SOCIAL MEDIA AND SELECTION: HOW DOES NEW TECHNOLOGY CHANGE AN OLD GAME?

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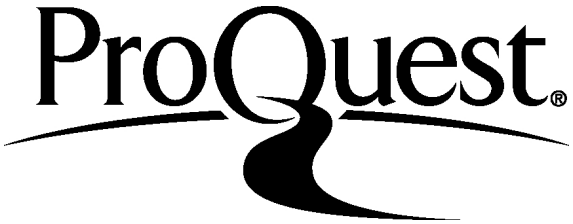

ABSTRACT

Research indicates employers use social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to make decision regarding would-be employees. A scarce amount of academic research specifically examines the decision-making processes employers use when using social media to select the best job applicant for the job. This study focuses on how social media impacts hiring processes, investigating the impact of political attitudes expressed on social media impact managers' evaluations of how "hireable" job candidates are. This study also examines how individuating information, also known as job-related information, presented on social media influences employer decisions to hire job candidates. To test the research model, an experimental design was used. Three separate political conditions were used to test how applicant attitudes about legalizing marijuana, the Affordable Healthcare Act and gun control laws, as well as high and low levels of individuating information, displayed on Facebook and LinkedIn profiles affect hireability evaluations. Whether social media platform influences decision-making was also tested. Structural Equation Modeling, a combination of path analysis and factor analysis, was employed to test the model relationships. Our results indicate a number of significant relationships, including relationships between similarity, liking, and hireability in all three conditions, individuating information and hireability, with moderating effects of social media platform proving significant in some political conditions as well.
Key words: SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM, HIRING DECISIONS

DEDICATION

For Josh –

"Life is lovely,

when you're near me."

- Chicago, *Make Me Smile*

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And to Josh, the love of my life: Thanks for running beside me. This is for you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

List of Tables (continued)

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

"A recent tweet by one would-be employee of Cisco Systems (a computer networking company) may have cost him a job. A man who's known on Twitter as "The Connor" posted this after an interview: 'Cisco just offered me a job! Now I have to weigh the utility of a fatty paycheck against the daily commute to San Jose and hating the work.' Well, it wasn't long before a Cisco affiliate tweeted back in response. He wrote: 'Who is the hiring manager? I'm sure they'd love to know that you'll hate the work. We here at Cisco are versed in the web.'" ("Think Before You Post," 2014).

Today, stories of applicants losing potential jobs over pictures and comments posted over Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms, are becoming more and more common, as are arguments over whether it is legal for firms to check job seekers' Facebook pages. In May, 2012, Maryland was the first U.S. state to sign a law making illegal the practice of employers asking for Facebook passwords (likened, by some recent college students, to "protecting the keys to ones' house") and a number of states have followed suit (currently, legislation has been introduced or is pending in 28 states, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 2014; Ho, 2014). Still, there is no federal legislation in place to completely make this practice illegal (Dame, 2014).

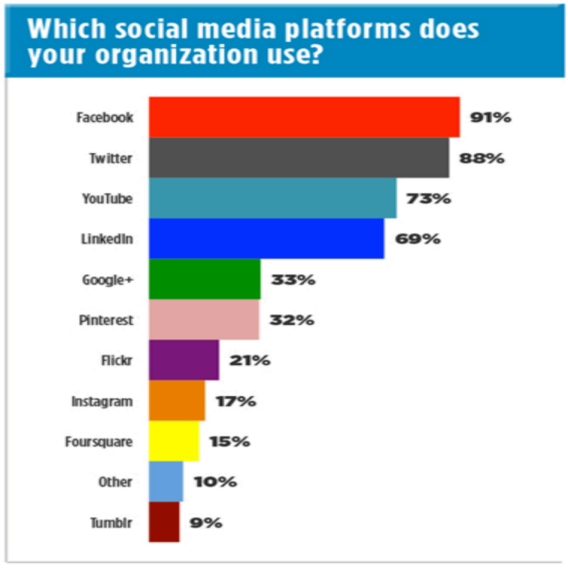
Social media is designed to allow individuals to share opinions and personal information, as well as to allow them to solicit information from others. Social media is an example of Web 2.0 technology. Web 2.0 is a term for collaboration technologies that enable the creation of user content, including social software for social networking (i.e., social media platforms)(Tepper et al, 2003). With the advent of social media, users can

access a number of platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram, to engage with and manage relationships with other individuals, such as relatives and professional contacts. An assortment of platforms with varying degrees of functionality exist (for instance, Facebook allows users to chat with and message each other and enables sharing of multimedia content, while Instagram is primarily a photo-sharing platform with limited video sharing capabilities), but an identifying quality of social media is the ability to create a user profile.

