

AC Online: College Student Guide to Professional Social Profiles

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Social media is playing a larger part in how companies consider your employment. More hiring managers today are looking at applicants' social profiles before making hiring decisions. Employers aren't just looking for blatantly bad behavior, though. They also want to make sure you'll be a great addition to their team.

In today's competitive job market, it is important for you to stand out on paper, in person, and even online. In addition to impressive, easy-to-read resumes and smart, personable cover letters, young professionals need to be aware of what they're sharing on their social networks.

Besides avoiding negative behaviors, such as posting racy photos, there are things you can do to make yourself more appealing to potential employers. The guide below highlights key places on social profiles where hiring managers look for "red flags", and offers quick and easy steps to help turn potential disaster into professional success.

 Tweet

4

11

 G+1

 Share

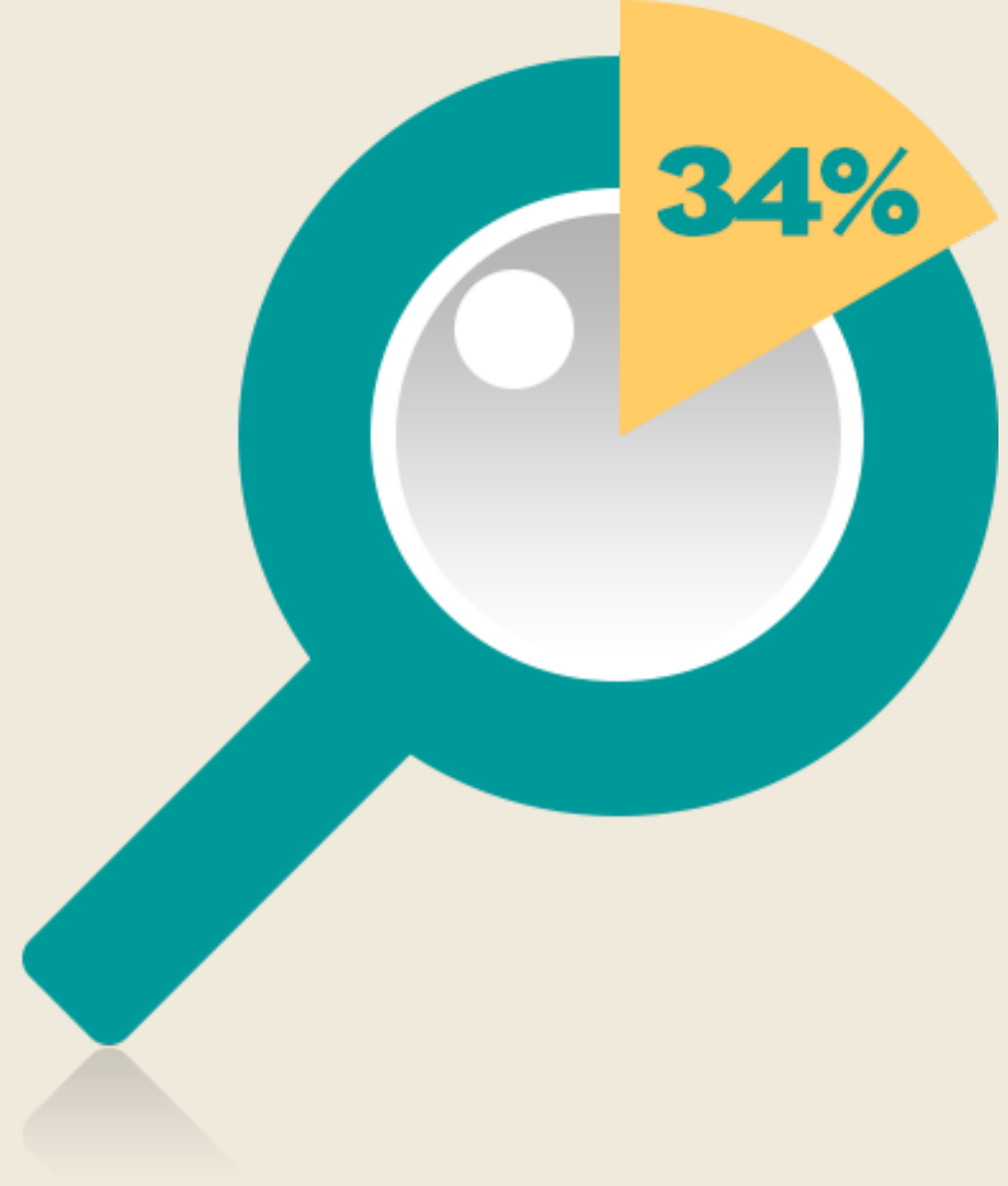
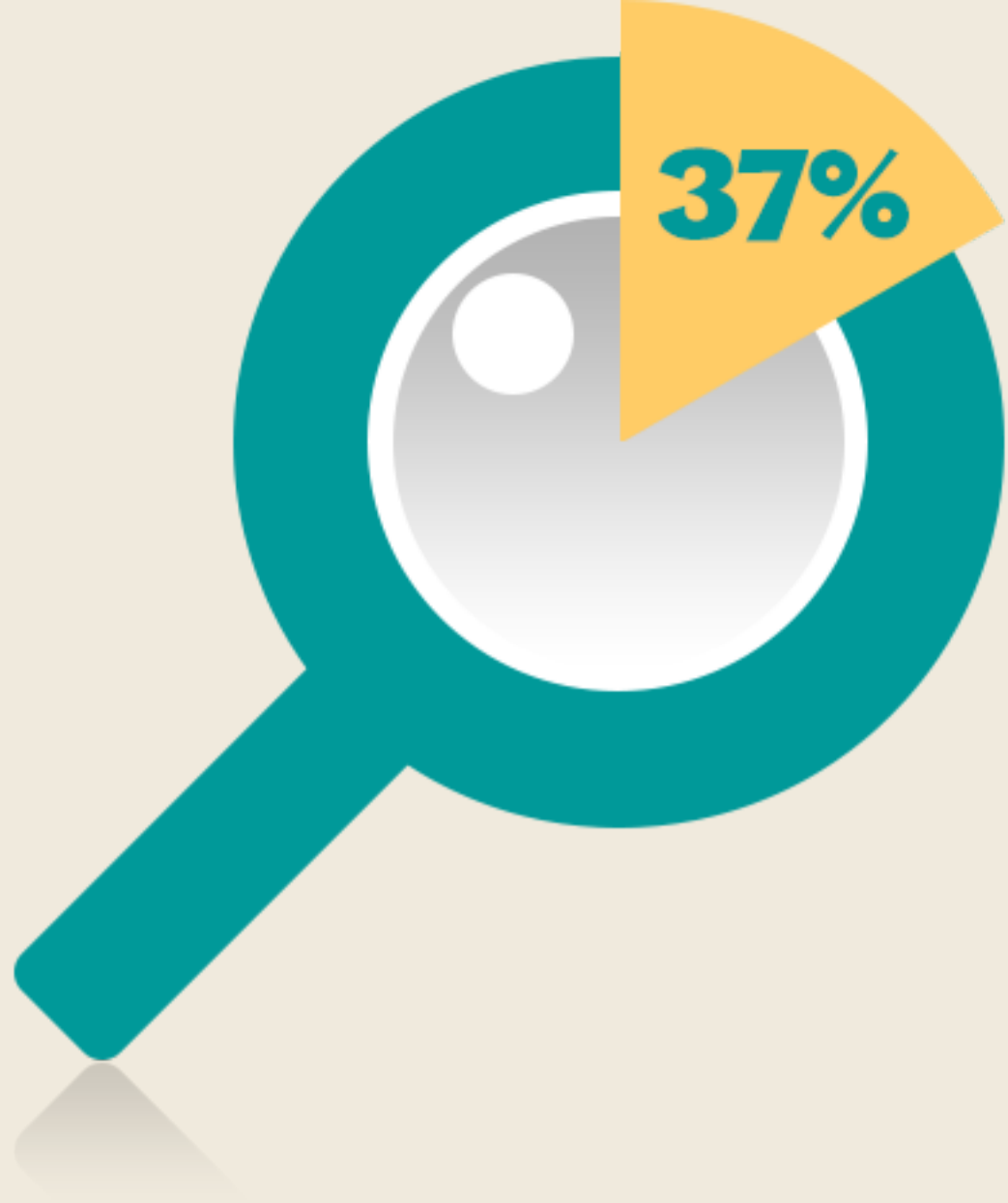


COLLEGE STUDENT GUIDE to Professional Social Profiles

4 Steps to a More Professional Social Presence

37 percent of employers surveyed said they used social media to screen job candidates.

