Impressions of Social Networking Profiles:

The Influence of Applicant Profile Content on Recruiters' Perceptions

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Abstract

Research on the use of social networking websites (SNWs) in the selection process is scarce, and the little research that has been conducted has focused on personal SNWs like Facebook and MySpace. Consequently, little is known about the use of professional SNWs, such as LinkedIn, in the selection process. The present study investigated the impact of relevance of different categories of LinkedIn profile content on experienced recruiters' evaluations of applicant employability. In addition, the study tested the effects of impression management tactics in the LinkedIn profile. Twenty-three experienced recruiters rated five manipulated LinkedIn profiles varying in the relevance of work experience, education, and interests and activities, and in the inclusion or exclusion of impression management tactics. Results showed that the relevance of work experience, education, and interests and activities, as well as the inclusion of impression management statements, was positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. Further, the relevance of interests and activities were found to moderate the relationship between education and employability ratings. Finally, impression management statements were found to increase recruiters' ratings when either education or interests and activities were also relevant. The findings suggest that job seekers should emphasize relevant experiences and interests, actively participate in relevant LinkedIn groups, and include self-descriptive, acclaiming, and enhancing statements on their LinkedIn profiles. Future research directions are also discussed.

Impressions of Social Networking Profiles: The Influence of Applicant Profile Content on Recruiters' Perceptions

Throughout the history of Industrial and Organizational psychology, issues of employee selection and assessment have received substantial attention from both researchers and organizations (Anderson, Lievens, Van Dam, & Ryan, 2004). Although researchers have given considerable attention to traditional selection procedures such as the employment interview (e.g., Huffcutt & Arthur, 1994; McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994) and resume screening (e.g., Brown & Campion, 1994; Cole, Rubin, Feild, & Giles, 2007), few studies have investigated the role that social networking websites (SNWs) play in employee selection.

During the last few years, SNWs have become increasingly popular among both individuals and organizations (Owyang, 2010). Starting out as relatively small community websites focused on connecting people with their high school friends, SNWs such as Facebook and MySpace are now being used to reach a multitude of different objectives, such as marketing and public relations (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). In addition, the amount of information available on these web sites has prompted employers to use SNWs to collect data on job applicants in order to increase the probability of hiring the right people (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). In most employment contexts, for every applicant interviewed, there are several applicants who are excluded from the applicant pool. These applicants are excluded on the basis of multiple factors. Among these factors are traditionally resumes, and more recently, SNWs (Cross-Tab, 2010). Although the use of SNWs by human resource personnel is increasing (Husom, Valdemanis, & Berg, 2010), few researchers have investigated how SNW profiles are perceived by recruiters.

Some researchers (e.g., Bohnert & Ross, 2010; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009) have investigated the impact that the use of SNWs for selection purposes may have on hiring decisions. However, the main focus has been on personal SNWs such as Facebook and MySpace. The large number of users on personal SNWs has prompted researchers to investigate the impact that profiles from these SNWs have on hiring decisions. However, personal SNWs are commonly accepted to be private in nature, and the use of these SNWs for selection purposes has been met with criticism (Frauenheim, 2006; Kowske & Southwell, 2006). In Germany, a draft law has recently been introduced that, if passed, would restrict companies from using some SNWs, including Facebook, when making hiring decisions (Hopkins, 2010). In addition, more and more Facebook users have begun hiding their profiles

from individuals they do not know, making it increasingly more difficult to use Facebook for selection purposes (Goldberg, 2010).

Due to the disadvantages associated with the use of personal SNWs like Facebook for selection purposes, the present study investigated the professional SNW LinkedIn. In contrast to most SNWs, LinkedIn is organized around professionals and their contacts, businesses, and groups. The information contained on LinkedIn profiles is mainly centered around work experience, education, professional interests, and contacts. In addition, while both Kluemper and Rosen (2009) and Bohnert and Ross (2010) studied the effects that SNWs have on hiring decisions, their samples did not consist of actual recruiters. Instead, they used students that had undergone a short training program in selection. One may argue that these students do not view SNW profiles with the same scrutiny as experienced recruiters would. In response to the shortcomings of previous research with regard to samples, the sample of the present study consisted of experienced recruiters from a number of different organizations in Norway.

While there is an abundance of advice from both practitioners and academics on how to construct a LinkedIn profile in order to produce the best impressions (e.g., Doyle, 2011; Swearingen, 2008; Wallace, 2008), much of this advice is prescriptive. Little empirical evidence for the influence upon readers of different types of information contained in SNW profiles exist. The present study investigated the effects of several types of information in LinkedIn profiles on recruiters' perceptions of applicants.

Social Networking Websites as Recruitment Tools

Some authors have discouraged the use of SNWs for selection purposes (Greenwald, 2008). For instance, Davis (2006) argued that there is no way to be sure that the information available on SNW profiles is legitimate. Although a general assurance of quality is a concern for any type of background check (Wells, 2008), this is more important for online information since it is possible for anonymous sources to create a SNW profile in another person's name (Byrnside, 2008).

An often cited assumption is that SNW profiles are used to create and communicate idealized selves (Manago, Graham, Greenfield, & Salimkhan, 2008). This view has been called the idealized self hypothesis. A contrasting view, the extended real-life hypothesis, holds that SNWs constitute an expanded social context in which individuals are able to express their actual personality characteristics, and in this way facilitate accurate interpersonal perceptions (Back et al., 2009). In an international study conducted with SNW users in Germany and the United States, Back and colleagues found that individuals do not use SNW

profiles to promote an idealized virtual identity. Consequently, the results from that study indicate that SNW profiles give a more accurate presentation of the job applicants than resumes, and may therefore be considered a better tool for making hiring decisions.

In addition, some type of self-presentation is included in most employee selection methods. Resumes, interviews, and job applications normally reflect maximal instead of typical performance (Sackett, Zedeck, & Fogli, 1988). Since SNW profiles contain information gathered over a longer period of time, employee selection methods using SNWs are likely to be based on typical behaviors, and should therefore be more accurate than traditional selection methods. At the very least, the use of SNWs in selection should provide information that is distinct from selection methods that reflect maximal performance (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009).

Work Experience, Education, Interests and Activities, and Impression Management

Because little research has been conducted on the use of SNWs in employee selection, the present study is mainly based on the considerable research on resumes. While resumes and LinkedIn profiles are not identical, they share a number of characteristics. First, both are focused on professionals. Second, they are both comprised of five major sections: job objective, work experience, education, interests and activities, and references. Finally, both resumes and LinkedIn profiles are used as initial screening tools by recruiters (Husom et al., 2010).

Traditionally, employability has been defined as the ability of an applicant to be employed (van der Heijden, 2001). More recently, however, researchers have argued that there is a distinction between being employed and being employable (Knight & Yorke, 2002; Lees, 2002). While being employed simply means having a job, being employable means having the qualities needed to gain employment and maintain progress in the workplace. In the present paper, employability is defined as the applicant's ability to gain employment. As in earlier studies (e.g., Cole, Feild, Giles, & Harris, 2004; Thoms, McMasters, Roberts, & Dombkowski, 1999), employability was conceptualized as recruiters' (a) intentions to interview the applicant, (b) recommendations that the applicant be hired, (c) belief that the applicant will succeed in the job, and (d) overall evaluations of the applicant. In other words, recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability refer to the recruiters' belief that the applicant is suitable for the job.

Human resource practitioners and researchers generally agree that the two most important sections of the resume are past work experience and education (Hutchinson, 1984;

Spinks & Wells, 1987). In addition, some researchers (e.g., Hutchinson, 1984) have found that recruiters prefer information about applicants' interests and activities.

In the pursuit of quality applicants, recruiters compare candidates' previous work experience with the duties and responsibilities of the job they are hiring for. For example, recruiters evaluate how closely the candidates' past work experience matches the needs and requirements of a job. The topic of work experience as a predictor for selection decisions has received substantial attention from researchers (Cole et al., 2007; Hakel, Dobmeyer, & Dunnette, 1970; Knouse, 1994). In a study using manipulated resumes, Hakel and colleagues (1970) found that resumes listing previous work experience within accounting were evaluated significantly more favorably than resumes listing other types of previous work experience when applying for an accounting job. In light of the previous findings, the present study hypothesizes that individuals with work experience that is relevant to a job will be perceived as more employable than individuals with work experience that is not directly relevant to the job.

> *Hypothesis 1*: Applicant employability is perceived as higher if the work experience listed on the LinkedIn profile is relevant to the job, than if the work experience is irrelevant to the job.

Academic credentials are some of the most frequently considered types of information within personnel selection (Rynes, Orlitzky, & Bretz, 1997). Hakel and colleagues (1970) reported that while evaluations of applicants depended on multiple types of information, education was given substantial weight by both student and professional raters. Cole and colleagues (2007) studied recruiters' perceptions of applicants through their resumes. They found that recruiters rated applicants with high quality academic qualifications positively, even when the quality of other content categories (e.g., work experience and extracurricular activities) were rated as low. In summary, education is given substantial weight by recruiters when evaluating applicants through their resumes.

In a meta-analysis involving 19 studies on the effects of academic qualifications on selection decisions, Olian, Schwab, and Haberfeld (1988) found that academic qualifications accounted for about 35 % of the variance in selection decisions. Thoms and colleagues (1999) found that applicants who reported coursework relevant to the job they applied for were more likely to be invited to an interview than applicants who did not list such coursework. Of the 64 raters in their study, twenty gave the listing of relevant coursework as the main reason for the choices they made. It is therefore predicted that individuals with relevant education will

receive higher employability ratings than individuals with education that is not directly relevant to the job.

Hypothesis 2: Applicant employability is perceived as higher if the education listed on the LinkedIn profile is relevant to the job, than if the education is irrelevant to the job.

The effects of interests and activities on evaluations of job applicants have been studied extensively by selection researchers (e.g., Cole et al., 2007; Hakel et al., 1970). In a study investigating the relative importance of different types of information in resumes, Hakel and colleagues (1970) found that interests and activities listed on applicants' resumes were significant contributors to recruiters' overall evaluations of applicants. Some authors have argued that the significant relationship between interests and activities and applicant ratings may be explained by the attributions recruiters form based on these activities. For instance, Brown and Campion (1994) suggested that recruiters attribute qualities such as leadership and motivation to applicants with many interests and activities.

In the present study, applicants' interests and activities were mainly presented to recruiters as the membership in LinkedIn groups. Because LinkedIn groups are the main social component of LinkedIn, they share many similarities with the interests and activities used in previous research. For instance, Hakel and colleagues (1970) defined interests and activities as the membership of professional societies. In the context of LinkedIn, profile owners often list their membership of such societies as their LinkedIn groups.

