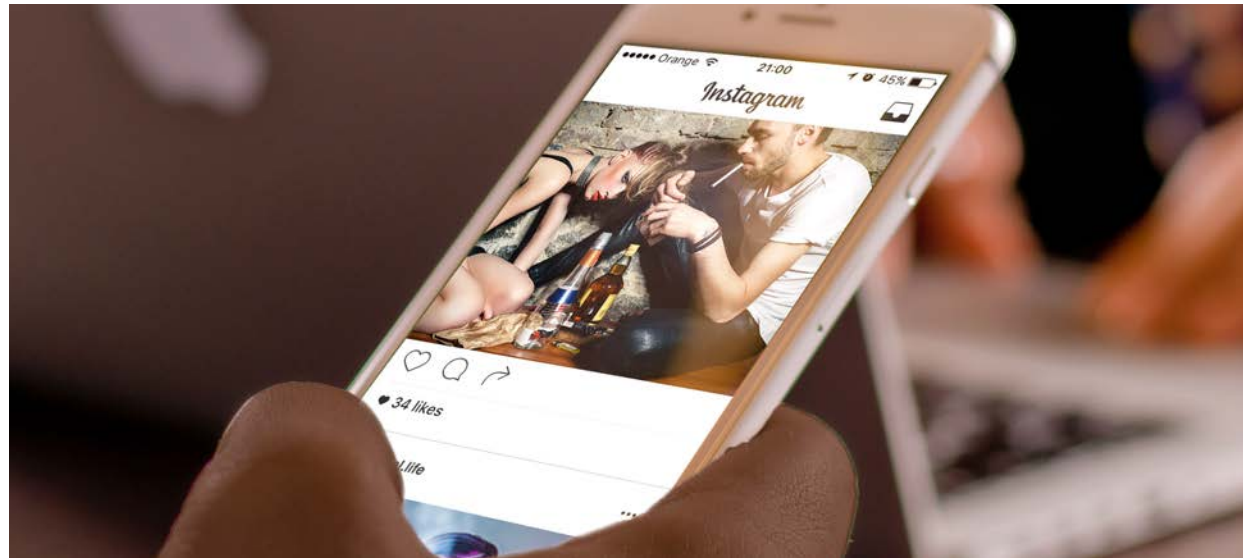


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Your Online Brand Can it Affect Your Career?

Social media. It's a numbers game we all like to play. For many, it provides tangible measurements of our popularity and success. We count friends on Facebook, views on LinkedIn. We tally retweets, shares, mentions, follows, and our emotions shift with the leaps and lows of telling graphs. Who "likes" us?

But social media isn't just social anymore. Increasingly, what you post online can impact your chances of getting, keeping and even losing a job. Consider these analytics: according to the most recent CareerBuilder® Annual Social Media Recruitment Survey* of US hiring managers and HR professionals, the "number of employers using social media to screen candidates has increased 500% in the last decade". That means 60% of employers are looking well beyond your resume and into your online persona for clues about you as a job candidate.

What they find can make or break your chances for an interview. CareerBuilder® cites the following types of posts that turn off employers:

- ◆ Provocative or inappropriate photographs, videos or information – 46%
- ◆ Demonstrations of drinking or using drugs – 43%

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- ◆ Discriminatory comments related to race, religion, gender, etc. – 33%
- ◆ Evidence that you've bad-mouthed a previous company or fellow employee – 31%
- ◆ Poor and careless communication skills – 29%

Alternately, employers will lean towards hiring you if they discover:

- ◆ Background information supporting your job qualifications – 44%
- ◆ A professional image conveyed throughout your sites – 44%
- ◆ That your personality seems like a good fit with company culture – 43%
- ◆ You're well-rounded, and show a wide range of interests – 40%
- ◆ Great communication skills – 36%

Already nestled into your dream job? Don't get too comfortable about your online posts. Employees in Canada can be disciplined or dismissed as a result of off-duty conduct that goes against the stated corporate values and expected conduct of the workplace. Now more than ever, such conduct is magnified in public view thanks to reckless posting online, leaving employers little choice but to respond. Some examples cited in the May 2015 Canadian HR Reporter include:

- ◆ Two Toronto firefighters dismissed due to inappropriate comments on Twitter, and a third due to Facebook comments.

- ◆ An Ontario Hockey League referee suspended after posting insulting comments about the women of Sault Ste. Marie on Twitter.
- ◆ Perhaps most offensive of all, an individual who wrote "Thank God the b*tch is dead" on a Facebook wall created in memory of a 15-year-old girl who committed suicide after years of bullying.

