



Online reputation in the workplace

Age range: 16-19

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



Session overview

Time	Key learning outcomes	Resources
20-35 mins	<p>By the end of the activity students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what is meant by personal brand and online reputation • Recognise the characteristics of different personal brands and reflect on their own • Identify how different personal brands can impact job prospects • Identify ways of using online platforms including social media in a job search • Describe ways they may be expected to use online platforms at work • Recognise how an employer's reputation can be affected by social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online reputation in the workplace student worksheet • Online reputation in the workplace presentation slides

Remember that you can refer to the guiding principles for establishing a safe learning environment in the Appendix section of the LifeSkills content guide. This includes suggestions for signposting students to further support. The content guide can be downloaded [here](#).

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Introduction

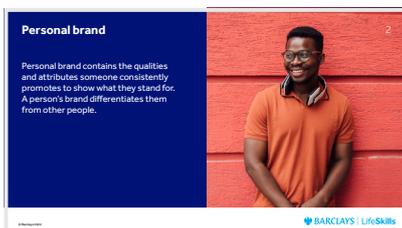
The use of technology is becoming more significant as economic, societal and technological forces are changing the world of work, with many jobs which are currently not digitally reliant expecting to grow and demand these skills. Running alongside this are a set of core transferable skills which are becoming increasingly important to employers such as problem solving, communication and creativity – jobs which require these types of skills will also need a workforce who can apply them in a digital way. Therefore, there is an increasing importance for young people, as they learn skills, to explore how they can apply them digitally.

Digital platforms have grown in significance in both everyday life and the working world. It is essential that young people understand how their digital footprint could be compared to an electronic tattoo which is always there, and how having a positive reputation is crucial to aiming high in and out of work, and for their mental wellbeing.

Activity one

Introducing brand and online reputation at work

1. Brand identity



- Working in pairs, ask students to think of two well-known brands of the same product (for example clothing, mobile phones, cars). Show **slide 2** and explain the concept of a personal brand

What qualities or features do they identify with each brand? How does each brand differ?

- Ask the students to talk in pairs about anyone they know who has a personal brand, such as a famous influencer
- After a brief discussion, ask two or three students to share their ideas about different products and brands with the rest of the class

How would they describe that person's brand?

How does it distinguish them from other people?

Do they publish anything online which has helped shape your view of them? What platforms do they use to do this?

Have they published anything online which has damaged what people think of them?

Activity one

Introducing brand and online reputation at work (cont'd)

2. Personal brand and online reputation

- Show **slide 3**. Explain that a personal brand can be built or extended online. It forms part of our online reputation. Check that the students understand some of the ways we can publish information about ourselves online and who can see the content.
- Working in their pairs, ask them which audience they think is the most important for any of the famous influencers raised in the previous discussion.
- Using tablets in pairs, can the students creatively make an infographic within five minutes to visualise the different audiences and which are most important? Ask one or two of the teams to display their infographic to the class on the big screen and present their idea and reasoning. The infographics could be designed and displayed on paper if tablets are not available
- Finally, choose from one of the two examples below to share the risks of posting something online which might cause offence to certain audiences that could result in a damaged reputation for the individual:
 - Nadia is studying towards a sports qualification and has ambitions to be a famous sports ambassador working with young people. But recently she has posted online regular unhealthy lifestyle tips and demotivating comments. Can students plan a week of posts for Nadia that start supporting a better reputation?
 - Jordan is working on a sustainability project and wants to become an environment ambassador. Recently he has posted a photo online showing him using a single-use plastic bottle. How can Jordan respond to some of the negative comments this photo has received to turn the negative into a positive?