Previous studies on the relationship between the relevance of interests and activities and applicant employability perceptions have yielded conflicting results. In a manipulated resume study, Nemanick and Clark (2002) found that only relevant activities listed on resumes were positively related to raters' perceptions of applicants. In contrast to Nemanick and Clark's results, Campion (1978) found that student applicants who had participated in both professional and social student organizations were rated higher on overall general impression, personal liking, and chances of further consideration. The conflicting findings may be due to the fact that the two studies involved different sample types. While Campion asked professional interviewers to evaluate students, Nemanick and Clark invited students to rate each other. Prior research has indicated that recruiters may be less discriminatory in their evaluation of different types of interests and activities. For example, Rubin and colleagues (2002) found that recruiters frequently equate involvement in student organizations with interpersonal skills, a skill set that is highly regarded by recruiters (Eberhardt, Moser, & McGee, 1997). Therefore, it is predicted that while any involvement in interests and activities

should be perceived as positive, LinkedIn profiles reporting involvement in relevant interests and activities should produce higher employability ratings than LinkedIn profiles reporting irrelevant interests and activities.

> *Hypothesis 3*: Applicant employability is perceived as higher if the interests and activities listed on the LinkedIn profile are relevant to the job, than if the interests and activities are irrelevant to the job.

A LinkedIn profile may be viewed as an attempt by a job seeker to manipulate recruiters' impressions. Consequently, another factor that may influence how recruiters perceive applicants through their LinkedIn profiles is impression management. Impression management has been used to predict recruiters' reactions to job candidates in a number of studies (Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Knouse, 1994; Knouse, Giacalone, & Pollard, 1988; Thoms et al., 1999). Although multiple definitions of impression management exist, there is general agreement among researchers that impression management refers to the process by which individuals attempt to control the images, or impressions, that other people form of them (Barrick & Mount, 1996; Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1989; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). In the recruitment and selection literature, researchers have shown that impression management techniques influence perceptions of applicants in resumes (Knouse, 1994), interviews (Gilmore & Ferris, 1989), and in letters of recommendation (Knouse et al., 1988).

Gardner and Martinko (1988) outlined a number of commonly used impression management tactics: self-descriptions, acclaiming, and enhancement. Self-description refers to descriptive statements made by applicants that describe different aspects of the applicant (e.g., a job applicant tells a recruiter that she is a real go-getter). Acclaiming refers to the description of favorable events that are worded to maximize desirability (e.g., an employee who tells her boss that sales have doubled since she was hired). Finally, enhancement refers to an individual's use of favorable evaluations of someone else in order to increase his or her attractiveness (e.g., an employee who tells her superior that she really admires the superior's style of management).

According to Krämer and Winter (2008), SNWs provide an ideal setting for impression management because users' control over their self-presentation is much greater than in face-to-face communication. In addition, the traditional resume, which is simply a list of jobs, schools attended, and interests and activities, limits the possible inclusion of impression management statements. In contrast, LinkedIn profiles are relatively flexible in nature and allow for the use of several impression management tactics, such as self-

description, acclaiming, and enhancement. However, individuals cannot tailor their self-presentations on LinkedIn to specific prospective employers because, in contrast to a resume or an interview, they are addressing a broad audience.

Knouse (1994) investigated the effects of impression management on raters' evaluations of different versions of a hypothetical resume. He found that impression management produced positive perceptions of interpersonal skill, self-confidence, and hireability. In a similar study, Knouse, Giacalone, and Pollard (1988) found that the use of impression management statements describing hiring organizations and applicants on a resume were perceived negatively by raters. When impression management statements included adjectives such as "excellent, energetic, etc." to describe the candidate, the candidates were rated as less attractive. According to Knouse and colleagues (Knouse, 1994; Knouse et al., 1988), the discrepancy between the findings of the two studies may be explained by the fact that impression management statements can lead to a resume being perceived as too exaggerated. Other studies have shown that impression management statements are positively related to raters' perceptions of an applicant when they make the applicant seem attractive and believable (Gilmore, Beehr, & Love, 1982), and when the statements are consistent with other information about the applicant (Baron, 1989). In the present study, LinkedIn profiles containing impression management statements are hypothesized to be rated higher than profiles without such statements.

Hypothesis 4: Applicant employability is perceived as higher if impression management statements are listed on the LinkedIn profile, than if there are no such statements.

Recruiters' Perceptions of Relevance

Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of different categories of content should be positively related to perceptions of applicant employability. Hypotheses 1 to 3 investigate the impact of either relevant or irrelevant work experience, education, and interests and activities on employability ratings. In order to investigate how different levels of relevance in these categories would affect employability ratings, the following hypotheses concern recruiters' perceptions of relevance in the three categories. In other words, the following hypotheses investigate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of relevance and applicant employability.

Researchers have found a positive relationship between previous work experience and recruiters' perceptions of applicants. For instance, Singer and Bruhn (1991) found that hiring

managers focused most on previous work experience when viewing manipulated applicants' resumes and videotaped interviews. In a similar study, Knouse (1994) found that work experience was positively related to recruiters' overall perceptions of applicants. Therefore, the present study suggests that perceptions of work experience relevance should be positively related to perceptions of applicant employability.

> *Hypothesis 5a*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience are positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

Cole and colleagues (2007) investigated the relative importance of work experience, education, and interests and activities in recruiters' evaluations of job applicants' resumes. They found that education listed on resumes was positively associated with employability ratings. The present study hypothesizes that perceptions of academic relevance will be positively associated with applicant employability.

> *Hypothesis 5b*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of education are positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

Although the perceived relevance of work experience and education is likely to weigh heavily on recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability, there is reason to expect that the interests and activities listed on LinkedIn profiles will have a similar relationship with recruiters' evaluations. As mentioned earlier, previous research has shown that recruiters attribute leadership, motivation, and interpersonal skills to applicants that list interests and activities in their resumes (Brown & Campion, 1994; Rubin et al., 2002). The membership in LinkedIn groups relevant to the job in question may also be perceived by recruiters as a sign that the applicant is passionate about the job, a trait desired by recruiters (Patterson et al., 2000). Therefore, it is hypothesized that perceptions of relevance of interests and activities will be positively related to employability perceptions.

> *Hypothesis 5c*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of interests and activities are positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

The perception of impression management in LinkedIn profiles is another potential influence on employability judgments. In a study designed to examine the impact of resume characteristics on decisions to interview graduate students, Thoms and colleagues (1999) found that recruiters preferred resumes that contained accomplishment statements. Similarly,

Knouse (1994) found that the inclusion of impression management statements on resumes was effective in increasing raters' perceptions of applicants. Thus, perceptions of impression management are hypothesized to be positively associated with perceptions of employability.

> *Hypothesis 5d*: Recruiters' perceptions of impression management are positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

In the screening process, recruiters have been found to place substantial weight on the fit between applicants' past work experience and current job objectives (Cable & Judge, 1997). This constitutes a challenge for job applicants with little relevant work experience. In turbulent financial times, some job seekers are forced to take jobs outside their field of interest. For these individuals, the lack of work experience within their preferred field of work is an obstacle they would have to overcome through other means. The question of how such a lack of fit between applicants' past work experience and current job objectives affects recruiters has been investigated in a few studies (e.g., Knouse, 1994; Oliphant & Alexander, 1982).

Knouse (1994) suggested that high quality academic qualifications may compensate for lacking work experience. Similarly, in a study investigating recruiters' reactions to resume content, Oliphant and Alexander (1982) found that relevant education became more impressive when other qualifications were irrelevant for the job in question. In the present study, work experience and education are hypothesized to interact. The perceived relevance of education should compensate for the perceived lack of relevant work experience in recruiters' evaluations of applicant employability.

> *Hypothesis 6a*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of education moderate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience and applicant employability.

Cole and colleagues (2007) found that recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability jointly depended on the content of three resume categories: work experience, education, and interests and activities. The researchers argued that high quality interests and activities compensate for lacking qualifications in other areas. For instance, a person who has spent a considerable amount of time working in student organizations during college may not have had occasion to gain work experience during this time. Cole and colleagues argued that recruiters take this into account when evaluating applicants' qualifications and suitability for a job. The present study hypothesizes that the relevance of interests and activities will moderate

the relationship between perceptions of the relevance of work experience and applicant employability, and between educational relevance perceptions and employability.

> *Hypothesis 6b*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of interests and activities moderate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience and applicant employability.

> *Hypothesis 6c*: Recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of interests and activities moderate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of education and applicant employability.

A similar moderating effect by impression management is also hypothesized. Some authors (e.g., Knouse, 1994; Thoms et al., 1999) have suggested that impression management may positively moderate recruiters' perceptions of applicants with some irrelevant information on their resumes. For example, an applicant's description of herself as innovative and customer oriented may decrease the perceived negativity of limited or irrelevant work experience, especially if those qualities are important to the job in question. Feldman and Klich (1991) suggested that some applicants who find themselves in such positions emphasize other accomplishments in order to create the impression that the irrelevant work experience or education is actually a logical career progression towards the current job objective. As an example, Feldman and Klich describe a former high school Spanish teacher applying for a managerial job that describes his teaching job in terms of organizational and presentational skills, and lists his choice of foreign language teaching as an example of his interest in international business.

While earlier studies have investigated the impact of impression management on applicant information separately (e.g., Gilmore & Ferris, 1989; Knouse, 1994; Thoms et al., 1999), few researchers have attempted to investigate whether impression management statements have an impact on the joint effect of several content categories. For example, little is known about the compensatory effect of impression management on employability estimates if an applicant has both irrelevant work experience and education. As shown by Cole and colleagues (2007), perceptions of applicant employability depend on the joint influence of different types of information. The present study hypothesizes that impression management statements will interact with work experience, education, and interests and activities, and be positively related to applicant employability judgments. Although an investigation of the simultaneous contribution of the four variables on employability is

preferred, such interactions are extremely difficult to interpret (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). As a result, 3 three-way interaction terms are created in order to investigate every possible combination of the three types of LinkedIn content with impression management.

Some researchers have investigated the moderating effect of impression management on the relationship between work experience and hiring decisions (Knouse, 1994), and others have suggested that impression management can moderate the relationship between education and employability judgments (Feldman & Klich, 1991). In addition, work experience and education have been suggested to have a joint effect on perceptions of applicant employability (Cole et al., 2007; Singer & Bruhns, 1991). Thus, the present study hypothesizes that impression management statements will interact with work experience and education, and be positively related to ratings of applicant employability. Specifically, the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience and education, and applicant employability should be stronger when the recruiter perceives a high level of impression management.

> *Hypothesis 7a*: Impression management interacts with work experience and education, and is positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

As mentioned above, the moderating effect of impression management on the relationship between work experience and hiring decisions has received some attention from researchers (Knouse, 1994). However, little is known about similar effects on the relationship between interests and activities and hiring decisions. However, some researchers have suggested that impression management could interact with interests and activities, and have an impact of on recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability (Bowie & Domke-Damonte, 2010). Consider, for example, an applicant with few relevant interests and activities. For this applicant, other aspects of his or her LinkedIn profile would have to compensate for the lack of relevant interests and activities. The present study posits that the applicant may emphasize other aspects of his or her profile by using impression management tactics. In addition, impression management should interact with work experience and interests and activities simultaneously, and be positively related to employability ratings.

