SHRM®
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Organizations' Use of Social Networking Websites for Screening Job Candidates

No, we never have and do not plan to use this tool for screening.

Yes, we currently use this online tool to screen job candidates.

No, we never have, but plan to use this tool for screening in the future.

Yes, we used this tool previously, but do not plan to do so again.

67%
67%
18%
13%
11%
18%
4%
2%

■ 2011 *(n = 441)*
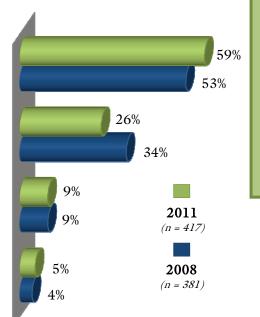■ 2008 *(n = 388)*

Organizations' Use of Online Search Engines for Screening Job Candidates

No, we never have and do not plan to to use this tool for screening.

Yes, we currently use this online tool to screen job candidates.

No, we never have, but plan to use this tool in the future.

Yes, we used this tool previously, but do not plan to do so again.

59%
53%
26%
34%
9%
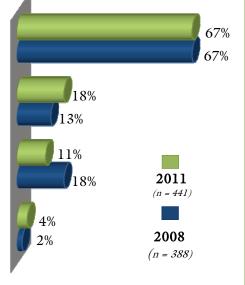9%
5%
4%

■ 2011 *(n = 417)*
■ 2008 *(n = 381)*

Defining Social Media

Web-based tools and technologies used to share information and turn communication into interactive dialogues with internal or external audiences. *Examples*: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter.

Key Findings

• Only one-quarter (26%) of organizations report using online search engines to screen job candidates during the hiring process. This is less than recorded in 2008, when 34% indicated using online search engines to screen job candidates.

• Only 18% of organizations report using social networking websites to screen job candidates during the hiring process.

• Large organizations (those with more than 25,000 employees) are more likely to have either a formal or an informal policy regarding the use of social networking websites to screen job candidates.

Contrary to popular belief, only a small number of organizations are using online search engines and social networking websites to screen job candidates.

Most Common Reasons Organization <u>Do Not</u> Use Social Networking Websites to Screen Job Candidates

	2008 (n = 337)	2011 (n = 461)
A concern about legal risks/discovering information about protected characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, religious affiliation)	54%	66%
Inability to verify with confidence information from an applicant's social networking page	43%	48%
Information about job candidates taken from these sites may not be relevant to their work-related potential or performance	36%	45%
Not all job candidates have information on social networking sites	*	34%
Concerns about invading the privacy of job candidates	40%	33%
Information about job candidates taken from these sites may not be relevant to whether they will be a good fit with the organization	26%	33%

Indicates response option was not available in 2008.

There has been a significant increase in the prevalence of formal and/or informal policies regarding the use of social networking websites to screen job candidates over the past three years. In 2008, 72% of organizations had no formal or informal policies on the use of these sites for candidate screening. Today, this figure has dropped to 56%. In addition, 29% of organizations plan to implement a formal policy in the next 12 months, up from 11% in 2008.

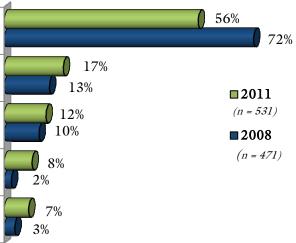## Does Your Organization Currently Have a Policy Regarding the Use of Social Networking Websites to Screen Job Candidates?

	2011 (n = 531)	2008 (n = 471)
No, we have no formal or informal policy on the use of these sites.	56%	72%
No, we have no formal policy, but there is an informal policy prohibiting the use of these sites.	17%	13%
No, we have no formal policy, but there is an informal policy allowing the use of these sites.	12%	10%
Yes, we have a formal policy allowing the use of these sites.	8%	2%
Yes, we have a formal policy prohibiting the use of these sites.	7%	3%