Job seekers create one or more social media users profiles that depict their sense of "self" and may do so on multiple platforms (i.e., these platforms provide personal biographical information about job candidates). On LinkedIn (a professional networking website), for example, users may list their education, professional experience, skills, previous employers, professional certifications, organizational memberships and so on. From there, profiles are available to a network of friends, colleagues, etc. However, a consequence of creating a public profile on a social media site is opening private information up to an unintended audience, including current and future employers, schools, parents, and so on.

Even without job seekers' passwords, employers can gain a wealth of information on public social media profiles, a practice that is especially troubling for individuals who are currently on the market for a job. Some companies request that job applicants "friend" human resource managers or log into a company computer during the interview (McFarland, 2012). Recruiters may also view information about job seekers if they have publically available user profiles (if their privacy settings are on "public").

Recruiters and HR managers use social media to learn more about job applicants. In fact, a number of employers, across multiple questionnaires, (89 percent, according to the American Bar Association and 91 percent, according to the Reppler Effect) claim they use social media sites to learn more about potential job applicants, with over 79 percent of them choosing Facebook as first choice for gathering information about job candidates ("Managing Your Online Image Across Social Networks", 2011). Further, a 2013 study conducted by Ragan and NASDAQ OMX Corporate, polling over 2,700 respondents from government agencies, nonprofits and corporations indicates that the most popular social media platforms used in organizations are Facebook (91 percent of respondents), followed by Twitter (88 percent), Youtube (73 percent) and LinkedIn (69 percent) (note, the survey discusses use of social media in general, including activities such as marketing or recruiting) (see **Figure 1.1 The Most Popular Social Media Platforms used by Organizations).**



Source: Ragan and NASDAQ OMX Corporate, 2013

Figure 1.1 The Most Popular Social Media Platforms used by Organizations

Consequently, it is not surprising that social media influences how firms and individuals interact, particularly when recruiting new employees (Kaplan & Haelein, 2010). Traditionally, employers had to rely on word of mouth, recommendations or reputations when considering job seekers (Simon & Gobbo, 2012). Now, employers can use social media to attract and collect data on larger talent pools across a greater geographical distance. For example, social media also opens a communication channel for organizations to attract and assess particularly desirable potential employees as well as their network contacts, through platforms such as LinkedIn. HCL Technologies, a technology firm, often employs social media to make hiring decisions in "niche" markets (i.e., looking for skillsets that include using PeopleSoft or SAP) (Bhattacharyya, 2013). It also opens the avenue for screening job applicants out of a particular job. **Table 1.1 (Changes in Social Media Hiring Practices)** illustrates changes wrought by the introduction of social media on the hiring practices of recruitment and screening job applicants**.**

	Traditional Way	**New Way**
Nature of Interaction	Two-way communication (applicants send in resume, organizations sends feedback through hiring decision)	One-way communication (applicants send out a variety of signals that "cue" organizations to make decisions)
Talent Pool	Employers use geographically limited talent pool	Social media allows organizations to recruit from a geographically dispersed talent pool
Networking	Employers rely on word-of-mouth, recommendations or reputations to learn "true nature" of job candidates	Employers use social media to gain valuable information about job seekers, including attitudinal and individuating information

Table 1.1 Changes in Social Media Hiring Practices

Research has found that social media assessments can sometimes correlate with more structured assessment techniques. For example, in 2009, Kluemper and Rosen

asked college students to rate personality characteristics of multiple Facebook users simply by examining their Facebook profiles, and found that, in comparing students' scores to the Facebook users' actual personality test scores, the students often made correct assessments.

However, a number of important legal and ethical issues surface when employers use "off-limits" information (such as an applicant's gender age, ethnicity, personal attitudes, and so on) found in social media websites. For example, automotive dealerships have recently come under fire for their use of social media to court salespeople who fit certain demographic characteristics (Radogna, 2013). The American Bar Association advises that there are legal implications to using "off-limits" information in hiring decisions; organizations may face significant financial penalties (Simon & Gobbo, 2012).

