DISCOVER

Pathway to Financial Success
— **In Schools**

UNIT 4
Getting Paid

Topic
Preparing for Work

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will:

- **describe** the importance of having a professional network.

- **analyze** the impact social media can have on one's career and education opportunities.

Title

Networks: Not Just Social

Overview

How can building a network support your job search? Does your social media use help or hurt your job chances? Students brainstorm ways a professional network can help people who are seeking jobs, consider how social media can be used by potential employers and others to form opinions, and discuss the value of creating a professional social media profile.

Financial Literacy Theme

Getting Paid

21st Century Skill(s)

Collaboration, Critical Thinking

Key Terms

Social media, professional network, digital footprint

Materials

- **Signs**—Write the following on pieces of paper and post them throughout the room before class begins: Computer Programmer, Teacher, Plumber, Medical Equipment Salesperson, Photographer.

- **Sticky notes**—stacks of 4–5 per student or use pieces of paper and tape

- **Point of View Student Handout**—one copy per student

Connect

How does this connect to the student?

Many students have a digital footprint before they even set up their own social media accounts, thanks to their family and friends. Students should think about how the information they are putting on social media will impact theirfuture education and employment opportunities.

How does this connect to careers?

Social Media Manager: Many companies hire someone to handle their social media accounts. Individuals in this role are responsible for posting content as well as reviewing social media feedback. The work can be equal parts marketing and customer relations.

How does this connect to the world?

Students may be familiar with using social media for personal reasons but not for professional ones, and they may not realize that potential employers may review their public social media as part of the job-screening process.

Prepare

Background: Modern job searches require more than just a strong resume and cover letter. An online professional ***social media*** presence is highly recommended for many job seekers and, in some cases, a digital portfolio showcasing work is expected. These are especially useful in cases where jobs are not posted or advertised. While estimates vary widely, many jobs are filled through networking and word of mouth. A majority of employers will also screen a candidate's personal social media profiles before making a job offer. Students should be aware that their ***digital footprin***t—information about them on the Internet—is often viewed by prospective employers and even college admissions officers. Social media can have both negative and positive effects on an individual's ability to get and keep a job.

Engage

- Ask students if they agree or disagree with the saying, "Sometimes it isn't *what* you know, but *who* you know." Discuss student responses.

- Direct students to form pairs and give sticky notes to each student. Challenge students to write down at least one way that knowing someone could help people seeking each of the jobs posted around the room. Tell them to put one idea on each sticky note. Start by giving at least one example such as, "Someone who wants to be a teacher could ask one of their former teachers for interview tips."

- Allow 2–3 minutes for discussion and then direct students to post their responses next to each job. Discuss their responses.

Teach

1. Explain that having a ***professional network*** can be critical to individuals seeking employment and valuable in other ways. Provide a personal example, if possible.

2. Inform students that networking can be accomplished in a variety of ways. It can happen by attending events such as career fairs or social gatherings, through existing personal contacts like family friends or mentors, and online through social media.

3. Distribute the **Point of View Student Handout** to each student. Explain that how we are perceived by others is important in networking situations and when applying for jobs. Point out that how you as a teacher see your students may be different than how their family or friends might view them. For example, some students may be shy and quiet in class but very outgoing at home or with friends. Pause after students complete each section of the handout and solicit responses from volunteers.

4. Discuss how people's point of view influences the way they think of other people. Explain that potential employers often have limited information upon which they base their opinion of job candidates (e.g., resume, cover letter, interview, letter of recommendation).

5. Challenge students to consider how they want a potential employer to view them. Discuss the character traits an employer may look for (i.e., strong communication skills, honesty, work ethic, persistence, ability to work in harmony with co-workers). Revisit the handout and have students circle or highlight the words or phrases that would be favorable to an employer.

6. Ask students if they would want an employer to view their social media profile before an interview. Would it help or harm their chances of getting the job they want? Tell students that many employers (70%[8]) and even college admissions officers (35%[9]) use social media to screen candidates.

7. Ask for examples of personal social media posts or comments having a negative impact such as:
   - Inappropriate photographs, videos or information
   - Comments viewed as discriminatory (race, gender, religion)
   - Use of foul or offensive language
   - Negative comments about a previous employer or co-worker
   - Posts with spelling or grammar errors
   - Sharing confidential work information or posting from a work location
   - Unprofessional screen name

8. Remind students that the impact can also be positive. Tell students that Kaplan Test Prep has surveyed college admissions officers to learn how social media impacts a student's chance of admissions. Show them this [brief video](#).

9. Challenge students to create an action plan to "clean up" potentially negative content and expand on positive aspects such as evidence of volunteerism or hobbies.

10. Suggest that students secure their social media accounts and/or delete content that might negatively impact them before seeking a job.

11. Ask students if they have ever seen someone's professional social media account such as LinkedIn. Explain that these accounts are used to connect with people professionally and typically include a person's education, work experience, and professional contacts. People can use them to make connections at companies or organizations where they might want to work.

Extend

- **Action:** Invite students to set up a professional social media account on a platform such as LinkedIn which provides [this student sample](#).

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[8] http://press.careerbuilder.com/2017-06-15-Number-of-Employers-Using-Social-Media-to-Screen-Candidates-at-All-Time-High-Finds-Latest-CareerBuilder-Study

[9] http://press.kaptest.com/press-releases/kaplan-test-prep-survey-college-admissions-officers-say-social-media-increasingly-affects-applicants-chances

- **Research:** Search for recent news stories in which an individual's use of social media has negatively impacted his or her education or job. Discuss how the situation could have been avoided.

- **Technology:** Challenge students to review their personal social media use, determine what information is public and delete potentially damaging content. Encourage them to investigate ways to prevent others from posting sensitive content as well.

Standards Correlation

National Standards for Financial Literacy from the Council for Economic Education

1. People make many decisions over a lifetime about their education, jobs, and careers that affect their incomes and job opportunities.

Point of View

What are four words you would use to describe yourself?

1.

2.

3.

4.

What are four words words your family or friends would use to describe you?

1.

2.

3.

4.

If someone had never met you and could only describe you based on what they find in your public social media profile or a search engine result, what four words might they use?

1.

2.

3.

4.