



InfoquestHR

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA SCREENING

PRE-HIRE BEST PRACTICES
FOR THE DIGITAL AGE



If you're reading this, then you've probably noticed that employment screening best practices are changing. You're also probably wondering how social media fits into the equation. This guide explores exactly how social media background screening improves the hiring process and makes the workplace safer, as well as how you can implement social media screening into your own pre-hire process.





The saying “Your employees are your most valuable asset” stands true in more ways than one. Your team is valuable because their job performance keeps your business running, but they are also literally valuable in that about 30% of your annual revenue is spent on your employees. These considerable costs explain why employee retention statistics have become the hallmark of a healthy company... or an unhealthy one.

So why are your retention rates low, but your employee costs so high? It turns out, it has a lot to do with who you let in the door. Statistically, **most good employees leave because of bad relationships: with their boss, with their work, or with their peers.** If these relationships are fundamental to your business health, you need to make sure that your employment screening practices follow suit.

Employee retention statistics are **the hallmark of a healthy company...** or an unhealthy one.



WHY DOES SOCIAL MEDIA SCREENING WORK BETTER?

Social media screening taps into publicly shared social media information as a means to determine whether or not someone is a good fit for employment. Contrary to what you may think, social media screening does not focus on personal habits or traits, but highlights behavior that could raise serious concerns in the workplace, like:

RACISM

SEXISM

VIOLENCE

ILLEGAL
ACTIVITY

Unlike criminal background checks— which negatively and disproportionately impact minorities and low income communities— social media data is truer to a person's character in real time and more accurately represents social demographics. When performed correctly (and legally), social media screening prevents problematic hires from entering your workforce, encourages more positive relationships between coworkers and managers, and promotes a corporate culture of diversity and inclusion.

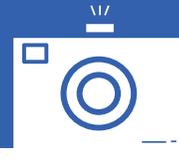
Social media screening does not focus on personal habits or traits, but instead **highlights behavior that could raise serious concerns** in the workplace.

PREVALENCE OF SOCIAL DATA IN HIRING DECISIONS

70% of employers already use social media
in a hiring decision, up by 60% since 2016.

46%

Provocative or inappropriate
photos, videos or information



43%

Information about candidate
drinking or using drugs



33%

Discriminatory comments related
to race, religion, gender, etc.



31%

Candidate bad-mouthed previous
company or fellow employee



This 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 2186 hiring managers and human resource professionals and 3031 full-time US workers in the private sector across industries and company sizes.

SOCIAL MEDIA SCREENING MAKES YOU MORE EFFICIENT

“Do well by doing good” is more than just an inspirational mantra. Yes, social media background screening has become the clear ethical choice for socially responsible businesses, but it can also save you some serious cash. On average, social media background checks can cost up to \$25 less per report than criminal background checks of equal scope, and can identify more relevant concerns with greater accuracy.

Remember earlier when we talked about the importance of retention on your profitability? **By reducing the number of problematic hires that slip through your nets you foster a more positive workplace environment over time, and that saves you money.** A lot of money. (See the infographic on the next page for an estimate.)

Let’s also not forget those two horrible phrases your legal counsel checks their closet for every night: *Negligent Hiring* and *Harassment Lawsuit*. The figures are all over the place, but for an average business, these claims usually run about \$125,000, and that’s just for legal fees! With the proper pre-hire filters in place, you (and your lawyers) can sleep better.

Social media background screening has become **the clear ethical choice for socially responsible businesses,** and it can also save you some serious cash.

THE STEEP COSTS OF HIGH TURNOVER

Let's say you run a business of 200 employees with a 15% turnover rate (the current nationwide average), and you are replacing moderately skilled workers.

COMPANY

Variables	Business Information
Number of employees	200
Annual turnover percentage	15%
Lost employees	30

EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

Variables	Cost Per Employee
Cost of hiring	\$25,000
Training and onboarding	\$10,000
Learning and development	\$10,000
Opportunity cost of unfilled role	\$50,000

TURNOVER COSTS

Cost of turnover	\$2,850,000
\$ saved with 20% reduction	\$570,000

SOCIAL SCREENING BEST PRACTICES

So you're convinced. You see the value of social media background screening, and you want to tell everyone in HR to get started. What now?

An essential first step is to establish a clear social media policy for pre-hire screening as well as for your current employees. A set of guidelines will help your team understand your definition of acceptable online behavior while giving them space to express themselves freely. A simple internet search for "Social Media Policies" will point you in the right direction.

Next, decide how you want to implement social media screening into your pre-hire process. While your internal HR partners can conduct online background checks on their own, they may not have the time or training necessary to do them in a cost-effective manner.

If possible, consider a third party background screener. Outsourcing investigative work is not only cheaper, but it eliminates the risk of a hiring manager viewing protected class information that they now cannot unsee.

Whether you decide to screen in-house or outsource the work, be absolutely certain that your screeners follow the same FCRA guidelines required for all background checks, including adverse action procedures.

First,
establish a
clear social
media policy.

Second,
decide how to
implement social
media screening
in your pre-hire
process.

Third,
consider a third
party background
screener.

A QUICK CHECKLIST OF DOs

- Inform your candidates in advance and obtain written consent.
- Follow the same FCRA guidelines you would for any other background check.
- Advise candidates of their right to adverse action if they want to dispute a negative result.

WHEN IN DOUBT...

Always ask your legal counsel. Social media can help you mitigate considerable business risk, but not if you aren't following the law.

AND DON'Ts

- Ask candidates to log in to social media with you present.
- Ask candidates to lower their privacy settings.
- Ask candidates for their login credentials (this is strictly illegal in many states).

HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact us directly with your social screening questions.

**Ask a social
screening expert.**





WHAT IS A SOCIAL MEDIA HIRING REPORT?

With a combination of software automation and experienced social media analysts, InfoQuest identifies a candidate's potentially problematic online activity and provides you with an FCRA-compliant report to use in your hiring decision.

To request a full sample report, visit infoquesthr.com or give us a call at 843-233-9675.