In theory, social media introduces ethical and practical problems for job seekers and recruiters. For example, social media may enable an asymmetric exchange of information that departs from conventional recruitment processes. Traditionally, individuals disclose more information when they know the recipient of the information and a "back-and-forth" (or feedback loop) is established; however, research indicates that this pattern does not occur with social media websites like Facebook, where users disclose personal information without direct feedback from the organization. Further, a study of 236 undergraduate students found that, even after reading a vignette about the dangers of disclosing personal information, respondents still disclosed all information they were asked about (Nosko, 2010). That job applicants may disclose too much

personal information on social media may put them at a disadvantage with recruiters (who may search for job applicants online and access this information).

When job seekers reveal too much information, recruiters' ability to evaluate candidates in an ethical and legal manner may be compromised, resulting in all too quick "screen out" decisions. Our earlier example of the would-be Cisco employee demonstrates how an otherwise qualified job seeker's social media activities resulted in the firm rescinding a job offer. In practice, there is a steadily growing literature base detailing this issue, as well as offering up practical solutions users and employers alike may use to try to "alleviate" chances of this occurring, but little to no academic research examines the use of social media sites for HR decisions (Roth et al, forthcoming).

Through social media, job seekers expose their private information, particularly demographic characteristics, such as age, political beliefs and gender (information that they are not legally required to disclose in an interview or application) to managers. For example, employers can read status updates, photo captions, notes, etc., thought to indicate user's attitudes (for instance, an applicant's stance on homosexuality), that have no bearing on how competent an applicant may be at a potential job. Many recent studies indicate employers do not hire job seekers who have "troubling" Facebook profiles that include information such as pornographic pictures or high levels of profanity (Erwin, 2014). Unsurprisingly, studies also indicate employers react unfavorably to profiles that depict a job candidate as an alcoholic or drinking large amounts of alcohol (Bohnert & Ross, 2010; Peluchette & Karl, 2008).

Though it is documented that employers screen out employees with these "red flag" behaviors, much less information is known about, for example, how employers

respond to job seekers who post on issues of faith or political orientation. Because social media encourages discussion and airing of opinions, it is reasonable for job seekers to leverage platforms to express their personal attitudes. For example, one would expect an individual who is a firm supporter of legalizing marijuana to update her status to reflect this, or an individual who strongly supports gun control laws to air his attitudes openly on Facebook.

Hence, in this study, we examine how job seekers' expressions or statements about broad social and political issues affect raters' assessments of their employability. Broadly, we investigate: how do job seekers' statements about personal attitudes influence how employers view these individuals and as a result, choose to hire (or not hire them)? Specifically, the research question for this study is: *do user attitudes expressed by individuals on social media sites impact recruiters' screening decisions, particularly attitudes about gun control laws, legalizing marijuana and the Affordable Healthcare Act (often referred to as "Obamacare")?*

Our investigation of social media and recruitment is informed by Demographic Similarity Theory (including stereotyping and the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm) and individuating information theories. When navigating the social media landscape to make screening decisions, managers use information provided via social media ("cues") to evaluate applicants (Beach & Mitchell,1987; 1988; 1990; 1993). Managers' assessments of job seekers' social media presence may also be influenced by stereotypes, fixed, overgeneralized beliefs about an individual or group of individuals (Hastie & Dawes, 2009).

Demographic Similarity Theory, a theory that examines how closely managers

look at demographic variables when making decisions, is a mechanism for understanding these cognitive processes, including stereotyping and similar psychological mechanisms (McCarthy, 2010). Demographic Similarity Theory draws from the Similarity-Attraction paradigm, maintaining that managers observe key personal attributes and attitudes expressed by applicants and may stereotype job applicants: that is, prescribe positive characteristics to individuals whom they view as similar to themselves and negative characteristics to those who are not (for example, a staunchly Republican manager may positively evaluate an applicant who is very outspoken about his conservative political beliefs on Facebook) (Byrne, 1961; Tsui, Kunda et al, 1993; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Demographic Similarity Theory suggests that managers, when using social media to screen employees, may feel higher levels of "attraction" towards candidates they perceive as similar to themselves, and as a result, may evaluate these "similar" job candidates more favorably than other candidates.

Social media provides a context through in which Demographic Similarity Theory may occur. Some of the surveys we reviewed indicate as many as 91 percent of all employers use social media to learn more about job applicants with intention to screen out inappropriate applicants (The Reppler Effect, 2011) and social media provides a public forum through which job seekers may air their own personal attitudes, especially about political issues, few studies investigate the decision-making processes managers use when evaluating this information. Applicants can post status updates decrying gun control laws, share pictures supporting healthcare reform, join groups in favor of legalizing marijuana, and so on. Since managers can view publically available profiles (or

access protected sites through "friending" job applicants), how applicant attitudes impact hiring decisions needs to be investigated further.

