

Using Social Media to Network | Beyond OSU: Concept

Assignment Overview:

Successful networking leads to more job and internship opportunities, better preparation for professional interviews, and connections for advancement opportunities both now and in the future. In this assignment, students complete a worksheet of steps to learn how to use new and existing social media to advance their networking capabilities and reach.

- Learning Outcomes:**
1. Outline networking opportunities within social media.
 2. Develop personalized and comprehensive strategies for career networking.

Beyond OSU: This assignment falls under the **Beyond OSU I (Prepare) learning outcome #1: Illustrate how OSU and related experiences connect to career readiness & advancement skills** (NACE competencies).

NACE Competencies: Skills developed completing this assignment:

Professionalism, Communication, Technology, Career & Self-Development



Instructions for students and instructor:

Step 1: Reflect: Examine your current social media profiles and posts. In a survey conducted by *The Harris Poll*, 70 percent of the employers who responded said they believe every company should screen candidates' social media profiles during the hiring process. Moreover, **78 percent of employers** believe that current employees should maintain a work-appropriate social media profile. How does your presence look from that employer perspective? **Run a Google search on your name** and fill out part 1 on the worksheet to do an assessment.

Step 2: Choose your media: You have many options when it comes to social media. Different platforms have unique advantages. Based on your own career needs (like an online portfolio or writing samples) you can tailor this assignment to highlight your strengths and skills. As the #1 career platform, everyone will start this assignment using [LinkedIn](#) and [OSUConnections](#) (OSU networks), then add two additional social media platforms.

Step 3: Research and Select: From the **“Optional Platforms”** list included on the last page, challenge yourself to investigate 4-5 options you have for social media networking. You may already use Instagram or Facebook, but take this opportunity to explore the functionality of other platforms or the depth of the ones you already use. An easy prompt in Google like “how can I use TikTok for my career networking” yields great insight. List 4-5 new platforms before making a choice on the two you will ultimately use. This is your journey.

Step 4: Engage: Being active and engaged with others is critical to success in building an effective network. Connect with people and organizations by following, commenting on posts, re-posting and participating in discussions. Joining industry groups through Facebook (for example) is a great way to connect with industry peers and leaders. When filling out the worksheet, think about the long-term benefits of the connections you are making now.

- Tips:**
1. Remain **professional** in your work on these platforms.
 2. **Be safe** – don't share personal information and don't make posts that can get you in trouble with peers, supervisors, or future employers.
 3. Make **great profiles** – think about completing the Career Development Center's LinkedIn assignment!
 4. Increase your relevant content. Move from posting pics of your dog or cat or friends, to items that refer to and reflect [NACE competencies](#). This assignment should build your professional reach and impact.

Student Worksheet:

Part 1: Please fill out this two-page worksheet and submit it to Canvas for your assignment.

Google search results: Using "Incognito Mode," list the items that come up when you search yourself on Google.

Items you feel are positive results:

Items you want to address: *

***Keep in mind: social media posts find their way into Google searches. Removing source posts and content can help clean up your search results. Untagging yourself from unwanted content is another way to help improve your search results.**

Part 2-3: Social media you are currently using: List these in order of your usage (high to low – you may have less than 8).

- | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. |

Additional social media platforms you plan to explore for this assignment? Why do think they could help?

- | | |
|----|------|
| 1) | why? |
| 2) | why? |
| 3) | why? |
| 4) | why? |
| 5) | why? |

From this exploration which two platforms are the best for you and why? What makes them useful for you?

Platform 1

Why it is useful:

Platform 2

Why it is useful:

Student Worksheet:

Part 4: Based on what you have learned in this assignment and in class, think about how networking can boost your career. **Follow four companies or organizations on [LinkedIn](#):** List them here:

Company/Org. #1:

Company/Org. #2:

Company/Org. #3:

Company/Org. #4:

Using [OSUConnections](#), connect with six alumni of interest and reach out with one good question to ask:

What is your main question? Examples can be found here: <https://career.oregonstate.edu/careered/informational-interviews-and-job-shadowing>

Using [LinkedIn](#), connect with four people in your field of interest that you do not know. Send a message along with a connection request. Example: Dear [first name], I've been following your work, and your career path really impresses me. I loved your recent [mention work or article fact you learned about them]. If you have a few minutes, I'd love to learn how you started in this field. Thank you, [your name].