> *Hypothesis 7b*: Impression management interacts with work experience and interests and activities, and is positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

Finally, in order to investigate every possible combination of the three LinkedIn content categories with impression management, it is hypothesized that impression management should interact with education and interests and activities simultaneously, and be positively related to ratings of applicant employability.

Hypothesis 7c: Impression management interacts with education and interests and activities, and is positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

Method

Participants

Participants were 23 human resource recruiters and managers involved in recruiting. The participants came from 15 organizations representing a variety of industries including manufacturing, research, telecommunications, and professional services.

Initially, an email was sent to 122 recruiters soliciting their participation in the study. Potential participants were asked to reply by email if they were interested in participating in the study. Forty-one recruiters volunteered for the study. The volunteers were then sent an email containing a description of the study, LinkedIn profile scoring forms, and five manipulated LinkedIn profiles. Of the 41 recruiters that volunteered for the study, 23 usable surveys were returned (56 % response rate).

The raters were 13 men and 10 women between 27 and 66 years of age ($M = 43.2$, $SD = 10.6$), and had between 1 and 30 years of experience with recruiting ($M = 7.8$, $SD = 6.8$).

Measures

LinkedIn content rating measure. A survey designed to measure perceptions of relevance was needed in order to investigate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of LinkedIn content and employability judgments. Because no appropriate measure could be found in the literature, relevance of content in LinkedIn profiles was measured by scales originally developed for the present study. The scales consisted of items based on the 22 categories identified by Brown and Campion (1994) as common to resumes. The eight items comprising the scales measured the perceived relevance of work experience ($\alpha = .86$), education ($\alpha = .90$), and interests and activities ($\alpha = .87$). All items were rated on a Likert scale from 1 (very little) to 6 (very much). A sample item from the work experience scale was "Indicate how relevant you think the applicant's previous work experience is". In the

education scale, one item was "Indicate how relevant you think the applicant's academic qualifications are". A sample item from the interests and activities scale was "Indicate how relevant you think the applicant's group memberships are". In addition, recruiters identified impression management by the use of three items from an instrument evaluating the influences of impression management developed by Knouse, Giacalone, and Pollard (1988). A sample item from this scale was "Indicate how impressive the LinkedIn profile is" (1 = very little; 6 = very much). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this scale was .81. This resulted in a measure consisting of eleven items designed to investigate recruiters' perceptions of the relevance and impression management of a LinkedIn profile owner.

Employability ratings measure. Employability was measured with a scale developed by Cole and colleagues (2004). The measure consisted of four items that were chosen on the basis of their frequent use in previous research on selection decisions (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1997; Kristof-Brown, 2000). A sample item was "How likely is it that you would be interested in interviewing the applicant?" (1 = very unlikely; 6 = very likely). Another item asked raters: "Taking everything into consideration regarding the applicant's LinkedIn profile, what is your overall evaluation of the candidate?" (1 = very negative; 6 = very positive). The four items were subjected to a principal components exploratory factor analysis because of the differences in scale anchors. Prior to performing the principal components analysis, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of correlations greater than .30, suggesting that enough variance was available for extraction. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was .82, greater than the recommended value of .60 (Kaiser, 1974), and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1950) was statistically significant, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix (Field, 2000). The four items loaded on a single factor that explained 89 % of the variance (α = .95). Cole and colleagues (2004) reported that the same items loaded on a single factor explaining 86 % of common variance (α = .94).

Manipulation variables. Initially, the four categories of profile content were varied in six constructed LinkedIn profiles. However, in order to get more recruiters to participate in the study, the number of profiles was lowered from six to five. This resulted in a design where the education and impression management conditions were identical in all profiles. In other words, in the profiles where the education listed was irrelevant, there were also no impression management statements. Conversely, the profiles which included relevant education also included impression management statements. Consequently, it was not possible to test the education and impression management conditions separately (Hypotheses 2 and 4). However,

because recruiters' perceptions of the different manipulated variables were measured, this was not a major issue. T-tests showed that the recruiters agreed with the relevance of the manipulated variables.

Control variables. Previous researchers have reported that recruiters' gender and age have been found to have significant effects on recruiters' assessments of applicant employability (Graves & Powell, 1995; Hitt & Barr, 1989). Because of this, these variables were controlled for in the analyses. In addition, the manipulation variables were used as additional controls in the testing of Hypotheses 5 to 7.

Procedure

Five LinkedIn profiles, created based on their average relevance level (low (Appendix A1), low/medium (Appendix A2), medium (Appendix A3), medium/high (Appendix A4), and high (Appendix A5)), were presented to each of the recruiters. The number of profile variations was limited by the amount of time available to the recruiters. Five sections of the LinkedIn profiles were manipulated. These sections reflect the typical information desired by human resource managers: job objective, work experience, education, interests and activities, and references (Hutchinson, 1984; Spinks & Wells, 1987). The conditions of work experience (relevant versus irrelevant), education (relevant versus irrelevant), interests and activities (relevant versus irrelevant), and impression management (impression management statements versus no impression management statements) were manipulated in the five LinkedIn profiles.

The manipulated LinkedIn profiles were created based on LinkedIn profiles collected from LinkedIn.com. A marketing manager job was chosen for the hypothetical job description for several reasons. First, it is a prevalent profession on LinkedIn. Second, it is a profession that does not require a specialized degree. Finally, a search through LinkedIn profiles of people currently holding positions as marketing managers revealed a multitude of different, but marketing related, previous jobs. In order to ensure that the LinkedIn profiles did not appear so similar that participants would become suspicious, the type of jobs, education, and interests and activities were comparable, but not identical. For instance, one candidate was a member of the LinkedIn group eMarketing Association Network and another was a member of Digital Marketing. The five LinkedIn profiles were all rated by all participants, leading to a total of 115 ratings (23 per profile).

In the relevant work experience condition, two of the LinkedIn profile variations contained three previous jobs for the applicant, first as a salesperson at a telecommunication store, secondly as a marketing assistant at a recruitment firm, and lastly as a marketing

consultant at a waste management company. In the irrelevant work experience condition, three of the profile variations listed the previous jobs as store clerk at a local grocery store, advisor at the Norwegian labor and welfare administration (NAV), and benefits consultant at a local bank.

In the relevant education condition, three of the profile variations listed a Master's degree in marketing and brand management from the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH). In the irrelevant education condition, two of the profile variations listed either a Master's degree in philosophy or literature from the University of Bergen.

There were two profiles in the relevant interests and activities condition, each listing membership in one student organization and four LinkedIn groups related to marketing (such as Digital Marketing and Social Media Marketing). In the irrelevant interests and activities condition, three of the profile variations listed membership in one student organization and four LinkedIn groups not related to marketing (such as Bergen University Alumni and Pension and Employee Benefits Specialists).

The three profile variations in the impression management condition contained five statements about the applicant. The five statements were based on statements used by Knouse (1994). One applicant self-description item was in the summary section (stating interests in areas improving personal and career development). One acclaiming statement describing a favorable event linked to the applicant was in the education section (assisted in a graduate research project). Two enhancement statements describing favorable evaluations of the applicant were in the recommendations section (praise from supervisor for innovative work, and praise from supervisor for good customer service). Finally, one acclaiming statement was in the awards and honors section (received an award for best Bachelor's thesis at NHH in 2004). In the no impression management condition, the two remaining profile variations omitted the five statements.

Efforts were made to control for extraneous factors and yet enhance realism. For instance, the manipulated LinkedIn profiles were created to look identical to real LinkedIn profiles. Details such as company names, job titles, impression management statements and so on were gathered from actual LinkedIn profiles. The number of connections (i.e., people directly connected to the profile owner on LinkedIn) ranged from 147 to 168 ($M = 156.2$, $SD = 8.5$). These numbers were chosen to convey the impression that all the applicants were savvy networkers (Anderson & Powers, 2008). In other words, the number of connections indicated that the applicants were active users of LinkedIn. The length of the profile was also

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held reasonably constant throughout the different profiles in order to control for the effect that raters' preferences in profile length may have on evaluations of job applicants (Thoms et al., 1999). In addition, the demographic data and the names of the applicants were similar for all conditions. The job applicants were male and had the five most occurring names in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2010). Furthermore, the applicants were approximately 30 years old and had studied in the second largest city in Norway. All profiles described an individual who was pursuing the job objective of a marketing management position, who possessed a Bachelor's and Master's degree, and who had worked three previous jobs.

A job description was provided to recruiters to ensure comparable understanding (see Appendix B). The job description was developed from an actual job announcement gathered from one of the most popular job listing sites in Norway. The position in question was that of a marketing manager for a hypothetical company. Job duties outlined in the job description included development of communication materials, and development and adaptation of new and existing channels for promoting the company. Job requirements included a Bachelor's degree, strong communication skills, and good teamwork skills. Recruiters were asked to assume that the five LinkedIn profiles represented five candidates for the position as marketing manager and that it was their job to evaluate whether or not it would be interesting to examine these applicants further. Recruiters were encouraged to refer back to the job description and instructions if needed.

In summary, the manipulated LinkedIn profiles were made as realistic as possible. First, physical aspects were very similar to the activities often performed by recruiters. With the exception of profile pictures, which were excluded in order to reduce bias related to the attractiveness of job applicants (Dipboye, Arvey, & Terpstra, 1977), appearance and content of the LinkedIn profiles were all identical to profiles found on LinkedIn. Second, mental aspects of examining LinkedIn profiles with respect to a given job and determining which applicants to interview were similar to those that recruiters go through on a daily basis. Finally, emotional aspects were similar in that the screening of applicants is not a very stressful event. In real screening situations, recruiters are only deciding which applicants to interview during the initial screening. They are not making final hiring decisions. Because of this, the cost of an error in the initial screening process, and emotional implications as a result of these, are not as high as in final hiring decisions.

Instructions sent to the recruiters explained that the purpose of the study was to find out what factors recruiters use in making selection screening decisions when viewing social

networking sites. Care was taken to enhance response rates: all volunteers where assured complete confidentiality, and follow-up emails were sent to late respondents.

Analyses

  Confirmatory factor analysis. In order to evaluate the survey instrument, I first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis of the LinkedIn profile rating items using Amos (Arbuckle, 2009). I compared several a priori profile rating factor models, including one-factor, two-factor, three-factor, and four-factor models.

  I first compared the fit of four different factor structures. The first structure was a one-factor model, in which all 11 items loaded on one factor. The second was a two-factor model, with work experience as one factor and education as the other, with work experience subsuming impression management, and education subsuming interests and activities. The third was a three-factor model, with work experience, education, and impression management, with education subsuming interests and activities. The final model was a four-factor version, with work experience, education, interests and activities, and impression management.

