

Social media is a brilliant tool when it comes to applying for a role. It can allow you to research a business and even the person you are interviewing with, but remember, at the same time a potential employer may be doing their own research on you.

Applying for a job can be a great reminder about considering your online presence and how you can utilise your social media presence to make a great first impression.

Here are some tips to make sure your social media is on point and how you can use it to your benefit when applying for a role!

- **Do a social media tidy up.** First, check all your accounts and profiles. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat or Instagram, it doesn't matter what profile it is, it's important to know what others can see. Delete or hide posts or photos on your profile or public groups you've had second thoughts about. Have you been tagged in a pic that could put an employer off hiring you? Make sure you check the privacy settings of your accounts.
- **A picture paints a thousand words.** As the old saying goes, what does your profile picture say about you? Make sure your image is a good reflection of the image you want to show a potential employer.
- **Does your CV's employment history match up with your social media?** It is good practice to check the employment history that shows on your social accounts against your CV. Make sure your work timelines are the same and there are no inconsistencies. It may lead to potential questions from an interviewer if they do not align and there are gaps in your CV.
- **Create your own brand.** Make sure you highlight on your social media what you are passionate about, what community activities you support or any charities you belong to.
- **Join groups relevant to your career or field.** Take the opportunity to highlight other interests or hobbies. Post updates on your industry, share positive and interesting content. Remember, while professionalism is important, employers are also looking for personality, so don't be afraid to show it off. Having a clean, professional presence on social media doesn't mean it has to be dry and boring.
- **Don't post inappropriate material.** This seems straight forward but having any material on your profiles that is inappropriate or potentially offensive – sexist, racist, pornographic or sharing extreme views – could make an employer reconsider hiring you. Also remember when you are commenting on a public forum that anyone can screen shot your views or online disagreements, so think about what you are writing and if you would be happy with a potential employer reading it.
- **Had a bad day at work?** We all have had a bad day at work in one way or another at some time; a disgruntled customer to deal with, an issue with another staff member. It's important to keep this offline. Potential employers don't want to read what you have had to say about your old employer, colleagues, or a difficult customer.
- **Posting your information to an online job page.** The Restaurant Association hospitality jobs pages are a great way to see who is advertising for a role or for posting your availability. If you are advertising yourself online for a role it is best practice to list your skills, previous experience, location you would like to work and the role that you are looking for. You can then ask potential employers to message you directly. That way you can keep your personal details such as phone number and email private until you are approached by a potential employer to send them your CV.

- **Use social media to research your potential employer too.** Social media can be a fantastic tool to help you learn more about an organisation you're applying to. It is great if you are wanting more information about the company profile, you can look into specials, what they offer on the menu and what marketing strategies they use for their business. Some establishments also outline what causes and values they support to their customers. This great insight can also be of help when interviewing for a role. You could include it in your interview when answering questions "I saw on your social media you have a special night on Tuesday" or "I see on your social media your establishment supports conscious consumers, I also share those values."

After your social media has had a refresh it is always a good idea if you know someone who recruits staff or is in a senior position to have a look over your social platforms in case you miss anything.

Finally, the last thing to do is make sure you regularly check in to update your social media.