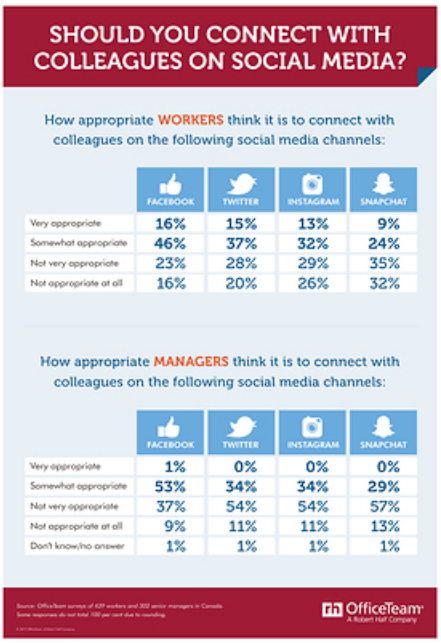
Robert Half Canada

Should You 'Friend' Your Coworkers?



Many Employees Think It's OK to Connect With Colleagues on Social Media, But Not All Managers Agree

TORONTO, Sept.12, 2017 /CNW/ - Do workers "like" the idea of office friendships crossing into social media? Nearly two-thirds of workers (62 per cent) polled by staffing firm OfficeTeam said it's appropriate to connect with colleagues on Facebook. Slightly fewer feel it's OK to follow coworkers on Twitter (52 per cent), Instagram (45 per cent) and Snapchat (33 per cent). In contrast, just over half of senior managers interviewed think it's fine to engage with fellow employees on Facebook (54 per cent), followed by Twitter (34 per cent), Instagram (34 per cent) and Snapchat (29 per cent).

According to the worker survey, those ages 18 to 34 find it more acceptable to connect with coworkers on social media than their counterparts.

Workers were asked, "**How appropriate do you think it is to connect with coworkers on the following social media channels?**" Their responses:

	Facebook	**Twitter**	**Instagram**	**Snapchat**
Very appropriate	**16%**	**15%**	**13%**	**9%**
Somewhat appropriate	**46%**	**37%**	**32%**	**24%**
Not very appropriate	23%	28%	29%	35%
Not appropriate at all	16%	20%	26%	32%
	101%*	100%	100%	100%

Senior managers were asked, "**How appropriate do you think it is to connect with coworkers on the following social media channels?**" Their responses:

	Facebook	**Twitter**	**Instagram**	**Snapchat**
Very appropriate	**1%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**
Somewhat appropriate	**53%**	**34%**	**34%**	**29%**

Not very appropriate	37%	54%	54%	57%
Not appropriate at all	9%	11%	11%	13%
Don't know/no answer	1%	1%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	101%*	100%

**Responses do not total 100 per cent due to rounding.*

"Your social media presence can impact how you're perceived offline – both personally and professionally," said Koula Vasilopoulos, a district president for OfficeTeam. "To establish and maintain a favourable reputation, workers should be selective about what is shared and with whom. Updating privacy settings and creating separate groups for colleagues or business contacts allows better control over what others can see."

Vasilopoulos added, "While engaging with colleagues on social networks can help foster stronger relationships, it's important to respect that not everyone is comfortable interacting online. When in doubt, wait for a coworker to follow first."

OfficeTeam offers the following don'ts when connecting with coworkers on social media, along with advice for what to do instead:

Don't	Do This Instead
Add everyone you work with to your social networks	Be selective. If a colleague's connections are limited to a few office buddies, sending an invite could be overstepping your boundaries.
Reject a coworker's friend request	Explain that you prefer to keep your account limited to personal use and suggest connecting on a professional networking site like LinkedIn. In some cases, it may be best to accept the offer so you don't offend the person. Adjust privacy settings to control what information he or she has access to.
Post updates or photos that reveal too much	Use your best judgment when sharing. Not everyone needs to know what you did last night, and certain topics can come across as unprofessional. Remove questionable images from your profiles.
Interact with people in your network only when you need something	Pay it forward by helping your online contacts and show support for their personal interests. You may discover things in common you can bond over.

About the Research
The surveys of workers and senior managers were developed by OfficeTeam. They were conducted by independent research firms and include responses from more than 400 Canadian workers 18 years of age or older and employed in office environments, and more than 300 senior managers at Canadian companies with 20 or more employees.

About OfficeTeam
OfficeTeam, a Robert Half company, is the nation's leading staffing service specializing in the temporary placement of highly skilled office and administrative support professionals. The company has 300 locations worldwide. For additional information, visit **roberthalf.ca/officeteam**. Follow **@RobertHalf_CAN** on Twitter and the OfficeTeam *Take Note*® blog at **roberthalf.com/officeteam/blog** for career and management advice.

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