

## **Have You Been Digitally Dissed in Your Online Job Search?**

To hiring managers and executive recruiters who don't know you personally, you are your Google results. A recent BusinessWeek survey indicated that 35% of executive recruiters admit to eliminating candidates based on their Google results.

To make sure you know what others are learning about you, you need to Google yourself. It's called self googling or egosurfing and you should be doing it regularly.

**Knowing what Google says about you is important and influencing what Google reveals is critical.**

There may be things about you on the web that you're unaware aware of; or maybe what Google reveals is inconsistent with your personal brand; or perhaps you have no online identity at all. If you're embarking on a job search or working on your personal branding plan, you'll want to know what Google is saying about you and proactively manage your online identity.

What's your Google identity? Take a moment to Google yourself by entering your name into Google with quotes, like this: "Your Name"

### **Are You Digitally Disastrous or Digitally Distinct?**

What's the quantity of entries, seen in the upper right hand corner of the results page? Are the results consistent with your personal brand? Do they clearly communicate your unique promise of value? From the results of your search, determine which of the following profiles best describes your current on-line identity:

#### **Digitally Disguised**

There is absolutely nothing about you on the web. Your search - "First name Last name" did not match any documents. It doesn't mean you don't exist, but it means that you remain hidden from those who may be researching you. This is easy to remedy. Read the tips for enhancing your online identity at the end of this article.

#### **Digitally Dissed**

When you fall into this category, there is little on the web about you, and what is there is either negative or inconsistent with what you want to be known for. Although not where you want to be, it is easy to improve your online profile. Just a small number of on-brand entries can help you expand your digital identity.

#### **Digitally Disastrous**

This is the most challenging situation because there is lots of information about you on the web, but it has little relevance to what you want to express about yourself.

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It may also include Google results about someone else who shares your name, creating confusion. For people with common names like John Smith, this is a serious challenge.

It will take a concerted effort to augment these results with enough highly ranked relevant results to ensure your personal brand is being clearly communicated. But don't fret. I have worked with many clients who made the move from digitally disastrous to digitally distinct. You will want to build an on line brand communications plan that focuses on volume.

### **Digitally Dabbling**

There is already some on brand information on the web about you. Although the volume of results is not high, the material that is there is relevant and consistent with your personal brand. This is a great start. This indicates you have a foundation on which you can build your online profile. You will want increase the volume of results by regularly posting relevant and compelling content.

### **Digitally Distinct**

This is nirvana in the world of online identity. There are lots of results about you and most, if not all, reinforce your unique promise of value, your personal brand. Bravo!

This will ensure that hiring managers and executive recruiters take your candidature seriously. But don't rest on your laurels, your Google results can change as fast as the weather in London. So you must be steadfast in your commitment to building and maintaining your personal brand on the web.

In a world that's becoming more and more virtual, your online identity is becoming more and more important to your personal brand plan. Whether you're digitally dabbling or digitally disastrous, you can impact your results.

The first step is to understand your current online profile. If you make a concerted effort to expand your online presence by increasing your visibility and credibility, you'll impress hiring managers and executive recruiters and ensure a spot on their lists of candidates to interview.

### **Five Easy Ways to Improve Your Online Profile**

- Review books relevant to your area of thought leadership and post the reviews on Amazon and Barnes and Noble
- Use technorati to find blogs relevant to your area of thought leadership and then regularly post comments to the entries

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- Publish an article on a website relevant to your area of expertise
- Build your own website. The best way to ensure that your online profile says what you want it to say is to speak for yourself
- Create a blog. A blog is only valuable if you commit to posting regularly (at least once a week) but it is a great way to demonstrate your knowledge of a particular topic and to connect with others who share your interest.

**(End)**