34 percent of hiring managers surveyed said information on a person's social profile kept them from hiring the candidate



It's critical that job seekers understand exactly what they're sharing on Facebook and other social networks. Right now, these social profile snafus are deterring employers from hiring you:



Candidate posted provocative/ inappropriate photos/info



There was info about candidate drinking or using drugs



Candidate had poor communication skills



Candidate badmouthed a previous employer

Step One: First Impressions

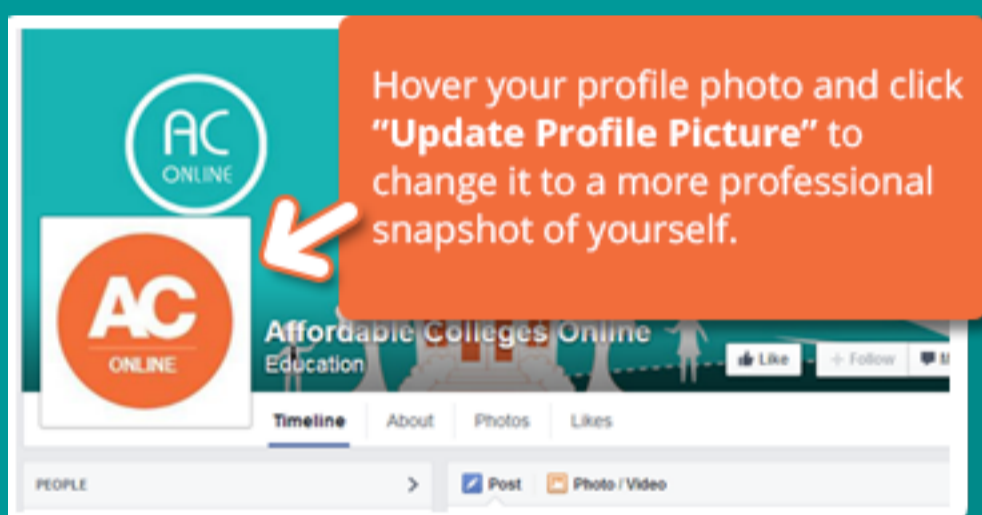
The first things an employer is going to see when s/he views your Facebook profile are your profile photo and your cover photo. Be sure to choose pictures that paint clean, friendly images of an up-and-coming professional eager to earn gainful employment. For example, let's compare these two profile photos:



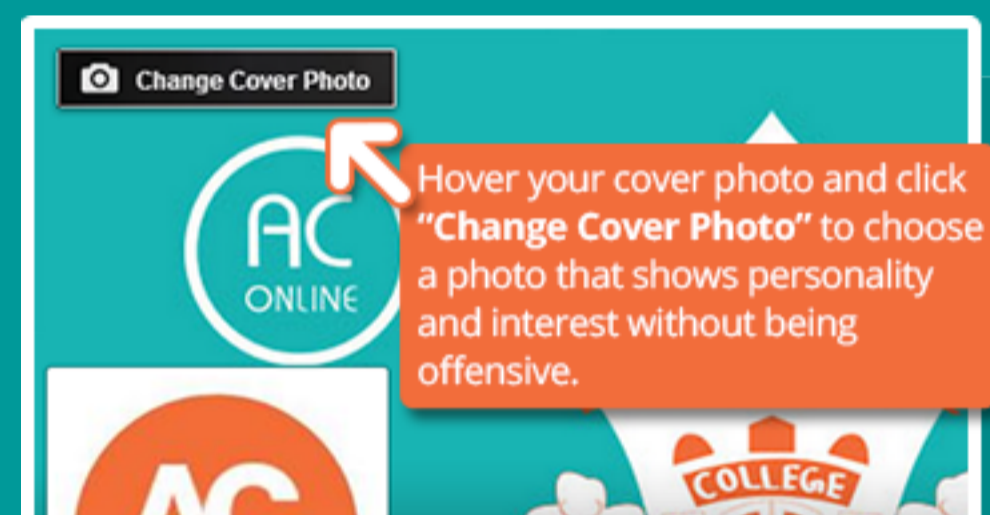
Dos and Don'ts for your profile and cover photos

- Do expect potential employers to scan your social profiles
- Do have a clean, professional photo
- Do show off a friendly personality
- Don't use offensive photos (anything containing nudity, alcohol, racial slurs, offensive language/signs, etc.)

