



*The contents of social networking sites are in the public domain and available for all to see, including prospective employers. Whether an employer uses the information to actively recruit you or even screen you out can depend on how your content portrays you.*

### ***The Invasion of Your Space: Employers Use Social Networking Sites for Recruiting Purposes***

It's no secret that there's a growing trend among employers to conduct Google searches as part of their hiring process. The newest twist is that this practice is beginning to seep into social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn.

The World Wide Web is public domain and users should assume that anything on it can be seen by anyone, including prospective employers. With the millions of profiles posted on social networking sites, it was only a matter of time before employers realized the recruiting benefits of this resource and began using these sites not only to screen out candidates, but also to actively recruit them.

Take the U.S. Marine Corps, for example, which has used such recruiting tactics as posting a streaming video of the daily life as a Marine and a link to "contact a recruiter" on their MySpace profile. According to the Associated Press, more than 430 people contacted Marine recruiters this way in the first five months after the page went live. The U.S. Armed Forces are widely recognized for innovative recruiting techniques, and companies tend to follow their lead when it comes to recruitment tactics. The use of social networking sites seems to be no exception.

So, if you are an active job-seeker who also uses sites such as Facebook, Twitter or MySpace for social networking, consider the following:

- Be sure your profile and chat content reflect the image you wish to portray during your job search.
- When posting messages to friends, remember that prospective employers may be watching.
- Don't let your screen name give you a false sense of privacy; there are many ways someone can learn your identity despite use of screen names.
- Get the most out of your social networking page. More than just a place to gather online with friends, it's an opportunity to introduce yourself to prospective employers as well!

Making a good impression on social networking sites can help in your job search efforts. At the very least, you won't be passed over for a job based on questionable information in your profile. If you play your cards right, it may not be long before employers will be chatting with you!