

Quick-fire activity

The career network

Aim: To introduce students to the idea of using online social networks to develop their careers.

Age range: 14-16 and 16-19



Steps

1. Ask the students who uses an online social network, such as Facebook or Twitter. If anyone isn't familiar with the idea of a social network, take a few minutes to discuss how a site works and what its benefits (and disadvantages) might be.
2. Next, ask the students what they might use a social network for. If no one mentions finding a job or developing their career, ask the students whether they think a social network could be used for these purposes.
3. Introduce the students to the idea of a professional networking site, such as LinkedIn, which helps people connect to others who could help them – or who they could help – in their careers. You could show students the site if you have access to the internet. You may want to show them your own profile, if you're comfortable with this, to demonstrate how you are linked to people in a wide range of careers via friends and colleagues.
4. If you have access to the internet, try using **Social Job hunting** at barclayslifeskills.com/key-skills/making-connections/social-job-hunting/ for some ideas about how to use Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to develop your professional network.
5. Ask students whether they'd be happy for a potential employer to look them up on a social networking site right now. What would they find there? Students don't have to say what they have posted online, but you can encourage them to discuss what type of posting might not give a good impression of them, such as photos, bad language or inappropriate messages. They could draw up an action plan for changes they should make to their online profile, such as changing their privacy settings.

Taking this activity further

Explore how to develop a network, both online and through direct contacts, using **Work Skills activity 3: Finding employment (16-19)** or **Work Skills activity four: Networking skills volunteer-led lesson (14-16)**.