

Your Online Resume

ISTE Standards:
1.2.a, 1.6.a

CASEL Competencies:
Responsible Decision-Making
Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions



This learning activity is for students and can be done on your own. In this activity, you'll learn how your online presence is like a resume that can help you – or hurt you – in your future personal and professional life, and then find out how to build your personal brand to send the message you want people to receive.

Building Your Online Brand

Think about...

How might the things you post now affect you in the future?

If you applied for a job and the person hiring you saw your social media posts, what would they think?

Your online resume

Here are some things that have appeared in people's "online resumes" without their knowing:

- Someone found a social network account in his name that he hadn't created.
- Someone got in trouble because he was tagged in a photo his friend took of his first time driving because he wasn't allowed to be a passenger in a car without an adult present.
- Someone lost a job because her employer saw she had posted quotes from a TV show.
- Someone found a photo of her that was being used, without her permission, in an ad.

You probably already use *privacy settings* to control who can see what you post. Can you think of ways that people might see things you posted even if they weren't in the audience you chose?

See if you can come up with at least three different ways:

1.

2.

3.

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Here are some examples you may have thought of:

- Your friends who do have access might share your posts
- Your posts might be copied from one platform to another (a TikTok video could be posted to YouTube, for example)
- Things you posted when you were younger (before you were “savvy”) might come back to haunt you
- Anonymous accounts (with no name) or pseudonymous ones (with a fake name) could be tracked back to you (“doxxing”).

Did you think of other ways that your content might be seen by unexpected audiences?

Now let's see what your online resume looks like:

Do a search engine search for your name. (Put your first name and last in quotation marks so they get searched together. You may also need to add your city, your school or one of your hobbies to narrow down the search results.) What did you find? Is it what you wanted to find? Why or why not?

Do an image search on your name. (If you don't know how to do that, go to Google.com, search your name and then click or tap the “Images” tab.) What did you find? Is it what you wanted to find? Why or why not?

Do a search for yourself on any social networks that you or your friends use (even if you don't have an account there.)

Find the most embarrassing photo that you've ever posted and upload it to [Tineye.com](https://tineye.com). (Don't worry, they don't keep copies of your photos.) This is a reverse image search that will show you where on the web any image has appeared. Has your photo appeared anywhere you didn't know about?

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Your online brand

What did you find? Does your online resume tell the story about yourself that you want it to?

If you're not happy with what you found, here are some ways of cleaning up your online brand:

- If you're tagged in a photo you don't like, most social networks will let you remove the tag. If you don't want the photo to be up at all, ask the person who posted it to take it down – this usually works!
- If that doesn't work, you can find out which ISP hosts the site and ask them to take it down. ISPs will usually only do this if the material is defamatory (it is untrue and hurts your reputation), if it's hate material or if what the site is doing could reasonably be called cyberbullying.
- Don't forget to think about the effect you have on other people's resumes, too. Always ask before sharing or tagging anyone in a photo – even if it's a good one – because you never know how they're going to feel about it.

You may not have found *anything* about you online at all. That's better than having a *bad* brand, but you'll still want to make sure that if people look you up online, they'll see something positive. After all, when we create a resume to apply for a job, we don't just avoid writing reasons why we'd be bad at the job – we write why we'd be good at it.

Here are some examples of things that employers look for in social media profiles:

- community participation, charitable service
- athletic accomplishments – lending credit to traits like perseverance and commitment
- giving back to their community
- articulate, professional and tastefully creative content
- thoughtful posting of articles
- kindness, compassion towards humanity issues

(Source: Bromstein, Elizabeth. "The Social Media Posts Canadian Employers Say Swayed Them For or Against Hiring a Candidate," Workopolis. <<http://www.workopolis.com/content/advice/article/the-social-media-posts-canadian-employers-say-swayed-them-for-or-against-hiring-a-candidate/>>)

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Role models

To start building your online brand, make a list of four people that you admire. They can be real people, fictional characters, people you know, people from history, celebrities – anybody that you look up to.

My role models:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Next, come up with *one word* to describe each of them. What do you *most* admire about them? Try to use specific words like “brave” or “smart” instead of vague ones like “cool.”

What I admire in my role models.

Role model 1:

Role model 2:

Role model 3:

Role model 4:

Building your brand

Now you're going to turn that question around. If you could pick *three words* that people would use to describe *you*, what would they be? They can be the words you used to describe your role models, but they don't have to be. They should be words that describe who you are as a *person*, not what you look like.

First word:

Second word:

Third word:

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Now you'll create a communications plan to take control of your online resume and make sure it communicates those three words.

To do this you will identify three different audiences who might see you online, think about how you want each one to see you, and make a plan for communicating that image. (You may want to review the video before you start.)

Identify three audiences who might see your content online.

a)

b)

c)

For each of these audiences, answer the following questions:

a) Platform. How do you reach this audience online?

b) Message. How do you want this audience to see you? Which aspect(s) of your brand are most important to communicate to this audience?

c) Tools. What tools can you use to communicate this? (Identify at least three. Draw on the list of tools for different social media developed in class.)

d) Crisis management. What do you need to avoid doing to protect this? What can I do if I make a bad impression on this audience?

e) Metrics. How will you know if you've been successful?

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Here's an example of what part of your plan might look like:

Audience: Readers of my fan fiction

Platform: Archive of Our Own, Wattpad, TikTok

Message: Creative, friendly, entertaining

Tools: Publish my stories on fan fic sites and on my blog. Comment positively on other people's stories. Use Tiktok to let people know about new stories and to interact positively with other writers in the same field.

Crisis management: Make sure I know the rules of my fan fic community and don't break them. Don't get in public fights with other writers. If I do, I'll let things cool down for a few days before apologizing.

Metrics: I'll know by how many people read, comment on and share my stories.

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Reflection

Talk to a parent or another family member about building an online resume that reflects who you are and who you want to be. Tell them the steps you have planned and ask if they can think of anything else you might do.

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