



How to Use Twitter for Networking and Thought Leadership

On Twitter, you can follow anyone and mention anyone, which makes it the ideal social network for your job search. You don't have to be granted access to see what they are sharing. They are active on Twitter in order to be connected. It's instantaneous.

There are three reasons to be active on Twitter:

1. You'll find real-time news you can use to research your industry and people.
2. Twitter makes it easy to expand your network and have conversations with people you want to know.
3. Twitter gives you the power to build awareness of your expertise.

Every action you take on Twitter can help draw attention to you. In this tip sheet you'll learn how to take these strategic brand building steps:

- Follow companies you want to work for
- Use lists to organize your feed
- Retweet to garner attention
- Mention companies and people doing great work

Here are 11 things to do on Twitter to create and build and strengthen your personal digital footprint.

1. Maximize Your Bio

Your Twitter bio is your online business card. A keyword rich profile helps it show up in search results and attracts like-minded professionals and should entice new people to follow you. Make sure your Twitter bio aligns with your LinkedIn bio so you are recognized as the same person.

User name and Twitter handle: Use your name as it appears on your LinkedIn profile and resume so it is clear that this account belongs to you.

Photo: Use the same headshot you use on LinkedIn.

Bio: You have up to 160 characters in your bio section to highlight your expertise and personal brand. It should be similar or the same as your personalized LinkedIn headline.



URL: The website URL you include can either point to your LinkedIn profile or personal website.

Location: The city, state/location you use should be your desired city. Often, recruiters will search for nearby Twitter accounts.

2. Your First Tweet

Your first tweets should be related to your ideal career. Share an article, quote or anything non-self-promotional. When someone is deciding whether or not to follow you on Twitter, they often look at what you've been tweeting, and they want to connect with "givers," not "takers."

3. Listen and Research

Before you start connecting with people be sure to evaluate what they are doing on Twitter and how often they use it. Take note of the types of tweets they share, when they are active or if they are even still using their Twitter account.

Use Twitter to research companies and people you might be interested in working for to get an idea of what they are saying about work and what's important to them. Look for commonalities that will help you craft meaningful comments and retweet. Perhaps you lived in the same town, or they mentioned visiting a city you've been to. All this information is at your fingertips.

4. Strategically Follow the Right Accounts

There is no limit to the number of accounts you can follow on Twitter, and since Twitter is an open network, you don't need to know the person in order to follow them. In fact, they are flattered to know you have an interest in them. While LinkedIn now allows you to follow anyone, Twitter was the first and built its membership around being open. Twitter users are generally more responsive and active than users of any other network. It is known as a helpful community. To make Twitter a useful tool for your job search and for networking, these are categories of people to follow:

- Target companies
- Employees inside target companies
- Recruiters at target companies
- Industry magazines/publications
- Experts (speakers, authors, bloggers)
- Alumni associations
- Job boards
- Career coaches

You can also find new people to follow by following who the experts follow. You may discover some new accounts. Also pay attention and consider following the people mentioned in the tweets of the accounts you're following.

5. Create Lists

Once you start following people on Twitter, you'll want an easy way to find their tweets. One of the best ways to do this is to create lists. The suggested categories above make logical list names. You can either make your list public, where everyone looking at your profile can see your lists, or you can make your lists private, so that only you can see the lists. You may choose to make your "experts" list public so the people you add will see you've added them to a list. This may help draw attention to you.



6. Boost the 280 Character Tweet with Images

280 characters isn't much space, so be sure to keep things informative, short and clear. Use the name of the article you are sharing, and always give credit to the author and/or publisher.

Tweets with images are more likely to get retweeted, and more likely to get favorited over tweets without images.

Also be sure to use a couple of hashtags. You'll want to monitor the ones you use to see how well they perform (likes, reshares, views).

Here are hashtag tips to follow:

1. People **use** the **hashtag** symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase in their Tweet to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in **Twitter** search.
2. Clicking or tapping on a hashtagged word in any message shows you other Tweets that include that **hashtag**.
3. **Hashtags** can be included anywhere in a Tweet.
4. You can use one or more hashtags anywhere in your tweet. Twitter recommends using no more than two hashtags per Tweet, but you're free to use as many as you wish.
5. Don't use spaces in a hashtag.
6. Don't use punctuation in a hashtag.

7. ReTweet

Sharing someone else's tweet is called a "retweet." And there are two ways to retweet. First, just click on the retweet button. Or a better option is to "retweet with comment" so you can add your opinion or commentary. The "retweet with comment" also allows the author/publisher to like your tweet and this can be a good way to gain the author's attention.

8. Hashtags

Hashtags serve as a way to tag or categorize the subject of the tweet. Use the Twitter search bar to search for hashtags and see who is using them. Not only can you use hashtags to find relevant content and people, you can use them to help people find you. Search for these hashtags:

- #JobOpening
- #Hiring
- #NowHiring
- #Job or #Jobs
- Industry (#Accounting, #Marketing, #FinTech)
- Events/Conferences (#sxsw, #IBMThink)
- Cities (#CHI, #NYC, #LA, etc.)
- #MBA



Use these hashtags in your tweets

- Industry (#Accounting, #Marketing, etc)
- Events/Conferences you are attending
- Cities (#CHI, #NYC, #LA, etc.)
- #MBA

Here are general hashtag tips to follow:

1. People use the hashtag symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase in their Tweet to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter search.
2. Clicking or tapping on a hashtagged word in any message shows you other Tweets that include that hashtag.
3. Hashtags can be included anywhere in a Tweet.
4. You can use one or more hashtags anywhere in your tweet. Twitter recommends using no more than two hashtags per Tweet, but you're free to use as many as you wish.
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9. TwitterChats

TwitterChats are online discussions on Twitter. These chats are a great way to network and build new relationships with those in the chat. Select chats related to your industry, functional area or other topics you are interested in. Here is a listing of TwitterChats you can research: <http://twubs.com/twitter-chats>

TwitterChats use their unique hashtag in every tweet to identify the conversation. The host asks a question, and anyone can respond. This exchange of information is a great way to learn and meet new people who are active in the conversation.

10. Be Generous and Helpful

Your goal on Twitter is to find people you can learn from. Not just those who might offer you a job. Be sure that you look for opportunities to help others by answering their questions or providing advice.

11. Carve Out Time

Once you've set up Twitter and shared a few tweets, you're ready to work your digital footprint:

Weekly: Check notifications and respond to new followers, commenters and those who share your Tweets.

Monthly: Plan your outreach for the month- who do you need to touch base with and what will you do.

Annually: Evaluate the strength of your network. Have you done enough to stay in touch?



Three Tools to Make Twitter Easier and More Interesting

The best approach is to space your tweets out throughout the day/week. To do this, you'll want an easy tool to schedule your tweets so you don't send them all within the same hour. All three apps listed below are "freemium" apps (free for the basic version and a charge for premium versions with more features). Not only do they help you schedule your tweets, Tweetdeck and Hootsuite allow you to show your Twitter lists as separate feeds. This makes it easier to monitor and take action.

Buffer. Enables you to schedule a tweet for later or add it to a queue. It also allows you to edit a tweet.

TweetDeck. Helps you organize and manage tweets by topics or lists.

Hootsuite. A social media dashboard that allows you to share status updates on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and other social media platforms.