

## E-NETWORKING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

# Dos & Don'ts for Building and Maintaining Online Relationships

Social media relationships mimic real relationships. Don't do what you wouldn't with real life, face-to-face relationships.

1. Don't just do a JOB search—do a PEOPLE search.
  - ✓ Do identify the top 5-10 organizations of interest to you; search for and connect directly with people on the inside.
2. Don't add users as "friends" or "connections" without first properly introducing yourself.
  - ✓ Do take the time and effort to let others get to know you. Share who you are, what you've done, what you have to offer, and what you're looking for.
3. Don't randomly approach a contact you barely talk to and begin asking for favours.
  - ✓ Do take the time and effort to get to know your contacts as people (not by their positions/job titles, status or perceived influence) and keep in touch even when seeking nothing.
4. Don't make it just about you. Social media is not for talking incessantly about yourself and promoting only yourself without regard for those around you.
  - ✓ Relationships are a two-way street. Do take the time and effort to cultivate relationships so that a mutual exchange of information, advice, referrals, and support takes place on an ongoing basis.
5. Don't be pushy or stalker-like sending frequent invites or repeated requests for assistance will hurt more than help.
  - ✓ Do connect and communicate with your network in moderation.
6. Don't add or reject new contacts or group affiliations hastily.
  - ✓ Do give yourself at least 24 hours before responding to any group invites or "friend" requests.
7. Don't burn your bridges, especially not online.
  - ✓ Do be the consummate professional. Even if criticism is warranted, bad-mouthing or belittling an individual/organization, and broadcasting disparaging/discriminatory comments to every one of your contacts will only make YOU look bad.
8. Don't make private conversations public.
  - ✓ Social media is about connecting, conversing with and engaging people. Do ensure that the conversations you post online for all to see can potentially involve or engage everyone, otherwise, you will end up excluding some individuals.
9. Don't tag your contacts in unflattering or inappropriate pictures or make suggestive remarks about your contacts that could negatively impact their online identity or jeopardize their online relationships.
  - ✓ Do think about the consequences of your online actions both on you and your contacts.
10. Don't disclose any confidential or proprietary company information or any private, personal details about individuals.
  - ✓ Do exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality in communicating with others—this is essential for success in the workplace.
11. Don't forget to say please and thank you.
  - ✓ Very few actions in the world of networking are as important as showing respect, common courtesy and thoughtfulness by thanking those who have helped you or tried to help you. Do recognize that manners do matter. It's often the little things that contribute to your overall image, your relationships, and ultimately, your success.