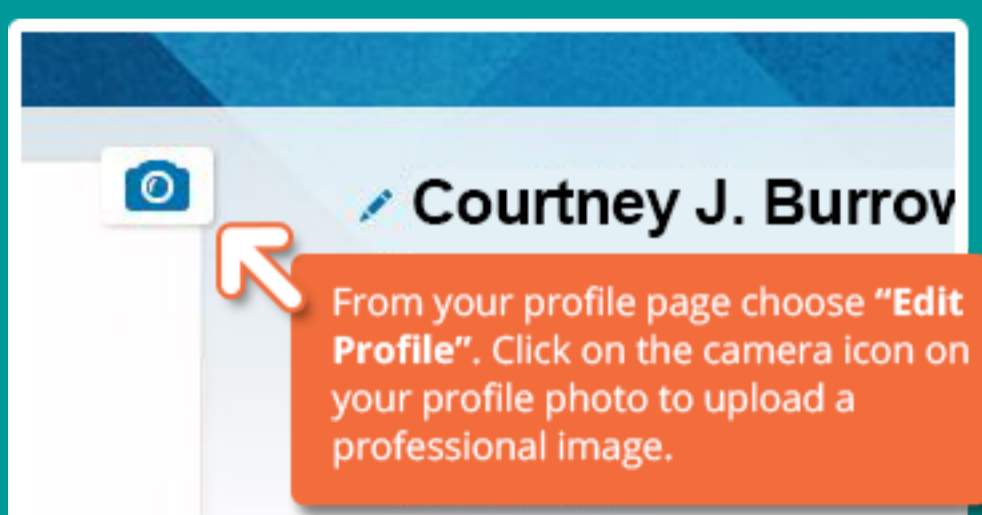
How to change your Facebook profile photo:



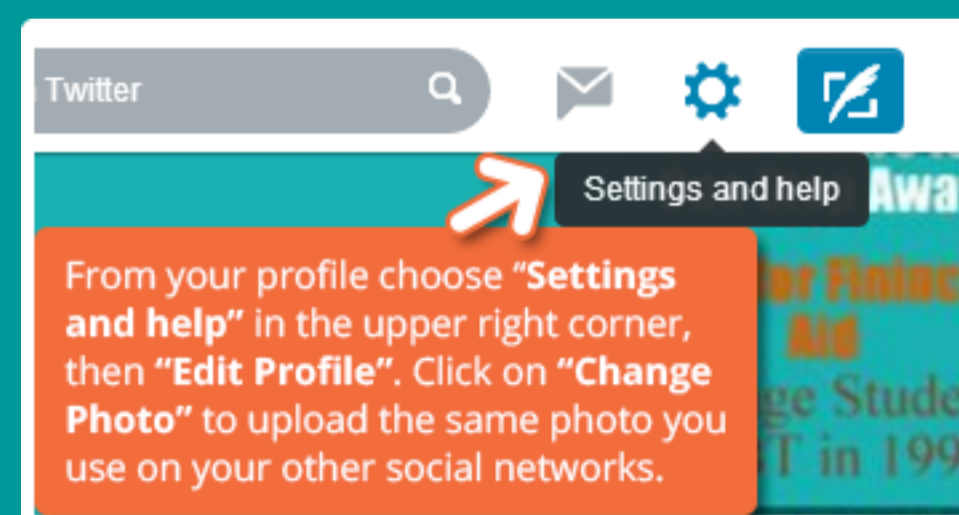
How to change your Facebook cover photo



How to change your LinkedIn profile photo:



How to change your Twitter profile photo:



How to change your Google+ profile photo:

How to change your Google+ cover photo:



Step Two: Scrubbing Your Profile

While the first impression might be the most important, employers are not going to stop after viewing your profile image. Your next step is to go through your activity log and delete or hide other potentially offensive content on your profile.