Social media related firings are on the rise, and those same posts that led to your dismissal may also impact your ability to be hired elsewhere.

Whatever you post online may be personal, but it isn't private. Your own privacy settings are no guarantee against how others may share your posts. Your digital profile is an extension of who you are and how you operate in the real world. Pause and think before you press "update". Ask yourself, "Would I hire this person?"

**The national survey was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder between February 10 and March 17, 2016, and included a representative sample of 2,186 hiring managers and human resource professionals and 3,031 full time, US workers in the private sector across industries and company sizes.*

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Showing Gratitude in the Workplace

With the pace of business ever-increasing, as we juggle activities, responsibilities, and commitments, slowing down to show gratitude is often overlooked. Would it surprise you to read that being thankful can have tremendous effects on your quality of life both personally and professionally?

According to Amy Morin, business psychologist and the author of *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do*, gratitude is one of the most overlooked tools that we all have access to every day. As a Human Resources Leader, the prospect of an accessible, powerful “gratitude” methodology that I could actively incorporate into our workplace culture shows obvious advantages from the get-go. I immediately set to work on researching the benefits of gratitude.

From my perspective, four advantages emerged:

1. Gratitude increases productivity

Those who are mentally distracted by their worries and challenges expend so much energy on their worries that very little is left to reflect on the positive. On the other hand, those who focus on the positive and feel confident are able to be productive as they can direct their focus towards their work. Research also supports that thanking a colleague for their efforts will directly increase that person’s level of motivation. Timely, sincere, specific, behaviour-focused praise is often a more powerful method of influencing change than criticism.

2. Gratitude improves well-being

The positive effect of a grateful outlook on personal well-being is documented in research. Robert Emmons published a study which supports that grateful people tend to have

lower blood pressure, along with improved immunity and healthier hearts.

3. Gratitude builds mental strength

Studies also indicate that showing gratitude builds resiliency. Grateful people are more adept at bouncing back from adversity and misfortune. While they mourn losses and endure frustrations, the grateful also find redeeming potential or value in most challenges.

4. Gratitude increases job satisfaction

According to an article published by Vanessa Buote, a culture of gratitude predicts higher job satisfaction. When people feel appreciated, and are able to acknowledge what they have, they’re more likely to be happy with their jobs.

As you wrap-up the 2016 year, consider how you can implement the simple practice of showing gratitude. We all have the opportunity to make 2017 a grateful year. This powerful tool is guaranteed to make it a memorable one for you and your team!



Avril Tysoe, HR Manager at Boughton Law Corporation.

boughtonlaw



Remote Control Motivation in the Home Office

Distant. Isolated. Uninvolved. In the sticks. These are synonyms for the word “remote”. And all describe feelings expressed at one time or another by the growing number of people working from home, remotely. While there are many perceived benefits to powering away in a home office – flexibility and a sense of freedom for starters – there are also challenges. Chief among them? Staying motivated.

Working from home blurs the lines between our jobs and our personal lives, and it’s easy to let distractions from one keep us from moving forward in the other. Dishes pile up. Family calls. Social media “pings” from every platform. Suddenly the day is half done and deadlines are looming. The workday stretches into night time and the dog waits to be fed.

It’s important to remember that working from home is exactly that: working. Help yourself stay motivated by treating it like a professional job site – with perks.

Set a schedule

What are your most productive hours? If you have the flexibility, create a schedule that allows you to offer your best work while still meeting your client’s needs. Make it your daily routine.

Suit up

You don’t need to wear a suit, but at least get out of your pyjamas and into something that makes you feel like a grown up professional. Believe it or not, what we wear affects how we approach the tasks at hand.

Power down

About those “pings”, turn off all notifications

from non-project related internet sites. Schedule a time to catch up later, when the work day is done.

Separate life from work

If you have the room, keep your work space separate from your relaxing, personal areas. Work in a different part of the home to where you sleep or live.

Mix and mingle

This is one of the perks we alluded to earlier. Working from home gives you the flexibility to walk away from a writer’s block, or refresh yourself with a change of scenery. If you’re stuck on a project, get outside and explore ideas from a new perspective. Clear your head, and come back ready to problem solve. Real human contact is vital to offset those “remote” synonyms. Call a neighbour or connect with a colleague. A personal touch and a laugh over coffee may bring just the motivation you need.

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Good Housekeeping: Is your Digital Estate in Order?

