

# Social media academic essay



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English 1020 October 31 2011 Menial Media: Employees Waste Hours of Time on the Internet Many people agree that social networking in the workplace is just asking for disaster and loss of productivity. Having different types of social networks in the workplace could also lead to uncomfortable situations between coworkers that could be bad for business. However, some disagree and believe that these sites can bring coworkers closer together. Not only do they believe it would bring coworkers together, they also say that this could increase business due to the 'family-like' style that the given office has.

Although this may be true in some cases, studies show that the majority of the time, social networking is one of the downfalls of a company because of websites such as Wiki Links, Facebook and Twitter that cause disturbances in the workplace and may even cause some of the company's private information to be leaked. Because social networking sites are such a distraction and cause time to be taken away from productivity, they should be banned from the workplace for employees. Bringing social networking into the workplace is sometimes risky for one who is applying to get a job.

Employers can research future prospects and see what their online life is like. Although a person may not be able to be completely understood solely by their social networking site, an employer might judge them based off of it. For example, had someone had a picture of themselves tagged online for the public to see, an employer might deem that bad publicity for the company and decide not to hire this person. However, those who apply for jobs have options to set their accounts on private and social networking companies are not held responsible for the material posted. When joining either MySpace or

Facebook [or Twitter], the user must agree to the terms of service and to the Web sites privacy policies” (Elzweig and Peeples “ Using Social”). If anything negative happens in the line of a person not being hired for a job due to a social networking site, that site will not be held accountable. In a few cases this does work out to the benefit of the applier. “ A CareerBuilder survey of more than 2, 500 employers, released in August of this year, indicated 35 percent of respondents use social media to promote their companies”(Hunt “ Finders Keepers”).

This means that there are endless opportunities for people to find jobs on advertisements of social networking sites. However, a company can also use these sites to see past jobs and responsibilities and check up on their background. Again, this is good for some people, but for others it is a nightmare having to go through their networking site and clear up their information. It is absurd for businesses to meddle in affairs that do not concern them. As long as an employee is doing his job right, then employers should mind their own.

Employers who use social networking sites to 'check up' or 'review' their employees are not being considerate to the personal lives of their workers. If, perhaps, an applier has made it past the stage of being handpicked and selected through the unfair means of social networking, he should not be allowed to access his personal networking site during work hours. This is a major distraction that could cause hours of work and productivity to be put off so that employees can update statuses, tweet, and check personal emails. Most business workers admit to spending at least one hour of their work time on a social networking site.

Should companies be responsible for paying employees for this hour of free time? Only 10% of business allow their workers to be on social networking sites whenever they please (Schiller “ Employers Crack”). Some argue that these sites are simply 'mind refreshers' for employees. However, many others make an even more valid point that if a worker really needed a 'mind refresher', then he should go on a ten minute walk outside: less productivity lost, and much more healthy. Social networking sites cause too much distraction in the workplace and should not be allowed.

If the distraction of checking the website a few times a day is not enough, then consider the possibility of cyberfights. Employees upsetting each other over these sites is begging for disaster. Disgruntled employees lead to an unhappy workplace, so why allow the possibility of that to happen? Yes, it could be said that these social networks could lead to a 'family-like environment', however the possibility for the latter is much more probable. Coworkers disagreeing with each others' personal lives is a major hazard to the stability of the workplace and could potentially lead to an employee being fired or suspended.

Embarrassing, childish, and shameful arguments happen over the internet every day. One lawyer speaks, " I don't need the world knowing every time I make a comment [ . . . ] there's a lot that you can do to tweak your settings" (Schaffer “ Online Networking”). What would stop these arguments from happening between coworkers in a workplace? Even 'friending' coworkers is a potential problem, especially if the operator of the account does not like work or does not like the people at work and forgets the fact that they have been 'friends'.

This occupational hazard could easily be avoided by not allowing social networking sites in the workplace. Social networks are meant for ones personal life; work is not ones personal life, so one shouldn't mix the two. It is a bit of a gray area for most people because they do not know whether they should add coworkers onto their sites or not. Workers should work during work time and play during play time. The two should never be mixed. It is simply unprofessional to have a Facebook page up while at a work desk.

There is a right time for everything, and the right time for social networking and communicating is for spare time , not working. Social Networking sites waste time and resources for the company. “ If one employee spends one hour of company time on Facebook everyday, it potentially costs his or her employer more than \$6, 200 per year” (“ Facebook Costs”). This time spent playing on social networking sites is losing businesses money, companies are better off just letting employees go home an hour early without pay while banning social networking sites, than allowing workers to waste this money.