Table 1

Comparison of A Priori Profile Rating Factor Structures

Structure (N = 115)	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	SRMR	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA confidence interval
1-factor	115.60***	38	3.04	.08	.93	.134	(.106, .162)
2-factor	98.97***	37	2.68	.08	.94	.121	(.093, .150)
3-factor	74.19***	38	1.95	.06	.97	.091	(.060, .122)
4-factor	65.20**	36	1.81	.06	.97	.084	(.050, .117)

Note. SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; IFI = incremental fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation.
**$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

  Fit statistics for the four models are shown in Table 1. Chi-square tests indicate how close the observed values are to those that would be expected in the fitted model. The closer the chi-square is to zero, the better the fit. A significant chi-square indicates lack of satisfactory model fit. However, because chi-square is sensitive to sample size, it often erroneously implies poor fit (Byrne, 2010). Researchers have addressed limitations with the chi-square by developing alternative goodness-of-fit indices. One of the first of these was the

chi-square divided by its degrees of freedom (i.e., relative chi-square). Although researchers disagree about the interpretation of the relative chi-square, ratios lower than 2 are widely considered to represent a plausible model (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003).

Table 1 reports the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). The SRMR can take values between 0 and 1, with values closer to zero indicating good fit. The CFI is an incremental fix index that measures the proportionate improvement in fit by comparing a target model with a nested baseline model. CFI values close to 1 indicate a very good fit, while scores close to .97 indicate good fit (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). Finally, the RMSEA measures the discrepancy between how well the model with optimally chosen parameter values would have fit the population covariance matrix if it was available. According to Browne and Cudeck (1993), RMSEA values less than .08 suggest adequate model fit, while values above .10 should be rejected. However, other authors (e.g., MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996) have suggested that RMSEAs in the range of .08-.10 suggest mediocre fit.

The results in Table 1 show that the best fitting model was the four-factor model, and that the worst fitting model was the one-factor model. The assessment of whether one model is significantly better than another is often done using a chi-square difference test. In this instance, the difference in chi-square between the three and four factor models was 8.99, which is itself distributed as chi-square with $(38 - 36 = 2)$ degrees of freedom. This value was significant ($p < .01$), suggesting that the four-factor model was significantly better than the three-factor model. In addition, the three-factor model was significantly better than the two-factor model, and the two-factor model was significantly better than the one-factor model. Thus, the four-factor model was used to test the hypotheses.

Independent samples t-tests. Independent samples t-tests evaluated the manipulation of variables. It was assumed that the variable manipulations were successful if raters in the relevant conditions rated applicant work experience relevance, educational relevance, interests and activities relevance, and impression management highly, while raters in the irrelevant conditions rated these items significantly lower. All manipulation checks were significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Results

Sample sizes were based on 23 recruiters, each judging all five LinkedIn profiles. Thus, analyses at the recruiter level were based on a sample of 23, while analyses at the profile level were based on samples of 115. Following the recommendations of Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), intraclass correlation coefficients were calculated in order to discover whether the recruiters differed in their ratings of applicant employability. Differences between recruiters explained less than 8 percent of the variance in the dependent variables, and consequently did not represent an important control variable.

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables are found in Table 2. As shown in Table 2, three of the predictors are highly correlated (see variables 7-9), suggesting poor discriminatory validity. However, the confirmatory factor analysis described above showed that the three dimensions measured different constructs. In addition, tests revealed no issues with multicollinearity.

Hypotheses 1 to 4 were tested using independent samples t-tests. Hypotheses 1 and 3 predicted that applicant employability would be rated highest in cases where the work experience and interests and activities were perceived as relevant to the job. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare applicant employability ratings in the relevant and irrelevant conditions. As shown in Table 3, significant differences between scores were found for the relevant and irrelevant conditions in both of the manipulated variables. These results suggest that the relevance of work experience and interests and activities both have an effect on employability ratings. Specifically, the results suggest that when the relevance of either work experience or interests and activities as reported on LinkedIn profiles is high, employability ratings are also high. Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 3 were supported.

Hypothesis 2 and 4 predicted that profiles that included impression management statements and relevant education would receive higher ratings of applicant employability than profiles that did not include such statements or irrelevant education, respectively. As shown in Table 3, the perception of applicant employability was highest in the conditions with relevant education and impression management statements ($M = 18.06$, $SD = 3.80$), and lowest in the conditions with irrelevant education and no such statements ($M = 11.17$, $SD = 4.32$); $t(113) = -9.01$, $p < .001$. However, because the manipulation of education and impression management was identical across the conditions, these two content categories could not be studied separately. Thus, it was not possible to support Hypotheses 2 and 4. Hierarchical moderated regression analysis was used to test Hypotheses 5 to 7. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality,

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Demographic controls											
1. Gender (0 = male, 1 = female)	.43	.50									
2. Age	43.17	10.59	.04								
Profile manipulation controls											
3. Work experience (0 = irrelevant, 1 = relevant)	.40	.49	.00	.00							
4. Interests and activities (0 = irrelevant, 1 = relevant)	.40	.49	.00	.00	.17						
5. Education and Impression management (0 = irrelevant education/NoIM, 1 = relevant education/IM)	.60	.49	.00	.00	-.17	.67**					
Predictors											
6. Work experience	3.01	1.28	.02	-.06	.75**	.34**	.16				
7. Education	3.98	1.46	-.02	-.04	-.02	.63**	.84**	.28**			
8. Interests and activities	3.65	1.58	.06	-.01	.02	.73**	.85**	.34**	.82**		
9. Impression management	3.63	1.16	-.01	-.01	.18	.52**	.73**	.50**	.75**	.80**	
Criterion											
10. Employability rating	3.83	1.31	-.03	-.06	.39**	.61**	.65**	.69**	.74**	.78**	.83**

Note: N = 115.
**p* < .01

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Table 3

Overall Means and Independent Samples t-test Results for the Work Experience, Education and Impression Management (IM), and Interests and Activities Manipulations

Overall means and independent samples *t*-test results for work experience

	Overall (*n* = 115)	Relevant Work Experience (*n* = 46)	Irrelevant Work Experience (*n* = 69)	
Employability Ratings	15.30	17.83	13.62	*t*(108,85) = -4.77***

Overall means and independent samples *t*-test results for interests and activities

	Overall (*n* = 115)	Relevant Interests and Activities (*n* = 46)	Irrelevant Interests and Activities (*n* = 69)	
Employability Ratings	15.30	19.17	12.72	*t*(112.31) = -8.63***

Overall means and independent samples *t*-test results for education and impression management (IM)

	Overall (*n* = 115)	Relevant Education/IM (*n* = 69)	Irrelevant Education/IM (*n* = 46)	
Employability Ratings	15.30	18.06	11.17	*t*(113) = -9.01***

****p* < .001

linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. In accordance with the recommendations of Aiken and West (1991), the interactions were tested separately in order to reduce multicollinearity and instability of the regression equation. Recruiter demographic variableswere entered in the first step. In the second step, profile manipulation variables were entered as an additional control. In step three, the main effects of relevance of work experience, education, and interests and activities, as well as impression management, were entered. In steps four to six, the two-way interactions of interest were entered. Finally, in steps seven to nine, the two-way and three-way interactions involving impression management (IM) were entered. Aiken and West (1991) recommend the centering of variables in order to reduce multicollinearity. Centered interaction scores were therefore first calculated in order to create single interaction terms leading to 6 two-way interactions and 3 three-way interaction terms. According to Aiken and West (1991), the centering of variables greatly reduces multicollinearity, although it does not eliminate the chances for multicollinearity entirely.

Results of the hierarchical moderated regression analysis are reported in Table 4. Manipulation variables' influence on evaluations accounted for incremental variance (ΔR^2 = .68, *p* < .001) in applicant employability ratings. Hypotheses 5a to 5c predicted that recruiters'

Table 4

Hierarchical Moderated Regression Analysis Predicting Applicant Employability Ratings

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9
	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
Control variables									
Recruiter gender (0/1)	-.03	-.03	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.06	-.06	-.05
Recruiter age	-.06	-.06	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.03	-.03	-.03
Profile manipulation controls									
Work experience (0/1)[b]		.50***	.10	.09	.10	.09	.09	.09	.10
Interests and activities (0/1)[b]		.07	-.01	.01	.00	-.05	.02	-.00	-.05
Education and IM (0/1)[c]		.69***	-.01	.00	.00	.01	.03	.04	-.08
Profile content main effects									
Work experience (WE)			.34***	.34***	.34***	.36***	.48***	.47***	.36***
Education (ED)			.23**	.20**	.22**	.27***	.31***	.24***	.36***
Interests and activities (IA)			.30***	.29**	.29**	.32***	.26**	.31***	.38***
Impression management (IM)			.23**	.23**	.23**	.21**	.19*	.19**	.28***
Two-way interactions									
WE*ED				-.05			-.07		
WE*IA					-.04			-.02	
ED*IA						.08*			.06
WE*IM							-.09	-.11	
ED*IM							.10		.03
IA*IM								.08	-.05
Three-way interactions									
WE*ED*IM							-.16*		
WE*IA*IM								-.13*	
ED*IA*IM									-.16
F	.26	47.28***	76.19***	68.89***	68.89***	70.90***	62.57***	57.96***	55.05***
ΔR^2		.68***	.18***	.00[a]	.00[a]	.01*[a]	.02**[a]	.02*[a]	.01[a]
R^2	.01	.68	.87	.87	.87	.87	.89	.88	.88

Note. a = ΔR^2 compared to Step 3. b = 0 = irrelevant; 1 = relevant. c = 0 = irrelevant education/no impression management statements; 1 = relevant education/impression management statements.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

perceptions of the relevance of work experience, education, and interests and activities each would relate positively to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 3), these hypotheses were all supported. Hypothesis 5d, which predicted that perceptions of impression management would be positively related to applicant employability ratings, was also supported (see Table 4, Step 3).

Hypothesis 6a predicted that recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience and education would interact and positively relate to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 4), the interaction between work experience and education was not found to be significant. Thus, Hypothesis 6a was not supported.

Hypothesis 6b predicted that recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of work experience would interact with the relevance of interests and activities and positively relate to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 5), the results did not support this prediction. Consequently, Hypothesis 6b was not supported.

Hypothesis 6c predicted that recruiters' perceptions of the relevance of education and interests and activities would interact with and positively relate to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 6), the two-way interaction term between education and interests and activities was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $p < .05$, $\beta = .08$, $p < .05$), indicating that Hypothesis 6c should be supported. Following the recommendations of Dawson and Richter (2006), a graphical plot was created to aid in the interpretation of the interaction term. As shown in Figure 1, applicant employability ratings increased when the perceptions of relevance of education increased. As expected, applicants who were rated high in both categories received the highest employability ratings. Conversely, applicants that were rated low in both categories received the lowest ratings. Of particular interest is the fact that the relevance of interests and activities had a larger effect on recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability than educational relevance. For example, the applicants whose education was rated as less than relevant and whose interests and activities was rated as highly relevant received higher employability ratings than applicants who were rated high in education and low in interests and activities. In summary, the results indicated that applicant employability ratings depend jointly on the relevance of education and interests and activities. Hypothesis 6c was therefore supported.