How exactly does one get one's digital estate in order? The first step involves figuring out what digital assets are. Wikipedia defines a digital asset as "... anything that exists in a binary format and comes with the right to use. Files that do not possess the aforementioned right are not considered assets. Digital assets are classified as images, multimedia and textual content files." To decompress the definition a bit, digital assets are assets which form part of your estate (which may or may not have a determinable value), but which are not usually accessible or transferrable by anyone other than you, because of the restrictive terms and conditions that are attached to the third party service providers ("custodians") who host such digital assets, e.g. Facebook, Google, Twitter, Instagram. Common examples of digital assets include your Google, Outlook, Facebook, iTunes, Twitter, Instagram, PokerStars and Dropbox accounts, and their content.

Unfortunately, very few people are aware of the value of their digital assets, whether economic or sentimental and as such many people pass away without giving thought to the digital legacies they have left unclaimed in the cloud and elsewhere. This is puzzling since surveys of North Americans reveal that we place quite a bit of value on our digital assets. For instance, a 2011 survey conducted by McAfee in the U.S. revealed that the average online user has more than USD\$37,000 in under-protected digital assets.

Beyond the monetary value associated with certain types of digital assets, there is huge sentimental (family photos, videos, art, etc.) and privacy value (things we may not want our loved ones to see) tied to our digital assets. Many of us have digital footprints in the cloud

that we would probably like to remain private upon our passing. A comprehensive digital estate plan will handle digital asset destruction in addition to preservation and distribution, and for some people, digital asset destruction is actually their primary motivation.

The second step is identifying what types of digital assets you own and what you would like to have happen to them in the event of your death or incapacity. The problem at this stage is that most people do not have an accurate understanding of the extent of their digital estate, i.e. they do not have a running list of their various accounts, passwords, and

digital contents, making inventorying and planning challenging. Take a minute and think about the various online accounts you have, the various passwords and the various password challenge questions you have and how long it would take you to capture this in a list and keep it updated. Depending on your age and your technological capacity, this exercise can be a daunting one.

Fortunately, once you have made a list of your key digital assets and decided on your wishes for those digital assets, including a plan for their curation - see our comments on password management software later - your digital estate plan will essentially have written itself. From there you need to figure out who to name as your digital executor (for your Will) and attorney (for your Power of Attorney) and make sure that your lawyer understands how to prepare those documents for you. As an aside, we note that the person named as digital executor or attorney is rarely the same person named as executor and attorney for the non-digital estate. The reason for this is usually a combination of technical ability and privacy concerns.

The third step requires the creation of a simple document containing your various online accounts (financial accounts excepted for security reasons) with their passwords, security questions and other data; this is to allow a digital executor or attorney to carry out your instructions. However, to avoid potential breaches of security, it is advisable to consider keeping the list in a secure offline location (such as a safety deposit box or firebox at home).

Instead of making a physical list and updating it every few weeks, another option, and one

which we use and recommend, is to rely on one of the various password management software suites available, such as 1Password, LastPass, Sticky Password, etc., provided that your digital executor has access instructions to such software. While the use of password management software is an incredibly powerful and efficient solution for tackling the curation of your digital estate, any online solution, regardless of its encryption and safety protocols, is vulnerable to online attacks. As such, we recommend that people carefully consider this option before pulling the trigger.

The fourth and final step in creating an effective digital estate plan, and one that is often overlooked, is confirming the terms of service for each custodian of your digital assets. The reason for this is due to the uncertainty arising from the legal repercussions of your digital executor or attorney accessing your various digital asset accounts upon your death or incapacity. Currently, we do not have any legislation in British Columbia or Canada governing access rights to the digital assets of a deceased or incapacitated individual, although a draft form of the *Uniform Access to Digital Assets By Fiduciaries Act* has received approval from the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. However, until this legislation is in force, allowing your digital executor or attorney to access your Facebook account is almost certainly going to be contrary to Facebook's terms of service and therefore could potentially be in contravention of legislation in Facebook's home jurisdiction. While there are not criminal repercussions in Canada for accessing another person's online accounts with colour of right, the U.S. does have such legislation, e.g. Computer Fraud and Communications Act.

While creating a plan for your digital assets can seem a daunting task, the four steps outlined herein will give you the peace of mind in knowing that you have a plan for your digital assets now (and for those you accumulate over time) and for their preservation and/or destruction upon your death or incapacity. Given how much of our lives we spend online, it is time for us to give this topic the attention it deserves.

If you have any questions about digital assets and your estate plan, please feel free to contact the writer.



