

Social networks portrayed through the power of social media: a comparison between two well-known articles

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ABSTRACT

Over the fluctuation of the world in social, economical and political context, social media has tremendously opened doors for networking opportunities. Targeting individuals who might not recognize how powerful social media is to achieve a good career through social networks. The paper will compare and contrast between two articles "Don't Quit Social Media. Put It to Work for Your Career Instead by Galloly" published on The New York Times in 2016 and "Boost your career with social media: tips for the uninitiated." by Gallo published on The Harvard Business Review in 2011. This paper also gave some solutions for people to enhance their social networks and improve the quality of social media.

1. Introduction

Two articles "Don't Quit Social Media. Put It to Work for Your Career Instead by Galloly" published on The New York Times in 2016 and "Boost your career with social media: tips for the uninitiated." by Gallo published on The Harvard Business Review in 2011. The two articles disclose a complementary relationship guiding individuals to build personal and social networks by means of social media, after all, to re-value social media's influence on their career pathway. This paper aims to not only evaluate the two articles but also to encourage social media users who wish to get one step further in their career to uncover the hidden positive effects of social media.

The "Alternating Structure" is used for this comparative analysis between The structure suits the flow of the articles to synthesize the correlated content and provide coherent explanation for readers. Accordingly, the paper will be divided into three main topics highlighting how social networks connected through social media work on personal, social and political level.

"Social networks" seems not to be the central object under discussion of the two articles but they go uncovered as an interconnected topic. A frame of reference to this term "social network" will be now defined so that further analysis will be based on the context. Social network theory illustrates the linkage between groups of people through nodes and ties. Groups connected within social networks can do things that disconnected groups can not (Christakis and Fowler, 2009). Generally, the articles were produced in the period of time that social networking skills was taken as an important skill to thrive in a competitive job market. For this reason, over a 5 year difference of time, the necessity of building social networks to achieve professional goals remains not much different. Therefore, the very first similarity of the two sources of information is about the relevance of the subject matter and the positivity of authors towards the discourse of social networks.

2. Make personal networks count

This paragraph sheds light on how to set a foundation for your professional network by polishing a personal brand. Social media might be the reflection of part of yourself identity. Thus looking at the image of ones' networks on social media is "a passive way of evaluation" on individual performance at work (Gilloly, 2016). Both authors agree that beyond the normal function of social media, users can advance the knowledge and a particular image of self-identity. It is important to make our personal networks known in a unique way in order to "make our personal brand invisible" in the job market (Gillooly, 2016). With the same concern, Gallo suggests some questions for ones to consider: what topics you want to be associated with. "You need to ask yourself, what you want to be known for? What are you passionate about?. Gradually, you might figure out our own space to shine by generating quality content to the community. It is how our personal branding is built after a series of "topics" you talk about and hopefully you "follow a well-rounded collection of sources" to expose others to a sense of expertise (Gillooly, 2016).

On the other hand, there are contradictory points of view regarding our "presence" in social media. Gallo emphasizes you can "learn from our digital network at hand, then to "demonstrate your proficiency with all things digital". It is to let others know you can manage to gasp essential digital information which reflects what you are up to, how you think. She encourages users to share different aspects of themselves in different social networks channels like LinkedIn, Twitter. Meanwhile, Gilloly praises "inactive" social media users called "lurks" who are actually active to "learning new things, keeping up with the latest trends or preparing for any conversation that might crop up during a job interview." So the physical appearance does not always mean who the users are and what they are good at. Personal networks therefore should be assessed cautiously, especially by the recruiters who might take advantage of AI to evaluate people. This point will be further illuminated in the following themes.

3. Professional network building

Viewing social media as “a standard of hiring process.”, both Gilloly and Gallo support its literal career benefits. Indeed, the history and the activity timeline of individual social networks allow recruiters to see a clearer picture of who you are. It sets expectations for your employers whether you are a match to the company according to your digital interaction within your networks. Gilloly brings in an interesting perspective concerning the consequence of staying detached from social media. The scenario could be “the level of candidacy might decrease for not being exposed to critical diversity.” The recruiters also look forward to seeing how you are able to communicate with people from different backgrounds, handle various issues in the workplace. Therefore, “your social media presence- is no longer just an extension of your resume. It’s as important as your resume” Gilloly says. Its importance is also confirmed by Gallo that how much social media exposes you to the outside world is among the indicators of your profile. She quoted “there is no such thing as private space online” (Gallo, 2011).

