

# Social Media Screening Checklist

**91%** of 300 employers surveyed in 2011 reported using social networks to screen potential employees

## Reasons for conducting an applicant social media screening

- It is fast, convenient, and cost efficient
- It can verify an applicant's professional experience
- It can help maintain the organization's well-earned reputation
- It can help avoid a potentially hostile work environment
- It can uncover anti-social, illegal or violent behaviors

## Reasons against conducting an applicant social media screening

- It is not always reliable
- It may create unconscious bias
- It creates an unfair advantage for applicants who do not use social media
- It may violate state privacy laws, thus opening the organization to liability

## Tips for screening social media

- A social media screen should be completed after an interview
- Don't rely on social media screening as the only tool
- Don't take it too seriously if there isn't an abundance of evidence
- If possible, utilize a professional organization to conduct a social media screening

## Sites to check in 2021



# Social Media Screening Checklist

## RED FLAGS

- Posted inappropriate photos
- Posted inappropriate comments
- Posted content about intoxication
- Posted content about non-prescribed / illegal drugs
- Posted sexually explicit content or evidence of sexually explicit conduct
- Posted negative comments about a previous employer
- Posted confidential information from a previous employer
- Posted information that would indicate they lied about their qualifications
- Demonstrated consistently poor communication skills

## GREEN FLAGS

- Posted volunteering or mentoring events
- Profile showed applicant received awards and accolades
- Applicant shows mutual connections or endorsements
- Profile supported their professional qualifications
- Profile showed applicant was creative
- Profile showed positive communication skills (i.e. well-rounded arguments)
- Profile showed applicant was well-rounded
- Posted industry knowledge or professional experience
- Posted shares of industry related news and trends
- Posted positive comments about colleagues, bosses, and/or organizations
- Applicant had good comments / endorsements posted by others

## Key Restrictions

- About 22 states bar employers from requesting or requiring an applicant or an employee to disclose his or her username or password of her social media account. New Mexico laws protect only the applicants from such requests.
- You cannot ask an applicant or an employee to add a supervisor or a manager to his or her 'friends' or 'contacts' list, or change the privacy settings of the account.
- You cannot ask the applicant to grant access to their social media accounts, or ask for information that allows you to access or observe their personal accounts. Also, as an employer, you cannot ask the applicant to open or access their social media accounts in your presence and allow you to scrutinize it.
- Laws prohibit you to refuse to hire an applicant because he or she fails to comply with any requests that are 'illegal' against the state privacy laws.
- You can only screen what is available in the public domain.