Activity summary

- Summarise the activity by sharing **slide 4** which lists some top tips for brand reputation:
 - 1. Be transparent:** It's imperative to move quickly when it comes to addressing an issue and/or apologising. Individuals who delay acknowledging the problem will only make things worse, especially in today's environment of lightning-fast social media
 - 2. Establish a schedule and post consistently:** It's important to set up a regular schedule of times to post and to stick to it to grow your influencer following. Posting on a consistent basis goes a long way toward building trust with an audience
 - 3. Grow your influencer following honestly and organically:** Don't be tempted to buy followers. Follower fraud is one way to seriously damage your reputation as an influencer and make brands and real followers flee from your platforms
 - 4. Be patient:** It takes time to build an engaging body of valuable content and create a trustworthy image with your followers, so commit to the long haul, and don't give up when you don't see immediate results
- Ask students to summarise what they've learnt in the lesson by writing down three new things they've learnt, two skills they've demonstrated and one thing they'll consider changing about their online behaviour as a result
- Remind the students that the internet is a public place. Something they post online for one audience might be seen by another. Emphasise the importance of building a positive online brand and reputation, and the dangers of posting anything that may be misinterpreted or could offend other people. This is also known as 'netiquette', put simply the use of good manners in online communication such as email, forums, blogs, and social networking sites

Activity two

Personal brands and employment

1. Your personal brand

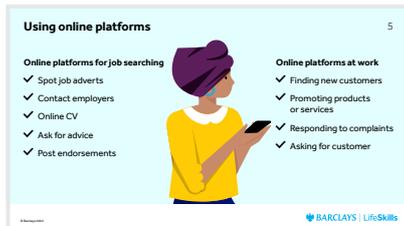
- Students should play the interactive game [Your Digital Footprint](#) in which they must choose which definition best matches how they use the internet. This will help students to think about how their online activity shapes their personal brand. If tablets or computers aren't available, ask students to reflect on their online behaviour in terms of the three profiles: do they use social media mostly for networking, sharing, engaging
- Ask the whole class to choose which of the three that best describes their use of the internet and social media. Then ask them to form teams comprising students who have chosen each of the three brands. If you feel students aren't comfortable identifying which group they belong to and this isn't possible, ask them to form groups randomly
- Using the **Using personal brand and online reputation student worksheet**, ask the groups to write their ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of how different people engage online. Can they provide an advantage when looking for a job and when working? How might they clash with what an employer expects? Remind them that, as employees, running their own business, a general influencer, they will be ambassadors for that company's brand and must help maintain its reputation
- Ask three students from different groups to present their ideas to the rest of the class. Ask the rest of the class to add any ideas that haven't been covered
- Remind the students that the internet is a public place. Anything posted online is likely to exist forever, an electronic tattoo. A positive personal brand and online reputation can be advantageous so they need to think very carefully about what they share, how it will be perceived by other people and if they may regret it later



Activity two

Personal brands and employment (cont'd)

2. Uses for different online platforms



- Show **slide 5**. Use the suggestions it contains to briefly check that the students understand how online platforms can be used to find job opportunities and as part of a job role. Working in pairs, ask them to generate new creative ideas for using online platforms in these two scenarios. Take feedback from the class and write their suggestions on the whiteboard for everyone to see
- Again, working in pairs, give half the class the **Personal brand building action plan: Mel student worksheet**, and the other half the **Personal brand building action plan: Marcus student worksheet**. Ask the students to note down what online platforms they would use and ideas as to what they would post online. After allowing time for the students to complete the task, ask them to choose the three they think will be of most help to Mel or Marcus
- Do a quick straw poll to find out which online platforms the students have put in their top three. Ask students to feedback to the rest of the class, comparing and contrasting how Mel and Marcus might use each one

3. Being aware online

- Advise the students that it's a good idea to have different online accounts for our personal lives and for work, but that in reality it's almost impossible to separate them completely. Anything posted on social media – personal or work-related – could affect an employer's reputation or the individual's own company if they own their own business
- Explain that the internet brings many benefits such as online shopping and banking, and being able to communicate with other people quickly and simply including work colleagues across the world. However, there is always an element of risk. We need to protect our internet security and privacy, at home and at work
- Talk with the students about fraudsters who are always looking for opportunities to steal our information, access our accounts and trick us into giving them money.

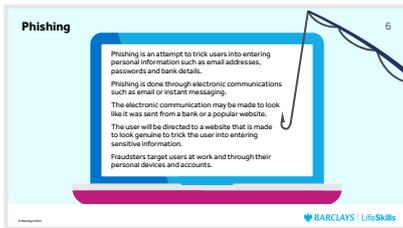
What sort of scams and cybercrimes have they heard of? For example, scam texts, fake websites, malware. Ask them to discuss in pairs and write a list.