Both authors give advice on how to impress recruiters through exploring what is important to them and controlling what people see on your social media. Firstly, by keeping an eye on the policy of the organization you apply for, you demonstrate your care about the notice on your social networks as a hint to your recruiter. Leaving effects on your network deliberately make you remembered by your boss to some extent. Secondly, you have to control what people see in a way your social networks are tailored to attract professional people. “By being more judicious about what you share, you can manage your digital trail to increase the odds that a potential employer will form a positive impression on you.” expresses Gilloly.

Clarifying the idea of how to establish your personal brand and also an organization’s brand, Gallo introduces two case studies. The first case study describes the process of a human capital manager tried out to brand herself as an effective talent acquisition professional. She created entertaining but valuable posts about her working experience in the space of recruitment which catch attention of certain target audience in her social media networks. She herself got recruited because of her boss seeing her thoughtful shares on Facebook. The second case is similarly towards gaining people’s trust through social media strategy. The user turns his social media into a reference check as it updates reasoning content about his business and his comprehension about issues his potential customers care about.

Social media is not only bridging you with the organization, it is the platform for professional jobs to survive and flourish. Clearly said in the New York Times, social media provides means of communication within your professional network in a sense others like internal and external colleagues or peers can understand you better. Using social media is more of a return on investment than a waste of time, extracted from an article “Quit social media. Your career may depend on it” having the opposite opinion to Gilloly. Yet, he rebutted by evidence of Facebook which is doing a great job to provide mundane

career opportunities for particularly people in the creative industries and advertising. Social media obviously fuels engines for social networks to expand and sustain.

4. Social media and political manipulation

Political manipulation is an inference from such factors as purposes, writers’ background, and political ideology. Quintessentially, Gallo’s article collects data from two authors who are writing books published by Havard Business Review. One of the two literature was being published, meaning the article also implied to attract audience for the book. It is understandable that the intention of this article’s publicity is both sharing the knowledge and marketing the books to be published, at the end of the day, branding the organization itself. This network includes important nodes such as the book author, the publisher, the content writer to achieve a bigger purpose. While the New York Time article is rooted from the author’s opinion. He leverages on a contrasting opinion - the other article to make his point across. Yet this article was written in the time of an important public affair - the president election votes in the US in 2016. In fact, social media facilitated public discussion across the world and tremendously affected the result due to the overwhelming fake news. On a positive side, Obama took advantage of online social networks in the 2008 president election campaign. He used technology to invite friends and aligned people, as a result, reached out to massive networks worldwide. Obama’s success story was because working men and women who donated money and voted for him felt connected (Christakis, 2010). It is to prove that social networks can make people politically connected. Although the concept of political manipulation is not deeply investigated in the two articles, there are some signals implying the interrelation of social networks and political ideology. It can be about the individual decision, organization and influential agents.

5. In conclusion

In terms of writing approach, the author is experienced in writing and speaking about workplace dynamics and information synthesized from the 2 other literatures. Distinctively, Gilloly’s arguments appear to be strong through the lens of the article written by Newport posted in the same platform. While Gallo stresses individuals to promote personal branding, Gilloly, despite telling less instruction, gives a more balanced argument on the flexible usage of social media. What is crucial is how much knowledge is well cultivated through social networks besides being “present” with a digital identity.

Overall, the advice to build professional footprint is in fuller details in the Havard Business Review’s article since the purpose of the article is to provide useful information about self-management. Both authors emphasized on the correlation of personal branding and professional building to make use of the social media networks. Readers should explore beneficial features of social media rather than “abandoning” it. The harm of being distracted or jobless can decrease if you understand the purpose and sensible tactics of using social media to cultivate relevant knowledge and build your personal and professional development.

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