

Dos and donts in social media



Dos

- ✓ **Think first.** Your post—even on your private social media account—can affect how people perceive the AO. Think carefully about how your social media content could impact your relationships with your professional stakeholders.
- ✓ **Use separate personal and business social media accounts.** Don't use your professional account to post opinions and private information. That should not be connected to the AO. Also, keep your business page(s) free from any personal or controversial posts.
- ✓ **Stay professional.** Even using only your private account, you could encounter professional contacts or be confronted with issues related to your work. It's smart to keep even your personal social media account free from potentially embarrassing personal information.
- ✓ **It's all about conversation.** Don't use social media as one-way communication. Always look for ways to actively push dialogue, discussions, and engagement.
- ✓ **Engage with others.** Your own engagement shows involvement and personability in the social media community and will help you succeed.
- ✓ **Post regularly.** But don't spam. It is difficult to say exactly how often you should and shouldn't post to the different channels. One rule would be: As often you can post quality content, do it. One to two posts a week, if possible, should work well. Consistency is the key word.
- ✓ **Pay attention to quality.** Provide value to your audience. The dialogue will only work if initiated or enriched by high-quality content.
- ✓ **Communicate in a professional but fun way.** As mentioned, personal and business pages should remain separate, but that does not mean you can't post in a friendly and engaging way. However, professionalism is important.
- ✓ **Videos work best.** Video content raises social media followers' interest most and lets them engage with your posts. So, if you get the chance to use videos, take it!
- ✓ **Be honest and transparent.** Information can be verified immediately on the web. Your reputation and credibility can easily be damaged.
- ✓ **Admit and correct your own mistakes.** Make your apologies or explanations visible to avoid misunderstandings and irritation.
- ✓ **Remain calm and polite.** Treat your followers with respect. Always reply with the facts, avoid provocation, and at the same time show empathy with the user. Take chats offline if they become offensive.



Donts

- ✗ **Follow the law.** Do not publish clinical cases and patient pictures without permission. Do not publish illegal content or content without copyright information and always comply with general and AO policies. Also, do not disseminate confidential information you learn as part of your job.
- ✗ **Don't over-promote:** Advertising shouldn't be the focus of the vast majority of your social media posts. Most of the content you post or share should be informative or entertaining, while some can directly relate to events you want to promote.
- ✗ **Don't post political opinions** or other potential controversial content. You likely have followers from a variety of backgrounds and beliefs, so avoid anything politically or religiously charged.
- ✗ **Don't ignore questions, comments, and messages.** Not reacting to your communities' engagement might create hard feelings and damage your reputation. Respond promptly to your followers.
- ✗ **Don't post pictures of others** or tag other people without their permission.
- ✗ **Don't use too many hashtags.** While hashtags can raise your visibility, it's been found that posts with more than three hashtags get less engagement. This is especially true on Twitter.
- ✗ **Don't forget a spelling and grammar check.** Having improper grammar and spelling can damage the brand perception and your reputation. Reread before you post and use one of the various free online tools to check and edit.