Hypothesis 7a predicted that impression management statements would interact with work experience and education, and be positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 7), the three-way interaction term
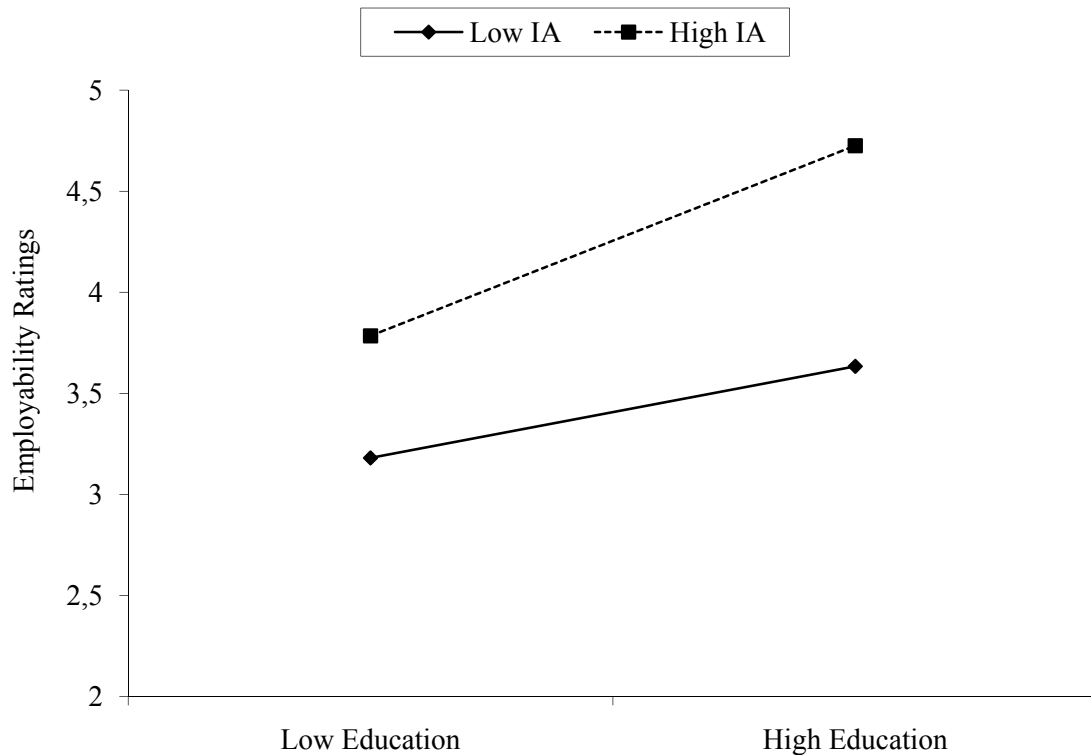
Figure 1. Interaction of Education * Interests and Activities (IA) on Employability Ratings.

between work experience, education, and impression management explained incremental variance in applicant employability ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .01$, $\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$) beyond that accounted for by the control variables and the four main effects. Thus, in line with Hypothesis 7a, impression management statements moderated the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of work experience and educational relevance on applicant employability. Following the recommendations of Dawson and Richter (2006), a graphical plot was created to aid in the interpretation of the interaction term.

According to the prediction of effects of work experience relevance on employability ratings, the slope of high education and high impression management (see Figure 2: Slope 1) should be greater than the slope of high education and low impression management (Slope 2). Second, the slope of low education and high impression management (Slope 3) should be greater than the slope of low education and low impression management (Slope 4). As shown in Figure 2, both predictions appear to be correct. However, slope difference tests (Dawson & Richter, 2006) revealed that only the difference between slopes 1 and 2 ($t(113) = -2.55$, $p < .05$) was significant. In other words, the results show that the slope for high education and low impression management was significantly less positive than the slope for high education and high impression management. However, because no significant slope difference between
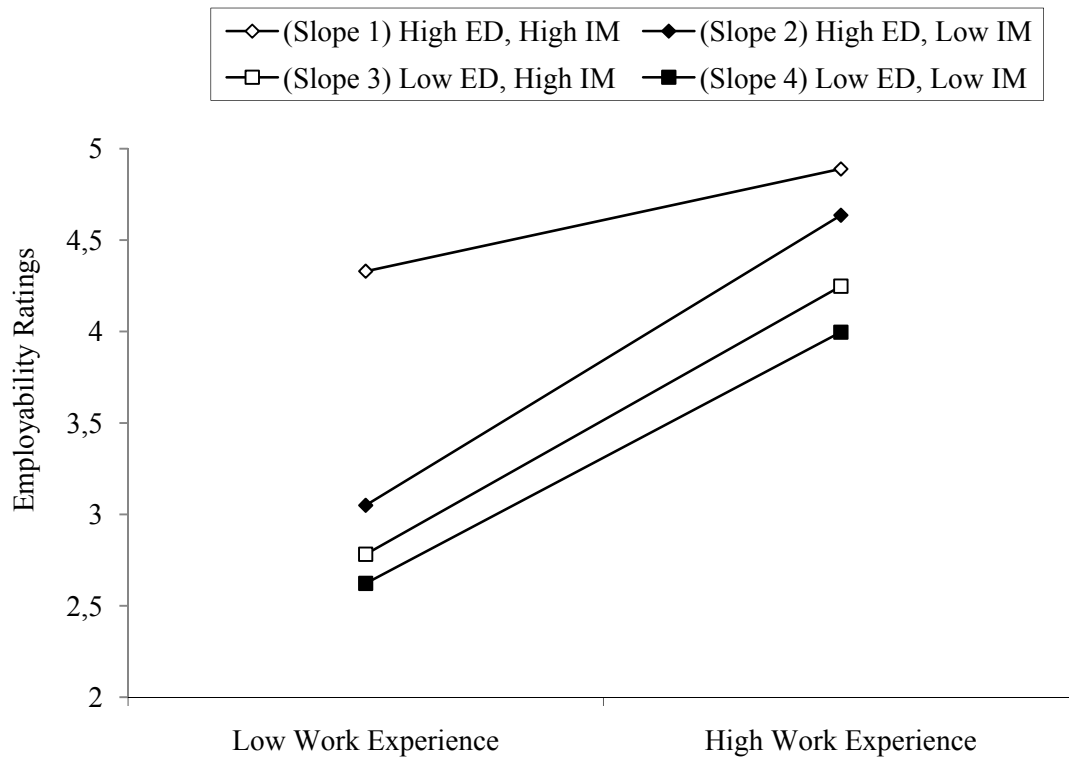
Figure 2. Interaction of Work Experience * Education (ED) * Impression Management (IM) on Employability Ratings.

slopes 3 and 4 was found, Hypothesis 7a was only partially supported.

Hypothesis 7b predicted that impression management statements would interact with work experience and interests and activities. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 8), a significant three-way interaction term between work experience, interests and activities, and impression management explained incremental variance in recruiters' employability ratings ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .05$, $\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$) beyond that accounted for by the control variables and the four main effects. Figure 3 shows the graphical plot of the interaction.

As in Hypothesis 7a, the slope containing high interests and activities and high impression management (see Figure 3: Slope 1) should be greater than the slope of high interests and activities and low impression management (Slope 2). In addition, the slope of low interests and activities and high impression management (Slope 3) should be greater than the slope containing low interests and activities and low impression management (Slope 4). As was the case in the former hypothesis, Figure 3 appears to support these predictions.

However, slope difference tests revealed only a significant difference between slopes 1 and 2 ($t(113) = -2.38$, $p < .05$). In other words, impression management significantly moderated the relationship between work experience, education, and employability ratings, but only in cases where interests and activities were perceived to be highly relevant.
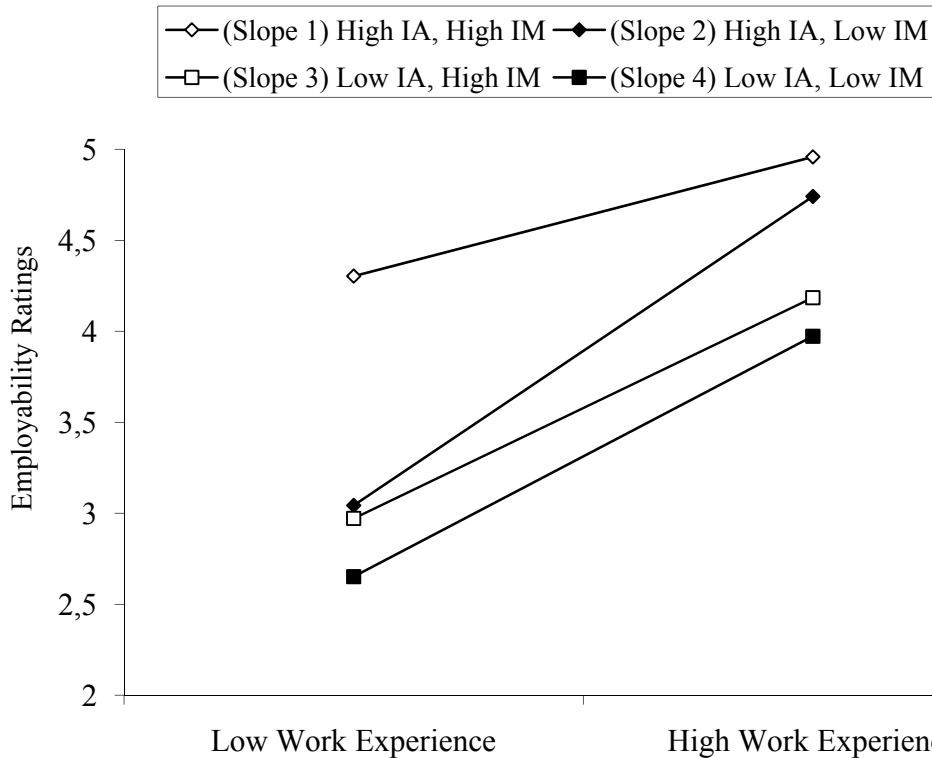
Figure 3. Work Experience * Interests and Activities (IA) * Impression Management (IM) on Employability Ratings

Hypothesis 7b was therefore only partially supported.

Interestingly, when examining the difference between the two significant slopes, Figures 2 and 3 show that when two of the three content categories were perceived as relevant (regardless of which), applicants were given high ratings. Conversely, when only one category was relevant, the applicants were rated substantially lower.

Finally, Hypothesis 7c predicted that impression management statements would interact with education and interests and activities. As shown in Table 4 (see Step 9), no significant interaction term was found. Thus, Hypothesis 7c was not supported.

As a final note, there is a distinct lack of increase in the explained variance after Step 3 (see Table 4). The incremental variance explained by the interactions in the analyses was relatively small (0-2 %). According to Zimmerman and colleagues (1999) and Landsheer and van den Wittenboer (2004), the explained variance by the inclusion of an interaction term is typically small, due to the large amount of variance explained by the main effects. It is also worth noting that the manipulation controls for work experience and education and impression management are no longer significant after the main effects are introduced (see Table 4, Steps 3-9). This indicates that the main effects contain some of the variance in the

manipulation variables. Further support for this was found upon investigation of the correlation table (Table 2), which showed that the main predictors are highly correlated with their respective manipulation control variables.

