

Expert Q & A

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The use of social networking websites in the recruiting process is clearly on the rise. What are the main benefits of this trend for recruiters?

The main benefit is quick access and networking: reaching people through an open medium ultimately broadens a recruiter's center of influence.

Are there any pitfalls? Do social media websites really ensure that recruiters are reaching a diverse group of candidates for a job?

Social media cannot replace the benefit of personally cold calling and networking with people. There is always that group of professionals that does not care to participate in social media. If a recruiter only depends on social media, he or she runs the risk of missing talent in the marketplace. One positive, as it relates to diversity, is that there are several ways to *leverage* social media to find diverse candidates.

Aside from checking out candidates' expertise, can recruiters learn anything else important about a job seeker through the social networking profile?

Of course. Often, recruiters may find information on [multiple activities or interests from which job-related information can be inferred]. Like anything else, a recruiter should use his or her resources to verify information found on social networking profiles. The information may be beneficial or detrimental to a candidate. Everyone should think carefully about what they post on social networks.

In light of this trend, would you argue that a recruiter's interview skills have become even more important? An easily obtained, impeccable online resume doesn't always mean a person is the perfect fit for a position, right?

Absolutely. Nothing can replace the ability to cull out information during the interview process. As always, qualifications on a resume are one thing, but culture fit is equally important. A recruiter has to dig deep to understand a candidate's qualifications and to understand in what environment/culture a candidate will thrive.