Netiquette / On-Line Presence Checklist

Netiquette encompasses the rules of etiquette governing communication on the internet. Knowing and following the rules of netiquette will ensure that you present yourself professionally to employers, coworkers, friends and family when interacting online. Prepare yourself and your social networking profiles **now** in order to make the best impression when connecting with companies/employers.

YOUR ONLINE BRAND

Your online brand is made up of your presence in social media and networking websites and communicates your personal information, background and interests to any person who views your profiles or other contributions to the internet (e.g. blogs, newspaper articles, etc.). Many employers "Google" applicants, and the information they gather can make or break their decision to hire a candidate.

Social Profiles
- Think of your online profiles as your virtual business card. Establish a consistent profile across each website (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blog)
- Pay attention to privacy settings and control strangers' ability to view information. Don't assume your information is private.
- Know when **not** to share.
- Use correct grammar and spelling to convey a level of maturity and professionalism even on purely social sites.
- Always interact with your reputation in mind. The internet has a long memory and something you post in college, may cause trouble in the future.

Your Strategy
- Assess your current presence on networking websites.
- Think about the message your profiles and posts send employers, friends and family. If you wouldn't want your mom or supervisor to see something, remove it.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen and bring consistency to your personal brand.
- Purposefully build your online presence by reading and commenting on related blogs and articles and joining professional groups.

Online Branding Resources
- grads.linkedin.com
- personalbrandingblog.com

YOUR NETWORK

Your network is made up of every person you know who can potentially provide information on finding careers or jobs you want to pursue. Think of your network as a giant web of interconnected links tying each contact to another.

Evaluate
- Identify your current network and note areas where it can grow. For example, could you benefit from making more contacts with professors who specialize in your chosen career field?
- Inform your closest contacts of your job search status and goals.
- Differentiate between the types of contacts in your networks: professional (employers, professionals), personal (family, close friends) and pro-personal (close professors, classmates, coworkers, supervisors).

Connecting
- Avoid appearing as a spammer or stalker by asking for an introduction from a mutual connection.
- Contact through email or message before requesting to connect on websites (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook).
- Clarify your intentions when making the connection. If you are looking for career advice for entering a particular field, say so in your message.

Cultivating Connections
- Take the "me" mentality out of the equation and focus on building quality relationships with your network.
- Give first, receive second by providing your network with relevant information that they will be interested in.
- Never ask for a job outright.

E-COMMUNICATING PROFESSIONALLY

Communicating professionally through e-mails is extremely important when building your network and job searching. Practice good habits daily so you don't accidently use "text talk" in your e-mails, resume and cover letters.

Brand Extension
- Your email address should be professional: firstname.lastname@domain.com
- Be cautious of your word choices as there is no body language in an email.
- It is tempting to be conversational in emails; try to maintain a professional format as if you were writing a conventional letter unless you know the person very well.
- Don't compensate attempts at sarcasm or humor with emoticons or exclamation points.

Content
- Make sure content is not private or inappropriate. Emails can be quickly and easily forwarded to others.
- Adhere to spelling/grammatical rules. Proofread!
- Always include a subject line, salutation and closing.

Attachments
- Check with the recipient to ensure that it is permissible for them to receive attachments before attaching documents.
- Ensure that the type of file you are sending can be opened by the recipient to maintain software compatibility.
- Keep file size as small as possible to avoid jamming the recipient's mailbox.

PERSONAL INTERNET PRESENCE: JOB SEEKERS SELF-AUDIT

Various **social media** outlets such as Facebook and Twitter are increasingly becoming integral to the job search. While these on-line sites are a great place to network, catch-up with old and new friends and keep-up with social and campus events, they can also create some problems. We encourage you to consider the following when creating profiles on these sites:

- Do not include your address, academic schedule or personal information that allows a stranger to know your location and/or the times you will and will not be at home.
- Do not upload pictures you would not want your parents, professors, campus administrators and potential employers to see.
- Do not join groups you would be embarrassed if your parents, professors, campus administrators and potential employers saw.

- Check your profile(s) on a regular basis to edit posted comments and pictures that have been "tagged" by others.
- Set your profile(s) to "private" so you approve those who view it.

The Auburn University Career Center brings recruiters on-campus for special events and on-campus interviews. Many of these recruiters are recent Auburn graduates and have access to Facebook. A significant percentage of employers conduct "on-line background checks." If you are not sure about posting a picture or how a comment will be taken...don't post it. If you are still unsure, a career counselor is happy to give you feedback.

The following questionnaire is a good resource to "check" your on-line identity:

E-mail Address

Choose an address that is permanent and uses your name and/or initials as much as possible so it not likely to appear as Spam.

Email: _____

This email is: ☐ Permanent ☐ Expires in the near future

In your opinion, this address is: ☐ Professional ☐ Funny

Google Yourself

Search Google, Yahoo and other search engines to see what information about you is available on the Internet.

Are you comfortable with what you found? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Social Networking / Blog Sites

For each site you belong to, would you be comfortable if an employer were to see your

Profile?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?
Pictures?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?
Groups?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?
Friends' Comments?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?
Friends' Profiles?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?
Posts?	☐ Definitely	☐ Give me a half-hour	☐ Employers check this stuff?!?

Resume

If you have a resume posted on-line, it should be updated at least once a semester so you appear to be an active job searcher.

For each place that you have it posted your resume, are you familiar and comfortable with the site's privacy policy?

☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I don't know

Has your resume been posted on the Internet by an academic department or organization?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I don't know

If your resume is posted on the Internet, do you…

- know when the resume will be removed from the site(s)? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

- have all of your contact information included?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Plan

If you have noted a problem area with your on-line presence, consider the following:

- Consider the areas (Google, resumes, social networking sites, etc.) where you have identified potential problems.
- What could you fix immediately? What is going to take some research? What might take ongoing maintenance?
- Is there anything that you would like to discuss with a career consultant in the career center?