Managers may learn more about job applicants via their social media profiles, with some evidence indicating Facebook and LinkedIn are commonly used (see **Figure 1.1 The Most Popular Social Media Platforms used by Organizations).** Being exposed to information, especially information job applicants may not voluntarily provide, may impact how many managerial judgments, from evaluations of how much they "like" a potential job applicant to how well they perceive the job applicant will do his/her job. Demographic Similarity Theory provides a mechanism for explaining this and this theory is partly based on the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm, pioneered by Byrne (1961). The Similarity-Attraction Paradigm suggests that attitudes, "summary evaluations of psychological objects" (potentially referring to, for example, politics) (Azjen, 2001, p. 28), are one way that individuals perceive they are similar to each other. Byrne maintains that, when individuals perceive an attitudinal similarity (or dissimilarity) with each other, this creates an attraction (or repulsion), and in turn, this attraction can impact job-related outcomes, suggesting there is a need for research in this area. Social media provides a context through which this "attraction" may form and further, little information is known about the influence of different social media platforms (for example, does a more entertaining, hedonic platform like Facebook yield different results than a more professionally-oriented, utilitarian platform like LinkedIn?).

Previously, Demographic Similarity Theory has most commonly been studied using demographic variables, such as ethnicity and gender, in the organizational literature (e.g., McCarthy, 2010). This literature base is largely silent on the issue of how

individual, politically-related attitudes may influence organizational practices, such as hiring. Hoyt conducted a study of how gender, moderated by political ideology (not attitudes necessarily), impacted manager hireability ratings and found that political ideology influenced manager ratings for female job seekers only (2012). Individual (political) attitudes have received little attention in the literature and when they do, they are often tied to demographic variables and are not the primary focus of the study.

There has been some work on variables that might be loosely related to attitudes. Social Psychology studies have examined dependent variables, such as personality evaluations (Touhey, 1974) and physical attraction (Condon & Crano, 1988). Yet personality evaluation involves assessing an individuals' predispositions to behavior across situations rather than his/her attitude, per se. Physical attractiveness may involve a descriptive judgment of how attractive a person or persons are based on some stimuli. As such, these studies only tangentially relate to attitudes and relate little to political attitudes in the workplace. That is, there is *near total lack* of literature in this particular area and a great need for study of this phenomenon in organizational settings. This study primarily focuses on the impact of applicant attitudes (relating to political issues), as depicted in a public social media setting and how these attitudes influence work-related outcomes, managers' evaluations of hireability.

When viewing social media profiles, managers are also exposed to cues that indicate job-related characteristics, such as education, employment history, job-related skillsets and personality characteristics, would-be employees possess (individuating information) that may also impact how the applicants are evaluated (McCarthy, 2010; Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Kunda & Spencer, 2003; Kunda & Thagard, 1996). For example,

a manager may browse an applicant's Facebook profile and find information about where the candidate received her degree(s) and how long the candidate has been working in the field. Individuating information theories suggest that individuating information will be integrated with "first-impression" information (such as displayed attitudes about legalizing marijuana) to create a more holistic picture of the applicant (McCarthy, 2010; Kunda & Thagard, 1996).

These theories of individual information informed our research model. The research model was tested using an experimental design consisting of social media profiles for three political conditions: legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act. Test subjects were exposed to a variety of social media profiles embedded with individuating information (for example, one experimental condition involved providing individuating information in the form of a status update, reading, "I had the highest sales numbers at work this month! ☺"). A sample of MBA students and graduate business students was used, as well as employees in the Greenville/Spartanburg area, and subjects looked at Facebook and LinkedIn platforms.

This study has implications for practice and future research. The findings illuminate how political attitudes expressed on social media may shape making hiring decisions and that there may be a need for firms to create detailed, transparent and consistent social media policies and practices for employees, particularly for screening out potential job applicants. Recruiters are recommended to focus on individuating information of job seekers, such as work experience and job-related skills. Further, employers should use appropriate platforms that focus more on individuating information (for example, selecting LinkedIn instead of Facebook) and providing appropriate criteria

that should be examined across applicants to make the decision more objective. Recruiters might consider notifying applicants in advance of social media screening (Radongna, 2012) and posting clearly that the company is an equal opportunity employer that does seek out diverse employees from a variety of different sources. Finally, companies should keep records of all information viewed around employment seekers (Bates, 2013).

