool for business professionals. Using Plaxo in the healthcare field – When you want to use Plaxo to source your job openings, it will be

necessary to build up your network – one person at a time. Start in the Groups Directory, and simply type in the name

of the group you want, such as: Health Care, Medical, Nursing, Doctors, etc. This will bring up a list of groups for that topic. Then join the applicable groups and begin building your network. This website will provide you with the same types of people that you would find in LinkedIn.

Facebook

This well-known social networking site now has more than 500 million members – and each of them interacts with many others in some way. The website enables them to interact with each other and stay in contact – which is about 50 percent of their users on a daily basis. It is easy to join groups and add friends, send messages, and update personal profiles. Facebook was initially set up to enable college students to get to know one another on campus, but it is now used by people of all ages to stay in contact.

Using Facebook in the medical field – When you want to use Facebook as a way to source talent, start by “friending” everyone you know at work. This will enable you to be put in contact with many other people in the industry that people in your workplace already know. Then go to those who are in your email address book and friend them. This is the fastest way to find your friends on Facebook. Once you have this list of friends, then simply start posting your marketing/sourcing messages on your home page, and be sure to ask others to share the information as well. This could make it quickly go viral. You can also set up business webpages, and use them in the same way.

MySpace

This is a social networking site that was very popular before Facebook came along. It enables users to contact friends and enjoy photos, music, groups, and more. The website advertises that users can find “friends and classmates, meet new people, and network with over 100 million others.” Most of the users here range between their teens to the midtwenties. Using MySpace in the medical field – Sourcing talent on MySpace should be very similar to that of Facebook. Start by searching for people

at work and in your email address book, and send them a friend request. Once you have a number of friends, simply start posting your marketing or sourcing messages on your home page.

Eons

This is an online community that is specifically for the Baby Boomers. It enables them to explore their passions, keep in touch with friends, make connections with interesting people, and perhaps even more important – have fun! The community was started by Jeff Taylor, who also started Monster.com. Using Eons in the healthcare field – Finding the talent you need on Eons is similar to Facebook and MySpace. Start by connecting with those you know at work and others who are in your industry/marketplace already on Eons. Go to the Groups Section and click on Money & Careers. Once you go there, you will find a number of groups that are related to the health-care field that you can join and it will enable you to have contact with more people. Then start posting your marketing/sourcing messages on the home page.

Twitter

This free web-messaging tool lets you connect with friends and contacts in real-time. It lets you update your contacts with short messages, of 140 characters each, called “tweets.” On your user's page, you can send and receive messages from your contacts who have signed up to receive them from you. There is no limit to how many tweets you can send per day. Using Twitter in the healthcare field – Using Twitter requires growing a list. You do this by signing up to receive other people's tweets, and especially those who are in your workplace and/or industry. Once you have grown a network, simply start sending tweets about your marketing/sourcing messages.

ADDING BLOGGING TO INCREASE YOUR PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

In addition to the above networking tools, you do not want to leave out blogging. A blog is basically used to provide

commentary, topical news, and many of them attach videos (a vlog), or audio

messages (a podcast) to make them more attractive.

Each blog post may also contain active links to other blogs or videos, pictures, websites, and possibly other media. Most of them, however, are only textual. A lot of information about a company can be learned from reading what they have posted on their blog. If you were considering applying at a particular company, you could investigate their blog and pick up a lot of useful information that could make you more excited about the possibility – or turn you away. A blog could help you determine whether or not they care for their employees, if they are cutting edge, and so much more. Now, apply this same type of information to create a blog that will enable your company to draw top talent by answering their questions and appealing to them especially.

Blogs provide a neat way for people to get to know each other. One way to find many useful blogs for your own interests is through the blog search engine, Technorati, which ranks and tracks over 115 million blogs. On the reverse side, companies can also learn a lot of things about potential job candidates by reading the information provided by those who already have their own blogs. You can learn things you would never find out about in a job interview and can even follow links to learn of other personal interests and connections.