

Locking down your DI?

Abhaidev is a third year undergraduate who has been enjoying student life to the full. She has a Facebook account with literally hundreds of photographs of her tagged at parties, trips to tourist attractions, holidays with friends – the usual! Abhaidev has also been studying hard, and is predicted to get a good upper second degree (2.1) – and she is applying for fast track management positions in a few companies.

As a teenager, she used various chat rooms, and found out a lot about the university she goes to from people who were happy to talk about it online. She has always been careful to avoid heated arguments online, but is aware that her cultural views have shifted since going to university. She does not necessarily see everything she said in the past as being entirely representative of her today.

She has been quite lucky in getting interviews, probably because of her dynamic and lively approach, which is reflected in her online persona. However, she rates one of the jobs she has applied for as being her ‘favourite’, and has recently heard that the company screens people’s online presence during the application process.

Abhaidev is not sure whether to ‘clean up’ her Facebook profile, to make it look more professional, or whether to acknowledge that she enjoys a party as much as the next person, and that this shows she has a character as well as those all important skills she has learned at university.



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¹ Image by nicubunu in public domain from <http://openclipart.org/media/files/nicubunu/11335>



Worksheet 1

Context:

You are a third year student on the cusp of graduating. You have been using the Internet socially since you were a teenager via chatrooms, gaming and more recently Facebook. You have already secured first interviews for graduate training schemes with two large corporations (A & B), but are still waiting to hear from the one you are most interested in (C).

A friend tells you they have heard this company routinely screens potential and existing employees on the Web, but the two firms you have interviews with both have a policy to not screen them. In this worksheet, if you do not have a profile yourself, imagine you have one.

1) What might your existing Facebook profile say about you if firm C looks at it?

2) Are there any things that can be seen on your wall, or in notes you have posted which might help encourage firm C to employ you?

3) Conversely, is there anything on your profile that might put an employer off?

4) If you were in the position of shortlisting people for interview and your company had a policy of checking candidates' DIs, how would you interpret it if it was obvious someone had just 'cleaned up' their profile?

5) How would you feel if the company you wanted to work for banned use of social networking sites such as Facebook during work hours?

6) How, on the other hand, would you feel if the company you worked for decided its staff had to use a social networking site, and to build customer relationships through it?



