

INTRODUCTION. Your first line of personal brand defense on Facebook is to **never** post anything that *you'd regret if a potential employer or promotion decision-maker were to see*. Think of every post to Facebook as “public,” even if it’s not. Your second line of defense is to tighten up your Facebook **privacy settings** so you are in control of what’s available on Facebook. Let’s get started.

BEST BEHAVIOR PLEDGE. Take a moment and think of your behavior on Facebook. Have you ever trashed your employer on Facebook? Said mean things about your boss? Made “politically incorrect” or “insensitive statements” about others? Posted photos or text items that might be less than savory? It’s time to stop, and it’s time to take the “Facebook Best Behavior Pledge”

I pledge, from now on, to consider every post I make to Facebook as “public,” and to always remember that I will only post items that if seen by a potential employer would at least be neutral if not positive towards my brand image. (Hold up your right hand, look in a mirror, and read out loud).

- Yes**, I agree to the “Best Behavior” pledge for Facebook.
- No**, I am going to keep hurting my online personal brand image by being destructive on Facebook.

Now, it’s time to audit your Facebook profile vis-à-vis your personal brand image.

TIMELINE AUDIT. Log in to Facebook, click on your name on the top left to get to your timeline. Click on the gray downward button or chevron on the top right, then click on “activity log” on the pull-down menu. Now, scroll through each item, including your posts, posts you’re tagged in, and posts by others. Also do this for photos, likes, comments, and all apps. When you find a negative post – one that is not positive for your personal brand image – click on the pencil icon on the far right, and **DELETE** it. Go ALL THE WAY back in time. Check the appropriate box below:

- Yes**, I have reviewed all timeline posts, and DELETED any that are negative for my personal brand image.
- No**, I have not yet done this, but I will complete this by: _____, 2016.

PRIVACY SETTINGS AUDIT. Review your privacy settings on Facebook, and tighten these so it is more difficult for people who are NOT your friends or family to see your posts. Log in to Facebook, and on the far top right click on the downward chevron. Scroll down until you see settings, and on the left click on “Privacy.” (You can also click on the “lock” icon and select “Facebook Privacy Checkup”). Go through each item, and set it to the most restrictive privacy setting. In terms of “who can contact me” and “who can look me up” you may choose to leave this option open to everyone, assuming you want friends and family to be able to find you on Facebook.

- Yes**, I have reviewed my Facebook privacy settings.
- No**, I have not yet done this, but I will complete this by: _____, 2016.

Be sure to click on “Followers,” and verify that your Twitter account is NOT connected. This is because Twitter is 100% public, so ANYONE could see your posts via Twitter.

- Yes**, I have disconnected Twitter from Facebook.
- No**, I have not yet done this, but I will complete this by: _____, 2016.

Remember, that updates to your cover photo and profile picture will still generally be public and visible to anyone with a Facebook profile.

FACEBOOK FRIEND AUDIT. Be careful who your friends are! First, if your friends share really terrible items and you comment / share / like them, you are opening yourself up to negative exposure by association. And, second, if you “friend” an employer or coworker, they will be able to see nearly everything you post, exposing you to prying eyes you may not want to pry. Don’t freak out – but be aware that when you accept a “friend” request, you are opening yourself up to being “researched” on Facebook. To see your current friend list, just type “My friends” into the Facebook search box. Next, scroll down the list of ALL your friends and “unfriend” any who are a “security risk” in terms of your online personal brand image.

- Yes**, I have reviewed my Facebook friends AND unfriended those who are “security risks.”
- No**, I have not yet done this, but I will complete this by: _____, 2016.