Are there some that everyone has heard of? Ask for feedback from the whole class

Activity three

Internet security and privacy

1. Phishing and social engineering scams



- Use **slides 6 and 7** to explain two common scams – phishing and social engineering. Read through each one carefully making sure students understand what can happen including how an employer might lose data or money if a victim is targeted at work
- Explain that as well as presenting risks, technology also provides many solutions to help protect our online security, devices and personal information. Ask the students to talk in pairs about the tools they have used or may know about. Prompt them to think about security measures that:
 - We can apply to our own devices, online accounts and communications
 - Customers may be obliged to use, for example online banking and shopping
 - Employers may require their employees to adhere to
- After allowing time for discussion, ask pairs for their ideas. Write a list on the board. Feedback may include facial recognition, voice recognition, fingerprint recognition, firewalls, internet security software, anti-malware, email filters, password managers, multifactor authentication, encryption

2. Being safe online at work



- Explore Aaron's use of digital technology using **slide 8**. Working in pairs using the **Protecting privacy and security student worksheet**, ask the students to read the prompts and note down the steps Aaron and his employer can take to protect their privacy and security, including technological solutions. After allowing time for discussion, ask for feedback from each pair and write a list of their ideas on the whiteboard
- Use **slide 9** to briefly explain the General Data Protection Regulation which came into force in May 2018
- To illustrate the purpose of the regulations, ask pairs of students to make two lists: the companies or other bodies who young people might give their personal information to, and the information they might be asked to provide. Prompt them to think about signing up for email or text alerts, online subscriptions, social media accounts, online shopping accounts; providing their name, address, email address, social media handles, phone number, date of birth. After time for discussion, ask pairs for feedback. Write two lists on the board, adding new items as they are suggested
- Remind students that as well as protecting them as individuals, the regulations are likely to affect them at work. Employers will expect their employees to comply with the collection and processing systems they have set up for customer personal information

Activity three

Internet security and privacy (cont'd)

Try next

Students can find out more about staying safe online at barclayslifeskills.com/tags/school/digisafe

You can also use the financial fraud, scams and identity theft section of the [Financial survival skills](#) lesson

Summary

- Summarise by reiterating that the use of technology and digital platforms are becoming increasingly prevalent in our personal lives and at work. Employers now expect their workforce to apply their skills digitally and to adopt new technologies quickly
- Restate that we can build and promote our personal brand online, and that our online activity can support our employer's reputation or our own company if we are self-employed
- Recap the risks involved; the internet is a very public place containing content that will exist forever, and we are all vulnerable to scams and fraudsters. However, technology also provides many solutions. Everyone – individuals, employers, employees, businesses and customers – need to take action to protect our privacy and internet security
- Ask students to summarise what they've learnt in the lesson by writing down three new things they've learnt, two skills they've demonstrated and one thing they'll consider changing about their online behaviour as a result

Online reputation in the workplace

Using personal brand and online reputation

Use this sheet to note down your ideas about the advantages and disadvantages of different personal online brands.

	Finding a job		In the workplace	
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages
Networker: Likes putting themselves out there and showing initiative				
Sharer A social butterfly who likes to share and get along with everyone				
Engager Assertive with strong opinions and likes to have their say				

Online reputation in the workplace

Protecting privacy and security

Use this sheet to note down steps Aaron and his employer can take to minimise potential threats to their privacy and security, including any technological solutions they can use:

Sharing information

- What is Aaron likely to be sharing online?
- What aspects of his life might he be happy to share and what might he want to keep private?
- How can he restrict who sees it?
- Why is it important that Aaron does not share personal information like his full name, date of birth, address?
- How could criminals use this to their advantage?
- How can Aaron keep his personal identification numbers (PINs) for online banking and login passwords safe?

What advice would you give to Dom if you were his friend?

- How can Aaron and his employer protect the security of the devices Aaron uses?
 - Why might Aaron want to connect his smartphone to household appliances and services?
 - What are the dangers of connected devices?
 - Why might Aaron want to use public wifi hotspots?
 - What are the dangers of using public wifi?
 - What could he do to minimise the risks?
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