

Online Safety and Your Job Search

- **Keep your primary email address private.** Use your primary email address ONLY for people you know and trust.
- **Don't put your address on your online resume.** Posting your resume online means that anyone can view it. Your email address should be sufficient in most cases.
- **Safeguard your references.** There is no need to include your references' names and contact information on your resume. Writing the phrase "References available upon request" is sufficient and will keep your references out of harm's way. They'll thank you later.
- **Don't give out information simply because it is requested.** Countless web sites ask you to give them your full name, date of birth, address, phone number, email address, etc. when you might just want to search their catalogs or read messages on a discussion forum. Give as little information as possible, and if they insist on information that doesn't seem justified, leave to go elsewhere. Some people give false information at such sites, especially if they don't plan to return in the future. Be especially cautious of "profiles" and "directory listings" for instant messaging programs or web sites.
- **Know what's in your signature file.** Don't put your company name, title, email address, address, phone/fax number, etc. there unless your employer requires that you do so. If you must provide that information, restrict use of that email account to business interactions with co-workers and customers. Do not ever use it to participate in any public forum (mailing list, newsgroup, web-based discussion board, etc.).
- **Watch what you "say" online.** When you do participate online, be careful--only type what you would say to someone's face. If you wouldn't say it to a stranger standing next to you in an elevator, why in the world would you "say" it online?
- **Never use a business account for personal use.** Simply leaving messages on a discussion board will reveal your IP address to others. That information can easily lead to a stalker knowing where you work and finding you offline. Restrict personal internet use to home and public access computers.
- **Never give your password to anyone.** Your ISP will never, ever ask you for your password while you are online or via email. In fact, they shouldn't ever contact you to ask you for your password, period. They can get it from their own records, if they really need it for any reason. If you call them for support, there are a few rather rare instances in which the support person might ask you for your password - but you called them, right? So you know it's really a support person from your ISP that you're talking to. There's no legitimate reason for anyone to ever contact **you** to ask for your password.
- **Trust your instincts.** If you see a job posting that sounds too good to be true, it might be a scam. Research the company name (if divulged) online. Type the company name into a search engine with the word "scam" after it to see if anybody else has reported them.