Discussion

Human resource practitioners have begun to use SNWs in employee selection over the last few years. However, little research has investigated how SNW profiles are perceived by recruiters. This study investigated the perceptions formed by professional recruiters when viewing profiles from the professional SNW LinkedIn. Some authors have discouraged the use of SNWs in selection, both for legal reasons (Byrnside, 2008) and by suggesting that SNW profiles do not reflect the profile owners (Manago et al., 2008). However, most research on the topic has found that SNW profiles are more accurate than other selection devices, such as resumes (Back et al., 2009).

The present study investigated the impact of work experience, education, and interests and activities because these three categories have been considered to have a positive influence on recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability (Brown & Campion, 1994; Cole et al., 2007; Hakel et al., 1970). The results indicate that work experience, education, and interests and activities which are perceived as relevant for a specific job, increases the chances of being invited to interview for that job.

The present study suggested that the inclusion of impression management statements on an applicant's LinkedIn profile would increase the perceived employability of that applicant. While previous studies have found somewhat conflicting results (Knouse, 1994; Knouse et al., 1988), the results supported this hypothesis, indicating that the inclusion of such statements benefit job seekers. In the present study, impression management statements were short and did not include exaggerated adjectives. Consequently, the positive effect of impression management statements contribute to Knouse's (1994) proposition that the inclusion of impression management statements increases ratings of applicants if the statements are short and do not include adjectives such as "excellent" and "energetic". Such adjectives may, as previously argued by Knouse (1994), be perceived by recruiters as exaggeration or even as attempts to manipulate the recruiter.

This study also suggested that education would moderate the relationship between perceived relevance of work experience and employability ratings. The lack of support for this hypothesis may be explained by the differences in dependent variables used in the present study compared to those of previous studies. While Knouse's (1994) study found support for a

moderation effect on self-confidence and hiring certainty, the present study investigated the effects on applicant employability judgments. In addition, the present study used LinkedIn profiles which are, although similar, not identical to the resumes used in previous research.

In contrast to previous findings (e.g., Cole et al., 2007), the present study did not find a significant interaction effect between the perceived relevance of work experience and interests and activities. However, a significant interaction was found between the perceived relevance of education and interests and activities, thereby supporting the findings of Cole and colleagues (2007). In other words, while the relevance of interests and activities does not compensate for the lack of relevant work experience, it does compensate, to some degree, for irrelevant education.

These results may be explained by the way in which the LinkedIn profiles were manipulated. While the hypothetical applicants in the present study had finished their education five years ago, their work experience was more recent, leading from the end of their studies to the present. Consequently, recruiters may have been able to overlook a lack of relevant education, but not a lack of work experience. The applicants with irrelevant interests and activities and relevant work experience may have been perceived as less interested in their field of work, and were therefore perceived as less employable. Conversely, if the applicant had not been employed in a relevant position during the last five years, relevant interests and activities may not have been a sufficient indication of the applicant's interest in the field of work. In contrast, for applicants listing irrelevant education, relevant interests and activities may have been perceived by recruiters as a reasonably newfound interest in marketing.

Because interests and activities mainly were conceptualized as the membership of LinkedIn groups in the present study, the significant interaction may be explained by the way in which recruiters interpret relevant group memberships. As stated by Cable and Gilovich (1998), it is generally accepted that recruiters use applicant information as signs of other skills and attributes than those specifically mentioned by applicants. Consequently, LinkedIn users who are members of groups that are relevant to the job may be viewed by recruiters as being passionate about the job. In addition, Cole and colleagues (2003) found that recruiters rated applicants indicating social activities as more extraverted than other applicants. Because extraversion is a valid predictor of performance for managers (Barrick & Mount, 1991), recruiters may view the membership in groups as a sign of the applicant's qualifications for the job. Although recruiters in this study were not able to see the extent of the hypothetical applicants' involvement in the groups, the membership of relevant groups may have been

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interpreted as active involvement in these groups. In the real world, however, this illusion may be quickly dismissed or confirmed upon further exploration by recruiters. In other words, being an inactive member of a relevant LinkedIn group may not be positively related to recruiters' perceptions of applicant employability.

The present study also investigated the moderating effect of impression management on other contents of LinkedIn profiles. It was hypothesized that impression management perceived as high would compensate for low relevance in other areas. However, the results only partially supported these hypotheses. While two of the 3 three-way interactions involving impression management were significant, only some of the relationships survived the scrutiny of Dawson and Richter's (2006) slope difference tests. The results indicate that the inclusion of impression management statements may increase recruiters' perceptions when (a) education is highly relevant or (b) interests and activities are highly relevant. In other words, the results suggest that the inclusion of impression management statements does not influence perceptions of applicant employability if most information on the LinkedIn profile is perceived as irrelevant to the job. Conversely, if one or more content categories are relevant to the job in question, impression management statements may enhance recruiters' perceptions of the applicant.

The graphical plots of the two significant three-way interactions (Figures 2 and 3) showed that recruiters gave high employability ratings to applicants with two relevant content categories regardless of which two categories were relevant. This interesting finding suggests that the type of experience or interest does not matter as much to recruiters when deciding whom to interview. What matters is whether more than one element of the LinkedIn profile suggests an interest or experience related to the job in question. Consider, for example, an applicant with relevant work experience, irrelevant education and interests and activities, and no impression management statements (see Appendix A2 for an example). While the relevant work experience may make this applicant seem interesting for a recruiter at first glance, closer examination of irrelevant qualifications in other areas may be viewed as indicators of a lacking interest in the profession. This further supports Cole and colleagues' (2007) findings that recruiters' perceptions depend on the joint influence of information reported in multiple categories. In accordance with Cole and colleagues' findings, relevant information in some categories compensated for irrelevant content in other categories. These results suggest that job seekers attempting to achieve a specific job objective should emphasize job duties, coursework, and accomplishments relevant to the job in question. However, these tactics only seem to have an effect when the applicant has mostly relevant experience.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

Despite the systematic process used to ensure that the LinkedIn profiles were as similar as possible, there is always a possibility of bias because the profiles were designed to be realistic and could therefore not be identical. For example, one LinkedIn group in the interests and activities manipulation may have been perceived as more attractive than another. It is also possible that some participants had prior knowledge of one or more of the companies or educational institutions listed on the profiles, which may have led to preferential treatment of those applicants. Future studies could benefit from running pilot studies with recruiters in order to uncover whether there are any differences in the reputation of different companies or educational institutions. Another option could be to use hypothetical companies in similar studies in the future.

The way in which the data were collected may also be considered as a limitation. Because both relevance and employability were rated by the same participants, the present study is vulnerable to common method variance. Although some authors (e.g., Conway & Lance, 2010) recently suggested that the impact of common method variance is overstated, the present study incorporated many of Podsakoff and colleagues' (2003) recommendations such as intermixing items from different constructs and ensuring the anonymity of participants. However, common method variance may still be present in the study. According to Siemsen and colleagues (2010), common method variance can deflate regression estimates when investigating interactions, thereby making it more difficult to detect an effect if it exists (Type II error). As a result, Siemsen and colleagues argue that the finding of significant interaction effects in studies vulnerable to common method variance should be taken as strong evidence that the interaction effect exists. This further supports the significant interaction effects found in the present study. However, future studies should attempt to reduce common method variance by using multiple sources to gather data. For example, studies could benefit from asking supervisors to rate the employability of already hired employees, and then asking recruiters to rate these employees' LinkedIn profiles. Another option to reduce common method variance would be to use one sample of recruiters to rate the relevance of the different content categories and another sample to rate applicant employability.

Another limitation concerns the manipulation of the four categories of LinkedIn profile content used to test Hypotheses 1 to 4. Although the four content categories were all manipulated in the LinkedIn profile variations, education and impression management were manipulated identically over all variations. Because of this, it was not possible to test the manipulations of education and impression management separately, as was originally

intended.

The present study investigated the professional SNW LinkedIn. However, other professional SNWs exist, and the prevalence of these websites in other countries may make these sites interesting research topics in the future. Consequently, similar studies should be conducted with SNWs such as XING and Ryze.

In the present study, the manipulation of the four content categories was dichotomous, leading to sixteen possible LinkedIn profile variations. An issue concerns that fact that only five of the sixteen possible profile variations were used in this study. The limited size of the sample did not allow for a full factorial design. However, the five LinkedIn profiles were created based on their average relevance and thus encompassed a wide range of the possible profile variations. Regardless, future studies should attempt to use a full factorial design in order to examine every possible combination. In addition, future research should investigate other aspects of LinkedIn profiles, such as number of connections, the use of different impression management tactics, and the distinction between active and inactive participation of LinkedIn groups. Finally, future researchers should investigate the relationship between recruiters' perceptions of applicants through social networking profiles and job-related outcome variables such as job performance.

Theoretical Implications

The main contribution of the present study is the context in which the study took place. Because practitioners increasingly are using social networking websites as selection tools, investigation of how the information contained on these websites influences decisions is needed. Consequently, the present study used the theoretical rationale from studies on traditional selection methods on a more modern selection method, social networking websites. Thus, this study contributes to selection research by investigating the impact of different LinkedIn profile content categories on recruiters' perceptions.

In addition, because of the theoretical basis for this study, findings may also have implications for studies investigating the influences of resume information on recruiters' perceptions. For example, the finding that the relevance of different content categories jointly influenced employability ratings supports Cole and colleagues' (2007) previous findings.

The present study also contributes to the substantial research on impression management in the context of selection. Specifically, the results support previous findings that tactics such as self-description, enhancement, and acclaiming positively influences impressions of applicants. Contrary to previous research, this study also investigated the

impact of impression management on the joint influence of several content categories. The finding that impression management only compensates for lack of relevant experience or interests when either education or interests and activities is highly relevant adds to a topic that, while frequently discussed, had not yet been studied.

Because this study investigated social networking profiles, it also contributes to the use of impression management statements on such websites. By finding that impression management statements were positively related to perceptions of applicant employability, the present study also contributes to the arguments that social networking websites are suitable settings for impression management.

Implications for Constructing LinkedIn Profiles

According to Higgins and Judge (2004), recommendations by recruiters are among the most important factors considered by hiring managers in their decision of who to hire. As the present study investigated the impact that different types of information have on recruiters' perceptions, the results may have practical implications for LinkedIn users attempting to achieve a specific job objective.

When a job seeker is attempting to reach a particular job objective, he or she should look closely at whether the work experience, education, and group memberships listed on his or her LinkedIn profile can be perceived as relevant or irrelevant to the prospective job. The findings suggest that job seekers should emphasize experiences or interests that may be perceived as relevant to the job desired. While job seekers are not able to quickly change their work experience and education, gaining membership in relevant LinkedIn groups may be a quick way to increase their chances when applying for a job, especially in the case of lacking academic qualifications. However, it is likely that active participation in these groups is required in order to increase recruiters' perceptions. Consequently, job seekers attempting to increase their employability through the use of LinkedIn profiles should become actively involved in LinkedIn groups relevant to their preferred job objective.