Ryan Howe, Associate at Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang, LLP



Pressure Points Stress in the Work Place

What is a work place? With today's omniscient reach of technology into every corner of our lives, the work place is carried around with us everywhere, either on our beeping devices or in the buzzing synapses of our brains. For many, "work" is a 24/7 presence in our thoughts, no matter where we are. So too is work place stress.

The notion of stress in the work place has shifted with the evolution of a work day. It's no longer something that can be left behind at the end of a shift. The causes of stress remain the same, but the pressures have accelerated with the constant availability of updates and notifications. Employees worry about needing to "do more with less", being plugged in at all times, job insecurity, excessive workloads and unfair pay. These can spin into the overarching work place stressor - feeling a lack of control.

The power to change external factors may elude us, but we can take steps to manage and influence the stress we feel.

Give yourself permission

It's okay to break away from the to-do list and gulp some fresh air, chat with a colleague, or just move around a bit. Build these small escapes into your daily schedule to reset and refresh. Then hit the ground running re-energized.

Good fences

Setting boundaries helps clarify expectations for you and your supervisor. When you're asked to do something and your plate is overflowing, check which is the priority. Instead of resentfully taking it all on, ask your

manager which of the tasks you should drop, and which to focus on.

Get away

Take vacations. Sounds simple, but many workers don't take time to relax away from their work place stressors. Whether it's a low cost staycation or a trip across the sea, get away and remember who you are unplugged.

Really get away

All devices have an "off" button. Find it and use it regularly for time well spent away from work.

The stress of work/life imbalance is everywhere, with as many manifestations as there are people. The good news? We can each learn to manage our own reactions to stress. Share with trusted colleagues, talk with friends and families, or tap into the guidance of a professional life coach or counsellor for wisdom and perspective. You are not alone. Take control.

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Limiting Beliefs. Limiting Success.

I think I can, I think I can. We all remember the little engine that could. With positive thoughts it chugged its way through tough terrain and obstacles to reach its final destination. This simple tale taught us early on that what we believe can shape our own stories.

The mind and how we use it can keep us stuck in negative thinking, or help us move towards our goals. This is especially true on the career path where our beliefs can influence outcomes and ultimately success. Do any of these thoughts sound familiar?

I don't have the credentials.

You may not have the requisite letters after your name, but what about your cumulative, hands-on work experience in your area of choice? Don't discount the proven skills and competencies you've acquired so far.

It's a terrible job market.

Someone is getting the work. Why not you? If you tell yourself there are no jobs, you'll prove yourself right.

I can't get a job without experience and I can't get experience without a job.

Remember, experience might not come from paid work, but from volunteering, interning or even blogging about an area of interest. Put yourself out there.

I've tried and failed already.

Failure is built into human nature, and can be our best teacher if we allow ourselves to learn from it. Success is rising up, dusting off, and trying again with new information.

I don't deserve it.

Allow yourself to enjoy the rewards of your hard work, creativity and intelligence, every step of the way. You earned it.

Each of us decides how we see and experience the world. Whatever we believe is (or is not) possible will influence our own career and life stories. Listen carefully to your self-talk, and reframe any limiting beliefs into positive messages that lead to success and a happily-ever-after.

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How to Stop Someone from Drunk Driving

The holidays are coming up, so many of us are bound to pop out with colleagues for some festive libations. Cheers! But how do you deal with someone who's passed the limit and thinks they can drive?

Planning ahead is the key to prevention: designate a driver to stay sober, plan to call a cab, take transit, and get everyone to agree to and stick with the plan.

But sometimes, someone thinks they are okay to drive after a few drinks. That's just dangerous. So what can you do? Here are a few tactics to stop someone from driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Don't be confrontational

Alcohol reduces our inhibitions, so a normally easy-going person can turn into a mean drunk after a few. Confrontation can set them off. So be firm, but keep your cool.

Offer a safe alternative

Find them a cab, track down a sober driver, or plot out a bus route home. Offer to pay if that's an issue or let them sleep it off at your place. There are many options, but driving drunk is not one of them.

Speak slowly

Remember, they've been drinking and alcohol reduces our ability to process information. Talk to them in a slower manner than usual and explain the danger.

Get help from friends

Turn to others from your group to join in for moral support. It's harder to fight a group and it's easier to persuade when the numbers are on your side.

Take their keys

You can't drive without keys, so if you can, take the keys. They'll thank you later.

Report them

If nothing else works, let the police do the job. It's far better to get pulled over and arrested than to kill someone in a drunken crash.



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