How to clean your Facebook profile:

1. Click on the wheel in the upper left corner of your Facebook page.
2. Choose privacy settings

Privacy Settings and Tools		
Who can see my stuff?	Who can see your future posts?	Edit
	Review all your posts and things you're tagged in	Use Activity Log
	Limit the audience for posts you've shared with friends of friends or Public?	Limit Past Posts
Who can contact me?	Who can send you friend requests?	Edit
	Whose messages do I want filtered in my inbox?	Edit
Who can look me up?	Who can look you up using the email address you provided?	Friends Edit
	Who can look you up using the phone number you provided?	Everyone Edit
	Do you want to allow search engines to link to your profile on the timeline?	No Edit

Use the **Activity Log** to review your past history and delete any offensive photos or posts.

Be sure to set your profile limit to **"Limit Past Posts"** as an extra precaution.

Other privacy options limit how public your profile is, from **"Everyone"** to **"Only Me"**.

How to clean your LinkedIn profile:

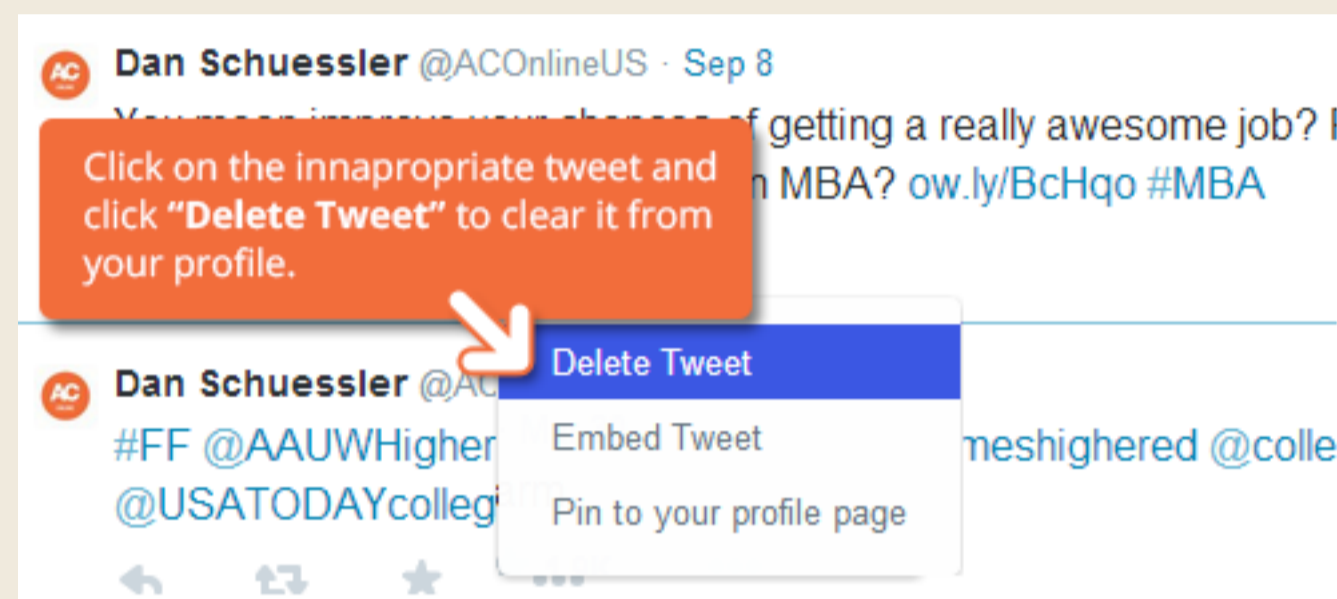
1. Scroll through the activity on your LinkedIn profile page



To delete photos or posts made in your LinkedIn profile, hover over the post and click "Delete" in the upper right corner.