Concerning impression management, the use of tactics such as self-description, acclaiming, and enhancement in various sections of the LinkedIn profile seems to be beneficial to job seekers. It is therefore recommended that job seekers include statements describing an interest in the area of work desired. Recommendations from former supervisors describing the profile owner favorably are also beneficial. Lastly, emphasizing awards received during studies seemed to have a positive effect on recruiters' evaluations. However, impression management tactics should be used with caution. When statements can be

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perceived as exaggerated they may have detrimental effects on job chances.

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Appendix A1
(Irrelevant Work Experience, Irrelevant Education, Irrelevant Interests and Activities, No Impression Management)

LinkedIn
Account Type: Basic

Add Connections

| Home | Profile | Contacts | Groups | Jobs | Inbox | Companies | More |

People ▾ [   ] 🔍 Advanced

eLearning from Mosby's - Nurses get the CE opportunities they need with Mosby's eLearning. - From Danielle Hohmeier

People

« Go back to Home Page

Jan Hansen
Oslo Area, Norway | Banking industry

Current	• Benefits consultant at Verdibanken ASA
Past	• Saksbehandler/advisor at NAV Forvaltning Oslo • Butikkmedarbeider at ICA Norge AS
	see all...
Education	• University of Bergen
	see all...
Recommendations	0 people have recommended Jan
Connections	147 connections
Public Profile	http://no.linkedin.com/in/janhansen

➔ Suggest a profile update for Jan.

Education

University of Bergen
Cand. Philol., Engelsk, Nordisk, Litteraturvitenskap
2001 - 2006
Activities and Societies: BSI Basketball
Recommend Jan's work at Universitetet i Bergen

Experience

Benefits consultant
Verdibanken ASA
Banking industry
March 2008 - Present (1 year 10 months)
Recommend Jan's work at Verdibanken ASA

Saksbehandler/advisor
NAV Forvaltning Oslo
Government Agency; Legal Services industry
June 2006 - February 2008 (1 year 8 months)
Recommend Jan's work at NAV Forvaltning Oslo

Butikkmedarbeider
ICA Norge AS
Privately Held; Retail industry
August 2001 - September 2004 (3 years 1 month)
Recommend Jan's work at ICA Norge AS

Additional Information

Groups and Associations:

- Nettverket.org
- Pension and employee benefits specialists
- Norge / Norway
- Bergen University Alumni

Send a message
Recommend this person
Forward this profile to a connection
Search for references
Saved to Profile Organizer

Report profile photo as...

Learn More
Profile Organizer 📇
Add Jan to a folder ▾
Add contact information
Add a note

[   ]

You may add up to **1000** characters.

[Save] or Cancel

Trial: 10 days
Go to **Profile Organizer** »

Jan's Activity

Jan Hansen has an updated profile (Headline)
10 days ago • Unlike Like • Comment

See more **Activity** »

Contact Information

View all contacts
Email & Phone:
Jan.Hansen+linkedin@gmail.com   primary
Tags:
classmates, Edit tags
Notes:
[   ]

View/Edit Contact Info | See all contacts »

Jan's Connections (147)

Shared (0)

Other (147)
Jan Johansen
Prosjektleder at ...

Bjørn Hansen
Associate professor at University of ...

Elisabeth Larsen
Consultant at ...

Personal Information

Phone: (+47) 987 65 432 (mobile)

Contact Settings

Interested In

- career opportunities
- job inquiries
- reference requests
- consulting offers
- expertise requests
- getting back in touch

Contact Jan Hansen
Send a message
Jan.Hansen+linkedin@gmail.com

« Go back to Home Page

Viewers of this profile also viewed...

Jan Johansen
Prosjektleder at ...

Bjørn Hansen
Associate Professor at University of...

Anne Larsen
Associate Professor at University of...

Elisabeth Larsen
Consultant at...

Jørgen Ouren
Executive consultant at...

Hege Pedersen
Konsulent organisasjonsutvikling at...

Kristin Fosser
HR- og HMS-trainee at ...

Svein Andersen
Lektor at ...

Knut Kristiansen
Senior Consultant at ...

Hans Karlsen
IT Consultant

Customer Service | About | Blog | Careers | Advertising | Recruiting Solutions | Tools | Mobile | Developers | Publishers | Language | **Upgrade My Account**

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Appendix A2
(Relevant Work Experience, Irrelevant Education, Irrelevant Interests and Activities, No Impression Management)

eLearning from Mosby's - Nurses get the CE opportunities they need with Mosby's eLearning. - From Danielle Hohmeier

People   « Go back to Home Page

Ole Larsen
Oslo Area, Norway | Environmental Services Industry

Current	• **Marketing consultant** at **Veolia Miljø**
Past	• Marketing assistant at **Centerpoint AS** • Salesperson at **Telebutikken Strandgaten** see all...
Education	• University of Bergen • University of Bergen see all...
Recommendations	**0** people have recommended Ole
Connections	**159** connections
Public Profile	http://no.linkedin.com/in/olelarsen

➤ Suggest a profile update for Ole.

Education

University of Bergen
MA, Philosophy
2004 - 2006
Recommend Ole's work at University of Bergen

University of Bergen
BA, Philosophy
2001 - 2004
Activities and Societies: BSI Fotball
Recommend Ole's work at University of Bergen

Experience

Marketing consultant
Veolia Miljø
Environmental Services Industry
March 2008 - Present (2 years 10 months)
Recommend Ole's work at Veolia Miljø

Marketing assistant
Centerpoint AS
Privately Held; Staffing and Recruiting Industry
May 2006 - February 2008 (1 year 10 months)
Recommend Ole's work at Centerpoint AS

Salesperson
Telebutikken Strandgaten
Telecommunications Industry
June 2001 - July 2004 (3 years 1 month)
Recommend Ole's work at Telebutikken Strandgaten

Additional Information

Groups and
Associations: 🇳🇴 Norge / Norway

                       Bergen University Alumni

Send a message
Recommend this person
Forward this profile to a connection
Search for references
Saved to Profile Organizer

Report profile photo as...

Learn More
Profile Organizer 📒
Add Ole to a folder ▾
Add contact information
Add a note

[   ]

You may add up to **1000** characters.

[Save] or Cancel

Trial: 10 days   Go to **Profile Organizer** »

Ole's Activity
Ole Larsen has an updated profile (Headline)
10 days ago • Unlike Like • Comment

See more **Activity** »

Contact Information
View all contacts
Email & Phone:
Ole.Larsen+linkedin@gmail.com   primary
Tags:
classmates, Edit tags
Notes:
[   ]

View/Edit Contact Info | See all contacts »

Ole's Connections (159)
Shared (0)
Other (159)
Anders Andreasen
Prosjektleder at ...
Kåre Lie
Associate professor at University of ...
Henriette Lien
Consultant at ...

Den Norske Turistforening

Nettverket.org

Personal Information

Phone: (+47) 987 65 432 (mobile)

Contact Settings

Interested In

- career opportunities
- job inquiries
- reference requests
- consulting offers
- expertise requests
- getting back in touch

Contact Ole Larsen
Send a message
Ole.Larsen+linkedin@gmail.com

« Go back to Home Page

Customer Service | About | Blog | Careers | Advertising | Recruiting Solutions | Tools | Mobile | Developers | Publishers | Language | **Upgrade My Account**

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Appendix A3
(Irrelevant Work Experience, Relevant Education, Irrelevant Interests and Activities,
Impression Management)

LinkedIn   Account Type: Basic   Add Connections

Home   Profile   Contacts   Groups   Jobs   Inbox   Companies   More   People ▾ [   ] 🔍 Advanced

eLearning from Mosby's - Nurses get the CE opportunities they need with Mosby's eLearning. - From Danielle Hohmeier

People   « Go back to Home Page

Per Johansen
Oslo Area, Norway | Banking Industry

Current	• **Benefits consultant** at **Bien Sparebank AS**
Past	• Saksbehandler/advisor at **NAV**
	• Butikkmedarbeider at **7 Eleven**
	see all...
Education	• Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administation (NHH)
	see all...
Recommendations	**1** people have recommended Per
Connections	**158** connections
Public Profile	http://no.linkedin.com/in/perjohansen

➜ Suggest a profile update for Per.

Send a message
Recommend this person
Forward this profile to a connection
Search for references
Saved to Profile Organizer

Report profile photo as...

Learn More
Profile Organizer 📇

Add Per to a folder ▾
Add contact information
Add a note

[   ]

You may add up to **1000** characters.

[Save] or Cancel

Trial: 10 days   Go to **Profile Organizer** »

Per's Activity

Per Johansen has an updated profile (Headline)
10 days ago • Unlike Like • Comment

See more **Activity** »

Contact Information

View all contacts
Email & Phone:
Per.Johansen+linkedin@gmail.com   primary

Tags:
classmates, Edit tags

Notes:
[   ]

View/Edit Contact Info | See all contacts »

Per's Connections (158)

Shared (0)

Other (158)

Fredrik Asbjørnsen
Prosjektleder at ...

Arne Hansen
Associate professor at University of ...

Elise Asklund
Consultant at ...

Summary

My primary interest is within brand building, strategy, advertising, and marketing campaigns. I enjoy copywriting and creative processes and would like to get more experience with innovation and product development.

My long term professional goal is to keep learning and developing my talent alongside others on a day to day basis while aspiring towards a better understanding of the factors that influences the brand, communication and consumer behavior

Education

Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administation (NHH)
MA, Marketing and Brand Management
2001-2006
Activities and Societies: Assisted in a research project my professor conducted during my last year of studies, BSI Fotball
Recommend Per's work at Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NHH)

Experience

Benefits consultant
Bien Sparebank AS
Banking Industry
January 2008 - Present (2 years 1 month)
Recommend Per's work at Bien Sparebank AS

Saksbehandler/advisor
NAV
Government Agency; Government administration industry
May 2006 - December 2007 (1 year 7 months)
Per has 1 recommendation including:
  [3rd] Berit Nordgård, *Manager, NAV*
Recommend Per's work at NAV

Butikkmedarbeider
7 Eleven
Retail Industry
September 2001 - June 2004 (2 years 10 months)
Recommend Per's work at 7 Eleven

Recommendations For Per

Saksbehandler/advisor
NAV

"Per is a perfectionist and strives for quality results. His outstanding work ethics push him to do his best and look for innovative solutions. He is highly motivated and has great customer service/people skills." *November 19, 2008*

(3⁺⁰) Berit Nordgård, *Manager at NAV*
managed Per at NAV

Additional Information

Groups and Associations:

Linked:HR - Compensation & Benefits

Sosiale Medier

Norge / Norway

Nettverket.org

Honors and Awards: Best Master thesis 2006

Personal Information

Phone: (+47) 987 65 432 (mobile)

Contact Settings

Interested In
- career opportunities
- job inquiries
- reference requests
- consulting offers
- expertise requests
- getting back in touch

Contact Per Johansen
Send a message
Per.Johansen+linkedin@gmail.com

« Go back to Home Page

Viewers of this profile also viewed...

