Branding Yourself Online

Web and Social Media for Professional Purposes

- ✓ Since the advent of tools like MySpace, we have been putting ourselves online
- ✓ You can use these tools to 'brand' yourself for future employers: 94% of recruiters in a recent Jobvite survey said they use or plan to use social media to find and screen job candidates. So, why not shape what they see?

What is Personal Branding?

Personal branding is creating a coherent impression of your professional self. You do it in person through:

- ✓ The clothes that you wear (e.g., suit and tie vs sandals and shorts)
- ✓ The words that you use (e.g., "And I was like…" vs "And I wondered…")

You also brand through your resume and cover letter, in the level of formality and industry lingo/jargon that you choose to demonstrate. Your email address is also part of your brand. Which of these addresses sounds more professional?

> john.doe@mail.utoronto.ca *or* johnnylovesit91@yahoo.ca

The second email is unprofessional: 1) A recruiter is not interested in what John loves. 2) John has revealed his age (born in '91), which is not professional. 3) A 'yahoo' is a crude or brutish person. You don't want to suggest that your behaviour is caveman-like, so use your utoronto.ca email, not Yahoo or Hotmail, to be safe.

Branding Yourself Intentionally Online

1. **Alter your name on unprofessional accounts.** Since everything you post online is public to some degree, regardless of your security and privacy settings, you may wish to alter your name on accounts that are simply unprofessional. Typically, this includes Facebook, where your profile photo is always visible, and Twitter, which is 100% public
2. **Create 1 or 2 social media accounts, which you can commit to working on weekly. On these accounts, include your real name and professional-sounding (and matching) usernames.** These are the accounts that you <u>want</u> a company to find, because you are going to fill them up with:
   - ✓ Interesting news articles and opinion pieces on topics related to your future field of work
   - ✓ Your own thoughtful observations on your future industry/field
   - ✓ Samples of your own best work (written or visual), for school assignments and other outlets as relevant to your experiences

Branding with Twitter

- ✓ Choose a username appropriate to include on your resume in your contact info; e.g. @JohnDoeCDNPoli for a Public Policy student
- ✓ Follow organizations and companies that share material interesting to you – and re-tweet it to save yourself the time and effort of writing new tweets!

Branding with Blogger or Tumblr

- ✓ Get appropriate username/URL
- ✓ Write and share blogs and articles demonstrating your knowledge of your future field of work
- ✓ Include URL in your contact info on your résumé – they are going to search for you anyway!

Branding with Instagram or Pinterest

- ✓ Get appropriate username/URL
- ✓ Pin or post images of things related to your future work
- ✓ Include URL in your contact info

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