Another hazard of allowing personal lives to clash with work lives, is the material that is posted. It is almost too much energy to make sure that the boss cannot see when, “ Called in sick to work- Fishing Day! ” is posted as a status. This could end a current career. Once, I worked in a clothing store where a girl called in sick, only to post on twitter a few hours later that she and her friends were having a sleepover. This seems pretty harmless, and although I did not care, my boss was very upset.

She left a memo on the board the next day saying that if people were not going to be smart about what they posted on their social networking sites, then they would be fired. It is also quite a hassle to make sure that no

unflattering pictures that shouldn't be seen by a boss, are not seen. “ If an applicant or employee demonstrates a lack of discretion and judgment by posting spring break photos showing himself or herself apparently intoxicated on a [social networking] page, an employer who finds these photos online may consider the photos when deciding [. . . ] to retain the employee” (Baker “ How Far”).

Some say that people who are this careless should be fired anyway, but most people are completely forgetful of who they have accepted as their Facebook friend and sometimes just don't think before they post. This scenario could be completely avoided if work and social media were not mixed. The 'Basic Information' section on social networking sites is a factor that could ruin many relationships at work. At work, coworkers probably do not know the entire background detail of many of their colleagues. Easy research could lead to uncalled for prejudices against others.

Social networking sites are taken out of context when they are brought to the work place. That is not what they were meant for. Judgmental coworkers may read a fellow workers information and automatically decide not to like them because of the information put. The hasty generalization that is caused by these types of sites are negative because it is hard to get to know someone unless time has been spent with them. Social networking sites allow for the 'time spent' factor to be taken away and hasty generalization on character to be in place. Even though the benefits of networking are obvious, the process of meeting new people, establishing regular contact and building meaningful relationships, is consistently challenging” (Crappell “ Preparing for Professional”). These sites make it easier to avoid face to face

conversation with a person, and just assume that a person is exactly like their online profile. Accidentally talking bad about a 'friended' colleague on a social networking site might be one of the most horrifying things a worker could do, unless this worker was talking bad about his boss.

This isn't considered cyber-fights or cyber-bullying because it was purely an accident, and the gossiped about colleague knows that. For example, posting on Facebook that the man in the cubicle to the right smells bad is not a good idea; especially due to the fact that he is bored and on Facebook as well. He sees this and does not want confrontation, so he picks the alternative: The Silent Treatment. Social networking sites cause grown adults to act like children. People argue that this can be prevented by simply paying attention.

That, however, doesn't factor in the fact that people forget names every day and could very easily forget the name of the person that sits in the cubicle to the right. Social networking sites are not the places for colleagues to mingle and these sites should definitely not be brought in the workplace if they have the potential to cause this many problems. The viruses that these networks could bring in are often overlooked. Many focus on the loss of productivity, the arguments and the mixture of the office and the home. However, not many workers realize the threats that they could be causing their companies. A recent FBI report indicates that phishing scams are becoming more common on social networking sites through a combination of viruses, hacked accounts, and decoy messages” (Schiller “ Phishing Scams”). Personal information and company information may be accessed through these sights and that is a major hazard for these companies. At a local restaurant, one of the employees got on Facebook and was sharing

information with a friend. Little did this employee know that the computer was being hacked. She let out way too much personal information about herself and ended up having to get a new credit card and change her Facebook password.

The dangers of these sites are unbelievable and the risk factors should be left outside of the workplace. Social networking is a distraction in the workplace that hinders work and can cause dangerous viruses to come through the computer. It causes workers to lose sight of their work while allowing them access to look at other coworkers online. It also allows room for dangers such as company secrets and personal information to be leaked. Social networking is not a good thing for the work place because of the extreme loss of productivity and money that is caused primarily by these sites.

It may appear beneficial to the bonding of the company, but socializing time for coworkers should be set up at breaks from work and by voice only, not by a social networking site. Ones work and ones personal life should not be intermingled by these sites. By banning these sites from the workplace, offices will be more efficient, and businesses will be better protected from hackers and spammers. Works Cited Baker, Natasha J. " How Far is Too Far? Employers and the Use of Online Searches. " Young Lawyer. Feb. - Mar. 2008: 4+. Academic OneFile. Web. 9 Oct. 2011. Crappell, Courtney. Preparing For Professional Relationship Building. " American Music Teacher. June-July 2011: 10+. Academic OneFile. Web. 26 Oct. 2011. Elzweig, Brian, and Donna K. Peeples. " Using Social Networking Web Sites in Hiring and Retention. Decisions. " SAM Advanced Management Journal Autumn 2009:



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