How to clean your Twitter profile:

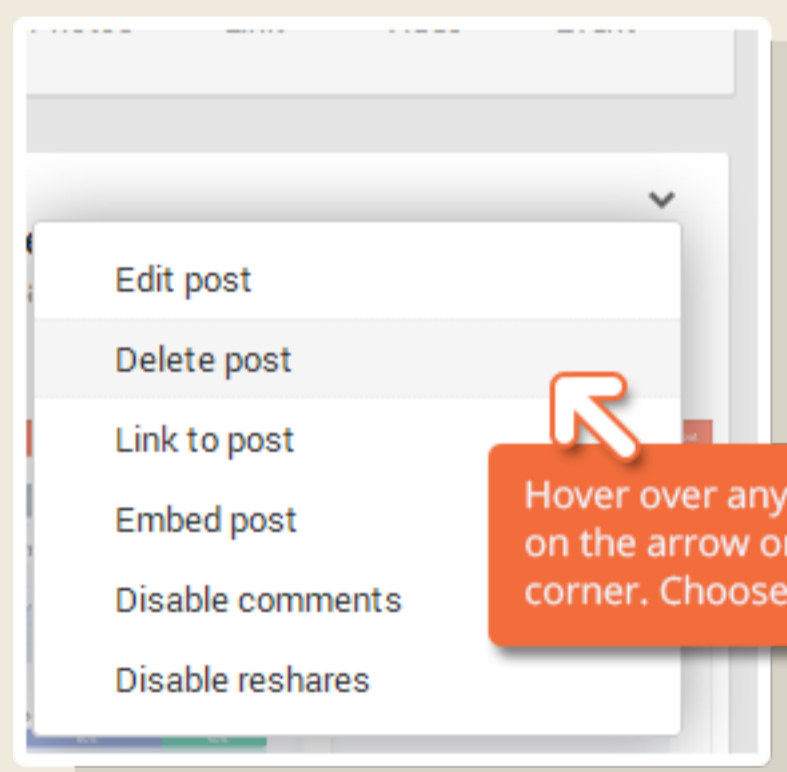
1. View your tweet history from your Twitter profile.
2. On the right side of your profile, click "Photos and Videos" to delete any tweets with inappropriate or offensive imagery.



Click on the inappropriate tweet and click "Delete Tweet" to clear it from your profile.

How to clean your Google+ profile:

1. Scroll through your Google+ profile to view your activity



Hover over any offensive posts. Click on the arrow on the upper left corner. Choose "Delete Post".

Step Three: The Profile Polish

Now that you've scrubbed through each of your profiles, go through and double check that comments made by you and your friends are also appropriate. Be sure that all photos (not just your profile image and cover images) are also appropriate; or, set your privacy settings accordingly.

Set privacy settings

Not everything you share has to be seen by “Everyone.” Before you share any photos or links, check that it is only visible to you or your friends.

Scan other profiles

Facebook, Google+, Twitter and LinkedIn aren’t the only social platforms. Do you have any other photo and video sharing accounts?

- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Instagram
- Flickr
- YouTube
- Foursquare
- Other

Limit cross-profile sharing

Pay close attention to what profiles you post to. Many social accounts, such as Pinterest and Instagram, allow you to post to Facebook or Twitter as well.

Google yourself

Find out what other can learn about you by doing a simple search.

Step Four: Playing the Professional

For better or for worse, your social media profiles serve as embodiments of your personal brand, and, as such, they are no longer idle playgrounds, but tools to help you get an internship, land a job, or attract future clients. Keep up your profiles by:

- Posting updated photos of you and your co-workers at work functions
- Share photos of you and your peers at appropriate school functions (volunteering, dictating your thesis, etc.)
- Follow brands and blogs relevant to your field of study or the line of work you’re trying to get into
- Share important news and analysis posts and tweets from influential brands and blogs within your field of interest.

Further Reading

For more information on ways employers are using social media and why it is more important than ever to keep your social profiles clean and professional, check out these additional resources:

<http://mashable.com/2013/02/09/twitter-job-search/>

<http://infospace.ischool.syr.edu/2012/03/08/is-your-social-media-presence-an-accurate-portrayal-of-who-you-are/>

Sources:



Forbes

HUFF
POST

BUSINESS

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DISCOVERING ABOUT
CANDIDATES THROUGH
SOCIALMEDIA ?**

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