Share one message you wrote here:

Using a mix of platforms, comment, post, or re-post six* career-related items: This can be a job posting, personal posting, work for your online portfolio (writing, art, video, etc.) or article of interest. Think about how your written and/or visual content integrates into networking to create a feedback loop. Engagement and continued contact are great ways to work your way into any industry. Good luck! *Mix content and platform usage over a few days so it's not all one "blast" of activity.

Briefly list here what you did and what platform(s) you used. Make at least one attempt from a new platform!

Optional Platforms:

Choose at least 2 additional platforms for this assignment: Spend time researching their functionality and benefits.

Platform	Website	Description
Discord	discord.com	Discord is a voice, video and text communication service used by over 100 million people to collaborate, share, and chat with communities. There are topic-based channels to join and network with on discord.
Facebook	facebook.com	Facebook is a website which allows users to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don't know online. It allows users to share pictures, music, videos and articles, as well as their own thoughts and opinions. There are a wealth of articles on how to use Facebook for career networking.
Instagram	instagram.com	Instagram is a free photo and video sharing app available on iPhone and Android. People can upload photos or videos to the service and share them with followers or with a select group of friends. You can also view, comment and like posts shared by their friends on Instagram.
Medium	medium.com	Medium is an open platform where readers find dynamic thinking, and where expert and undiscovered voices can share their writing on any topic.
Pinterest	pinterest.com	Pinterest is a visual discovery engine for finding ideas like recipes, home, and style inspiration, and more. You can highlight a portfolio by creating a board that showcases your work, skills or expertise.
Quora	quora.com	Quora is a place to gain and share knowledge. It's a platform to ask questions and connect with people who contribute unique insights and quality answers.
Reddit	reddit.com	Reddit is a network of communities where people can dive into their interests, hobbies, and passions. You can engage with subreddits related to your industry. It's also a good space to ask professional questions.
Slack	slack.com	Slack is a messaging app for business that connects people to the information they need. By bringing people together to work as one unified team, Slack transforms the way organizations communicate. Slack also offers slack communities to speak with like-minded people in your job field.
Snapchat	snapchat.com	Snapchat is a free messaging and social networking app. Snapchat allows you to send text messages, pictures and short videos to friends and family.
TikTok	tiktok.com	CareerTok videos cover professional topics and offer advice in the professional realm. It may also serve as a learning tool for your industry specific topics and help build career networks.
Tumblr	tumblr.com	Tumblr is a free microblogging social networking app where users can blog about their ideas and interests via text, photos, quotes, links, music and videos. The blogs are often short-form and often include more visual images rather than long text entries.
X(twitter)	twitter.com	X (formerly Twitter) is an online news and social networking site where people communicate in short messages. The hope is that your words are useful and interesting to someone in your audience. X is one example of a microblogging platform.
YouTube	youtube.com	YouTube is a free video sharing website that makes it easy to watch online videos. You can create and upload your own videos to share with others. It's a good place to showcase your work.
Dribbble	Dribbble.com	Artists and designers use Dribbble to find work, post samples or get hired. It has become an inspiration for most creatives to grow and share their professionalism with ease. Create a profile, follow others, etc.
GitHub	github.com	GitHub is an online software development platform. It's used for storing, tracking and collaborating on software projects using discussion boards. It makes it easy for developers to ask questions, show their work, share code files and collaborate with fellow developers on open-source projects.
Threads	threads.net/login	Threads is a new app, built by the Instagram team, for sharing text updates and joining public conversations. You log in using your Instagram account and posts can be up to 500 characters and include links, photos and videos up to 5 min. in length.

Notes for Instructors:

Please adjust this assignment as needed to fit your schedule, point system, and course outcomes. While these are designed intentionally at this length, we know that career development is not a one-size fits all process. Be mindful of your audience and their specific career needs. Please add specific industry elements to make this assignment more engaging for your class. Additionally, encourage students to practice good social media habits and protect their privacy while still connecting with others online.

Suggestions for this assignment:

Length: You can add a reflection paper to this assignment to see what the follow up from alumni and contacts produced. Coach them through any industry expectations on how to best reach people on platforms and the questions they might want to ask them.

Note: Not all students have social media or want to engage with it. Please consider appropriate alternative assignments that a student could complete to fulfill this learning outcome.

Assessment & Submission: Please assess this assignment in line with other work for your course, and direct students on how you would like them submitted (printed and submitted during class or completed electronically and submitted via Canvas, etc.).

Additional Resources: Please consider using the robust online resources the [Career Development Center](#) offers you and your students. For more information on using the Career Development Center's tools, events and workshops in your classroom, please [visit our website](#).



Oregon State University
Career Development Center

career@oregonstate.edu