

Twitter Job Success Story

If you've been on the Internet for longer than 30 minutes, you've likely heard of Twitter.com.

It's the "micro-blogging" web site that lets you share information with people in your network using short updates of 140 characters or less, called "tweets." It's free to join and to use.

Can it help you find a job? Yes.

Can it also be a huge waste of time in your job search? Yes.

So, let's look at a Twitter job-search success story to extract the lessons that can save you time and perhaps get you hired ...

Christine Garland, from Chicago, Ill., used Twitter to find an internship during college and a full-time a job after graduation. On top of that, she now uses Twitter to help hire employees.

She first hit the Twitter jackpot in Spring 2009, as a senior at Michigan State University.

"I was sitting down with a friend, Brett Kopf. He was heavily involved in Twitter and we were discussing how I was having a hard time finding a PR internship I really wanted," says Garland.

Then and there, Kopf sent out a tweet on his Twitter account, that said: "Anyone hiring for a PR Internship? I know a well-qualified candidate who is on the hunt."

Within five minutes, according to Garland, Kopf got a reply from one of his "followers," the people who subscribe to his tweets: "We are hiring for that position. Can you send her information our way?"

"We connected that night and started e-mailing. Within a week I had done two phone interviews and was hired on as Public Relations Manager for a start up company based out of Chicago," says Garland.

Did Garland benefit by Kopf tweeting to a huge number of people? No. He had fewer than 300 followers.

Just as you will miss 100% of the shots you don't take in hockey or basketball, you will be ignored by 100% of the employers who don't know about you.

"I never would have been hired otherwise. They were not doing any searches for students, so it was a very lucky moment" on Twitter, says Garland.

Takeaway Lesson: Let all your friends on Twitter know what job you are looking for, and do it regularly. Imagine if Garland had told 10 other people to tweet about her desired internship. She might have had even more interviews.

Now. Fast forward to April 2010 and some serious irony ...

Garland used connections she made in the internship she got through Twitter to find a full-time job, in which she helps to hire employees using ... Twitter.

"After graduating in December 2009, I was hired in January 2010 by a company called SavvyAvenue.com, in Chicago. I manage their social media," says Garland.

How does Garland use Twitter to help hire people?

She starts by searching for candidates who want to be found. "We just came across someone in Cleveland we interviewed this week, because we saw them on Twitter. I knew they were looking for a job because they said something about it," she says.

In particular, Garland looks for an ability to engage with people. "As soon as I see someone, I pull up their past tweets and see how often they talk to people. What do they talk about? Are they interested in the same things we are? It really is about engagement."

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Here are four more tips from Garland to help you find work using Twitter:

Every tweet counts. Employers will sift through your past tweets – available on your Twitter profile – looking for signs of intelligent communication.

You don't need 10,000 followers. The connection you make with your next employer will likely come from someone forwarding your messages to someone they know ... or someone they know.

Make sure your picture and bio are tip-top. Because employers will look beyond your tweets at these other parts of your Twitter profile.

Follow people in your industry. Garland tweets for new hires at her company. If you don't follow people like her, you will never know about jobs for people like you.

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