

# CLEANING UP YOUR “DIGITAL DIRT” CHECKLIST

Whether or not you make use of social media in your career search, you need to be aware that information about you likely appears online. And not everything will necessarily be flattering. Be sure to clean up your digital dirt when embarking on a job search.

- Google yourself to see what’s out there.
  - *Consider everything that you, yourself, have posted online (comments, photos, etc.).*
  - *Find out what others have posted about you (comments, photos, etc.).*
- Try various search engines and variations of your name and nicknames.
- Search public records (databases such as court records, tax records, real estate records and criminal records) for incriminating or erroneous information.
- Credit check/employment check/ education check.
- Set up a Google alert to keep yourself up-to-date on any new information that is posted online about you.
- Try to have unflattering content removed.
  - *If you control it, do it yourself.*
  - *If you don’t control it, ask the person responsible to delete it (e.g. the friend who tagged you in the questionable photo or the webmaster of the site where your negative comment appears).*
- Increase your security settings on all of your social networking sites.
- Maximize your LinkedIn profile so that this shows up at the top of searches.
- Consider creating a personal website or blog to control what information about you appears at the top of search results.
- Think twice before posting anything too personal online.