The Social Media Profile

Overview

More and more employers are asking applicants if they have a website or other web presence that they can access easily.  Managing your online image is crucial when [almost all recruiters perform](http://www.jobvite.com/blog/welcome-to-the-2015-recruiter-nation-formerly-known-as-the-social-recruiting-survey/) an online search of a candidate before setting up an interview.  By creating a professional social media profile (and ruthlessly editing your web presence), you can develop a rich alternative for employers who want to see beyond your one-page resume.

A key component of a successful personal brand is establishing a sense of authorship on the web. Online article or blog writing tends to be more informal and immediate than most other forms of professional writing. The purpose of this project is to use that informality, as well as the capacity for linking to a variety of online media, to think reflectively about current trends and topics being discussed in the broader business world outside of class. You will engage more thoroughly with your own discipline and begin to establish your sense of authorship and expertise on the web.

Details

For this assignment, you will create an online profile (website) that illustrates your professional personal brand and includes at least three online articles.

**The Profile Website**

Your profile website should be a showcase demonstrating a well-thought-out personal brand - who you are and what you can do for future employers, clients, or careers.  Just like you did with your resumes and cover letters, you will choose certain skills, values, etc., based on what you want a professional audience to know about you. Remember, when you post online, you are creating a "digital tattoo" or impression of yourself.

**The profile should include an appropriate headshot, a headline, a summary or bio and links to any social media that you have optimized for a professional audience. The website will also include or link to your three online articles.**

Depending on your field, purpose and personal brand, you may also consider adding a resume (address removed), sample projects, internship information, etc. All content must be focused on the image you will share with a professional audience.

**Important:** The key here it is to create a simple profile website that is coherent, unified, and well-written. Simply adding more content, without strong cohesive and rhetorical purpose, may reduce the success of your profile.

**Website Platforms:** You may use [Sites @ Penn State](http://sites.psu.edu/), a Wordpress-based website builder, free with your Penn State user id. Sites offers prompt support, extensive design choices, exceptional adaptability, easy export options, privacy settings and mobile- friendly functionality. Just be aware that you may lose access to this 6 months after you graduate. If you prefer, you may also use another free website builder, like Wix or Weebly, or you may build your own.

**The Articles.** As part of your profile, you will write at least three online articles or blog entries that follow the guidelines for writing for the web, including the capacity for linking to a variety of online media.  The purpose here is to think reflectively about current trends and topics being discussed in the broader business world outside of class, to engage more thoroughly with your own discipline and to begin to establish your sense of authorship on the web.

**Topics**  within your major or field work best, but they don't have to be - the purpose here is to show you are reading respected news sources and have intelligent things to say.  The guiding principle will be this:  Would you encourage potential employers, customers or clients to read your blog entries?

**Mechanics:** These online articles should follow the conventions for writing for the web and effective visual rhetoric, including:

* Prominently-placed main points, logical and obvious organization and short paragraphs (25-35 words).
* Well-written, thoughtful discussion of at least one referenced (and linked) online text. (Value-added posts will include additional links to credible and relevant sources.) Each entry should be between 200-400 words.
* Conversational, but still professional, tone.
* Attractive and compelling design, including an informative, interesting title and at least two headings to increase readability and accessibility.
* At least one relevant image, appropriately captioned and/or explained (unless it is obviously decorative).  Visuals should be linked to their original sources.

Evaluation Criteria

I will evaluate your social media profile according to:

**Content:**  The profile presents a carefully-crafted, consistent and professional personal brand.  The profile, including the articles, is well-designed and well-written.  The profile is substantial and appropriate for the rhetorical situation(s).  The profile establishes a sense of authorship and subject matter authority, including any relevant artifacts and links.

**Effectiveness:** The profile demonstrates creative and sophisticated use of the internet and electronic medium, including social media. The profile presents a full and professional brand for the writer.

**Design and Professionalism:** The profile is attractive and accessible.  The profile reflects the writer’s ability to apply design principles in a proficient way.  The profile is easy to navigate.

**Style and Tone**.   The writing is correct and concise.  Tone is appropriate to the rhetorical situation and genre conventions for online writing; meaning, in most cases, less formal and conversational, but still professional. All text follows the conventions established for writing on the web.