SOCIAL MEDIA AND RECRUITMENT FAQS

Q: How do you find your target groups, desired skills sets and commonly used platforms in terms of talent pools if you don’t have the analytics?

A: We recommend going out to your existing groups and asking them which social media platforms they use. You could run a brief survey via a simple online tool like Survey Monkey, where you can ask which platforms they use, groups they network in or find useful (for example on LinkedIn), if there are any chats they take part in or professional hashtags that they use.

Q: How do you monitor whether social media job advertising is resulting in an increase in applications on NHS jobs?

A: It is worth starting with your recruitment system. Most can track the source of the application. If that isn’t built in already, check if you can simply add a question about where the applicant saw the vacancy initially.

Q: Employees do stupid things on social media but social media lets hundreds of thousands of people see their stupidity and amplifies the impact. Is it too risky?

A: There are examples of high profile cases where tweets/posts have gone viral or attracted significant media attention. However, these are very few and far between. Obviously prevention is best, and that comes from effective policy, which is well communicated, and training about what is and is not appropriate. Make sure your employees are clear that their social media activity may be of interest to the employer, especially if they are easily identifiable as an employee (for example their bio confirms who they work for etc). If an incident happens, then act promptly. Determine whether a statement is required (your communications team will be able to help), and whether any action needs to be taken against the employee for example suspension or investigation under your policies.
Q: How do you create the do’s and don’ts crib sheet to make it positive, fun and engaging, not process driven?

A: Written documents are useful (and in the case of a policy, necessary) but they will only take you so far. Employees will only use social media professionally if they see what is in it for them. So you may need to create that. What benefit for them is there? It might be learning, networking, development, or even rewards, for example, if you have a ‘refer a friend’ scheme or similar, you can ensure there is a reward for a social media referral based on sharing. Have fun – consider running competitions through social media, having a social media event, or sharing compelling company information only in that space. If your policy is long and formal, consider creating a single page of do’s / don’ts / tips with engaging imagery.

Q: How do you deal with negative comments on your social media page?

A: Acknowledge them and apologise if you need to. Don’t get drawn into a debate online, but rather offer the opportunity to take it off-line. A simple ‘we are sorry you feel like that, and are happy to offer you the opportunity to discuss this with one of our team. Please contact...’ can resolve most issues.

Q: Has anyone else done a live Twitter event? If so, can they share what has worked well?

A: NHS Employers has run a number of these events. We advise having a unique hashtag, so you can to collate the tweets. It is also good practice to have someone dedicated to following the hashtag and engaging with the tweets as quickly as possible. During the event, it’s a good idea for a member of staff to post relevant questions and to ensure that there are clear responsibilities on the chat, making it easier to run. Set questions in advance if you can. Prior to the event, consider a blog post including the questions, along with the context to the chat. On the day, have a few people ready to tweet and participate in the chat, especially as it begins and people warm up. Afterwards, pull the tweets into a Storify / Twitter moment so that others can see them later on. Share the output on other platforms too to get maximum value – e.g. share the Storify on other platforms, or turn it into a LinkedIn post.
**Q:** What is the best way to promote ourselves as a trust and engage with the right groups?

**A:** Once you have established who your target groups are and which platforms they are using, get out there and engage. Make yourself useful to them by sharing relevant content, joining-in on chats, contributing to group discussions, and by being present. Focus on sharing stories and information about your culture. Sharing your jobs and vacancies can follow. Encouraging your employees to act as your advocates - if you provide them with good subject matter they will be happy to share it online too.

**Q:** How do I get others on to social media?

**A:** As above, there are two things that impact whether people adopt technology: what is in it for them / what problem is it solving? And how easy is it to use? We recommend training. This doesn’t have to be a full day’s training course, but you need to help people get set up, navigate the language, and understand how to post, share and comment. You have probably got people in your organisation who already know how to do this really well. Consider setting up a champions / advocates group. Make it special for them to be involved. They can be given some basic train the trainer training and a framework to work within. Consider drop-in sessions, breakfasts or lunch and learns. Above all, give people a reason to go to your channels. And make it fun! If you can, get your leaders on to social media - this gives permission and sets the tone.

**Q:** How does our social media policy play a part in this? How can we ensure that this isn’t broken?

**A:** Your social media policy should guide what your employees should and should not do. The first step is making sure that is well communicated and understood. Wherever possible, policies should balance addressing the risks with rules with enabling and encouraging use. Issues are fortunately rare. Most employees, if they have the right guidance, support and role models won’t breach policies. As we said earlier, training can be a big help.
Q: Is it still appropriate to contact candidates via social media without their consent?

A: As a general rule we say it is fine to contact candidates via professional social media sites for example LinkedIn. Some people see other sites, like Facebook, as much more private. If they have engaged with you via a platform previously then it is okay to assume you can contact them back via that same channel. Otherwise go for email.

Q: How do we engage other colleagues to buy into our social media?

A: Ensure first of all that employees have the skills to do so. If you can, consider internal social media networks like Yammer, which some people feel are safer than public sites. Have champions and advocates – find the ones that exist in your own organisation. It will take time – remember the innovation adoption curve. People find their own time to new ideas and technology. As we’ve said elsewhere, create some fun in your social spaces. Consider making social media the only place you can get certain information. Look at having a social event or competition. For example, the best photograph of the workplace / work in action [set rules about what / who can appear], or run an online chat about a workplace issue [for example, the environment] via an internal social platform.