Fredrik Asbjørnsen
Prosjektleder at ...

Arne Hansen
Associate Professor at University of...

Trude Torgersen
Associate Professor at University of...

Elise Asklund
Consultant at...

Jørgen Ouren
Executive consultant at...

Kari Pettersen
Konsulent organisasjonsutvikling at...

Vilde Olsen
HR- og HMS-trainee at ...

Sverre Anker
Lektor at ...

Torgeir Kristensen
Senior Consultant at ...

Frode Karlsrud
IT Consultant

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Appendix A4
(Irrelevant Work Experience, Relevant Education, Relevant Interests and Activities,
Impression Management)

Home   Profile   Contacts   Groups   Jobs   Inbox   Companies   More   People ▾   [_____]   🔍Advanced

eLearning from Mosby's - Nurses get the CE opportunities they need with Mosby's eLearning. - From Danielle Hohmeier

People   « Go back to Home Page

Bjørn Olsen
Oslo Area, Norway | Banking Industry

Current	• **Benefits consultant** at **Bank2 ASA**
Past	• Saksbehandler/advisor at **NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten** • Butikkmedarbeider at **Meny AS** see all...
Education	• NHH • NHH see all...
Recommendations	**1** people have recommended Bjørn
Connections	**149** connections
Public Profile	http://no.linkedin.com/in/bjørnolsen

➔ Suggest a profile update for Bjørn.

Summary
I`m interested in marketing, advertising and brand building. I especially enjoy working creatively and would like to get more experience with product development.

Education

NHH
Masters degree in Marketing and Brand Management
2004 - 2006
Activities and Societies: Research assistant, Profileringsutvalget
Recommend Bjørn's work at NHH

NHH
Bachelor in Marketing and Brand Management
2001 - 2004

Recommend Bjørn's work at NHH

Experience

Benefits consultant
Bank2 ASA
Banking Industry
March 2008 - Present (2 years 10 months)
Recommend Bjørn's work at Bank2 ASA

Saksbehandler/advisor
NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten
Government Agency; Government administration industry
June 2006 - February 2008 (1 year 9 months)
Per has 1 recommendation including:
  [3rd] Anne Thoresen, *Manager, NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten*
Recommend Bjørn's work at NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten

Butikkmedarbeider
Meny AS
Retail Industry
October 2001 - July 2004 (2 years 10 months)

Send a message
Recommend this person
Forward this profile to a connection
Search for references
Saved to Profile Organizer

Report profile photo as...

Learn More
Profile Organizer 📁
Add Bjørn to a folder ▾
Add contact information
Add a note

[_____]

You may add up to **1000** characters.

[Save] or Cancel

Trial: 10 days   Go to **Profile Organizer** »

Bjørn's Activity

Bjørn Olsen has an updated profile (Headline)
10 days ago • Unlike Like • Comment

See more **Activity** »

Contact Information

View all contacts
Email & Phone:
Bjørn.Olsen+linkedin@gmail.com   primary
Tags:
classmates, Edit tags
Notes:
[_____]

View/Edit Contact Info | See all contacts »

Bjørn's Connections (149)

Shared (0)

Other (149)
Asbjørn Andersen
Prosjektleder at ...

Harry Hansen
Associate professor at University of ...

Anniken Kristiansen
Consultant at ...

Recommendations For Bjørn

Saksbehandler/advisor

NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten

> "Bjørn has a unique combination of skills. He is customer focused, innovative, and well respected by his peers." *December 6, 2008*
>
> (3/4) Anne Thoresen, *Manager at NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten* managed Bjørn at NAV Arbeids og Velferdsetaten

Additional Information

Groups and Associations:

eMarketing Association — eMarketing Association Network

Social Media Marketing

Marketing & PR Innovators — Innovative Marketing, PR, Sales, Word-of-Mouth & Buzz Innovators

Marketing group Uken (student festival)

Honors and Awards: My master thesis was published in the local newspaper

Personal Information

Phone: (+47) 987 65 432 (mobile)

Contact Settings

Interested In

- career opportunities
- job inquiries
- reference requests
- consulting offers
- expertise requests
- getting back in touch

Contact Bjørn Olsen

Send a message

Bjørn.Olsen+linkedin@gmail.com

« Go back to Home Page

See all **Connections** »

Viewers of this profile also viewed...

Asbjørn Andersen
Prosjektleder at ...

Harry Hansen
Associate Professor at University of...

Torunn Lie
Associate Professor at University of...

Anniken Kristiansen
Consultant at...

Jørgen Ouren
Executive consultant at...

Knut Torgersen
Konsulent organisasjonsutvikling at...

Mari Olsen
HR- og HMS-trainee at ...

Sara Juul
Lektor at ...

Gunnar Pettersen
Senior Consultant at ...

Magnus Torgersen
IT Consultant

Appendix A5
(Relevant Work Experience, Relevant Education, Relevant Interests and Activities,
Impression Management)

| Home | Profile | Contacts | Groups | Jobs | Inbox | Companies | More | | People ▾ | | 🔍 Advanced |

eLearning from Mosby's - Nurses get the CE opportunities they need with Mosby's eLearning. - From Danielle Hohmeier

People

« Go back to Home Page

Lars Nilsen
Oslo Area, Norway | Environmental Services Industry

Current	• Marketing Consultant at Wilhelmsen & Sønner AS
Past	• Marketing Assistant at Kompetanse Utleie AS
	• Salesperson at Telekiosken Sletten
	see all...
Education	• Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration
	see all...
Recommendations	1 people have recommended Lars
Connections	168 connections
Public Profile	http://no.linkedin.com/in/larsnilsen

➜ Suggest a profile update for Lars.

Send a message
Recommend this person
Forward this profile to a connection
Search for references
Saved to Profile Organizer

Report profile photo as...

Learn More
Profile Organizer 🗄

Add Lars to a folder ▾
Add contact information
Add a note

You may add up to **1000** characters.

[Save] or Cancel

Trial: 10 days   Go to **Profile Organizer »**

Lars's Activity

Lars Nilsen has an updated profile (Headline)
10 days ago • Unlike Like • Comment

See more **Activity »**

Contact Information

View all contacts
Email & Phone:
Lars.Nilsen+linkedin@gmail.com   primary
Tags:
classmates, Edit tags
Notes:

View/Edit Contact Info | See all contacts »

Lars's Connections (168)

Shared (0)

Other (168)
Harald Pedersen
Prosjektleder at ...

Halvdan Fløgstad
Associate professor at University of ...

Tine Andersen
Consultant at ...

Summary

I am an enthusiastic, knowledge-hungry learner, eager to meet challenges and quickly assimilate new concepts. I am especially interested in marketing, effective design, and creative brand management.

Education

Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration
MA, Marketing and Brand Management
2001 - 2006
Activities and Societies: Markedsgruppen, Assisted in a graduate research project
Recommend Lars's work at Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration

Experience

Marketing consultant
Wilhelmsen & Sønner AS
Environmental Services Industry
June 2008 - Present (2 years 6 months)
Recommend Lars's work at Wilhelmsen & Sønner AS

Marketing Assistant
Kompetanse Utleie AS
Staffing and Recruiting Industry
May 2006 - May 2008 (2 years)
Per has 1 recommendation including:
  3rd Thea Andersen, *Manager, Kompetanse Utleie AS*
Recommend Lars's work at Kompetanse Utleie AS

Salesperson
Telekiosken Sletten
Telecommunications Industry
July 2001 - July 2004 (3 years)
Recommend Lars's work at Telekiosken Sletten

Recommendations For Lars

Marketing Assistant

Kompetanse Utleie AS

"Lars is a born salesman and marketer. He also has the correct vision to be innovative and suggest new ideas and concepts. Whether on the job or organizing a social event with partners and customers, Lars will facilitate business and relationships in a pleasant manner.

Once a partnership or customer relationship is formed, Lars will do his best to service the agreements and deliver on the customers` success. " *December 8, 2008*

3rd Thea Andersen, *Manager at Kompetanse Utleie AS*
managed Lars at Kompetanse Utleie AS

Additional Information

Groups and Associations:

INBOUND MARKETERS Inbound Marketers - For Marketing Professionals

DIGITAL MARKETING Digital Marketing

eMarketing Association eMarketing Association Network

Social Media Marketing Social Media Marketing

Honors and Awards: Best bachelor thesis at NHH 2004

Personal Information

Phone: (+47) 987 65 432 (mobile)

Contact Settings

Interested In
- career opportunities
- job inquiries
- reference requests
- consulting offers
- expertise requests
- getting back in touch

Contact Lars Nilsen
Send a message
Lars.Nilsen+linkedin@gmail.com

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Appendix B
Job description

UiO : Universitetet i Oslo

Hensikten med denne undersøkelsen er å undersøke hvordan profesjonelle rekrutterere evaluerer sosiale nettverksprofiler.

Vedlagt i emailen du mottok ligger 5 pdf-filer. Disse representerer fem jobbsøkere til følgende stilling:

Marketing Manager

Internasjonalt ledende leverandør - Fremtidsrettet teknologi

Som Marketing Manager i Tristan Electric AS vil du få det totale ansvaret for å markedsføre selskapet i riktige kanaler mot sluttbruker og det profesjonelle marked. Sentrale arbeidsoppgaver vil være å utarbeide kommunikasjonsmateriell, og å utvikle og bearbeide nye, samt å ivareta eksisterende kanaler for profilering av selskapet. Et viktig fokusområde vil være å sørge for tilstedeværelse og eksponering i sosiale medier. Du har personalansvar for en markedskoordinator, inngår i selskapets ledergruppe og rapporterer til Administrerende direktør.

Vi søker deg som har utdanning fra enten høyskole eller universitet, og gjerne erfaring fra tilsvarende stilling. Det er avgjørende at du interesserer deg for og er oppdatert på sosiale medier. Kjennskap til elektrobransjen er et pluss.

Som person er du selvstendig, kreativ og du trigges av å oppnå gode resultater. Du har gode kommunikasjons- og samarbeidsevner, og du trives i en operativ rolle hvor du får sette ditt preg på vår markedsstrategi og videre utvikling.

Vi tilbyr en selvstendig og sentral stilling i et internasjonalt selskap med spennende karrieremuligheter. Du vil jobbe i et aktivt og dynamisk arbeidsmiljø, hvor produkter og løsninger er innovative, nyskapende og av beste kvalitet.

Se for deg at de fem søkerne er kandidater til den ovennevnte stillingen, og at du skal ta en titt på LinkedIn-profilene deres for å se om de er interessante å ta kontakt med videre.

Det anbefales at du bruker stillingsannonsen (som du også finner i invitasjonsemailen) aktivt mens du fyller ut spørreskjemaet.

Takk for deltakelsen