Job applicants and social media users might take heed from confirmed findings as well. For example, users should become familiar with each social media platform's privacy policies and settings, and use them where appropriate (for example, Facebook allows users to view what appears on their profiles so users may avoid being inadvertently tagged by friends, though users are still advised to keep tabs on what their friends post). Users might also search themselves via a search engine (like Google) to see what information comes up (Erwin, 2013) and may even create profiles under an alternate name or nickname to protect their own privacy. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the company's social media policy and most importantly, know their rights (what information can be used and what information cannot be used to make hiring decisions).

Our study has practical implications for managers and social media users alike. For recruiters (and their larger organizations), choice of appropriate social media platforms should be discussed (i.e., is it wise to use Facebook vs. LinkedIn), along with a clear social media and recruiting policy. Employment seekers may view social media as an opportunity to market their valuable skills, achievements, etc. Users should consider creating and managing an employable "image" across multiple platforms; a number of

online services are available for doing this. Users should focus on providing unique, individuating information.

This study also has theoretical implications. First, it contributes to MIS theory, especially social media theories, by considering the impact of social media at an HR angle. Further, it contributes to organizational behavior research and examines the cognitive processes managers use to make HR decisions from an intuition-based theory. It also provides an application of Demographic Similarity Theory from a social media context using experimental design. Finally, it will contribute to the individuating information research stream as well.

The study will move forward as follows. First, we will overview relevant theories and studies surrounding social media, decision-making (particularly, Demographic Similarity Theory and Similarity-Attraction Paradigm) and individuating information. After the theoretical perspective, the model and hypotheses will be developed, and then the methodology will be discussed in greater detail. Following the methodology is a section on results of testing our model, and then implications for practice and theory, as well as directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The following section will discuss theories and literature streams relevant to this study. First, it will discuss social media and its definition and classifications, followed by how social media is studied, both in the literature and in practice. Next, this section will investigate managerial decision-making theories, focusing in particular on Demographic Similarity Theory, the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm and individuating information.

Social media definition and classifications

"Social media" is an umbrella term used to describe social software ("various, loosely connected types of applications that allow individuals to communicate with one another, and to track discussions across the Web as they happen" (Tepper, 2003, p.19) and social networking websites (that focus on user relationships and networking), such as Facebook and LinkedIn (Barnes, 2006). Social media (also sometimes referred to as the "social web," according to Appleford et al, 2014) may also be defined as 'a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content' (Kaplin & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61)." Social media is an increasingly pervasive type of Web 2.0 technology, indicating a move from individual-generated Web content to content that is regularly added to, commented on and collaborated on by an assortment of users.

Social media comes in a variety of forms, using web and mobile technologies in different interfaces, all of which employ an interactive format for creating user-generated content, such as creating profiles and sharing information. That is, the term "social media" is an umbrella term that encompasses different social media "platforms" (varying

interfaces and software combinations designed for user-generated content, interaction and connectivity). For example, Facebook is a more sophisticated social media platform that allows its users to post information in the form of text, images, videos, etc., while Instagram is primarily a photo-sharing platform with some video capabilities (though these platforms are still both improving and adding new features over time). Social media platforms may be classified in a number of ways, discussed below. According to some reports, over 500 different social media platforms exist, and the salience of these platforms ranges from those that exist temporarily and for a relatively short period of time (such as Amplicate, Hellotxt, and MySpace) to social network platforms that have thrived for a number of years and have a large user base (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube) (Craig, 2013).

The size of the user base and the activity level of that user base are key metrics for evaluating the success of social media platforms. Users craft their own profiles within a bounded social media platforms, from social networks to blogs to wikipedias, and many of these platforms are interconnected (for instance, applicants may share Instagram photos on LinkedIn or Facebook) (boyd & Ellison, 2008). The user profile is used to type oneself into "being"(Sunden, 2009). User profiles may be text-based or multimedia-based and are generally set to default privacy settings to are public or semi-public in nature (though privacy settings in most platforms are customizable). The public nature of these user profiles grants employers easy access to personal information, user attitudes and the user's network of connections, including friends, family members and coworkers (boyd & Ellison, 2008).

Social media platform classifications

Social media platforms may be classified based on the user behaviors they encourage. These grouping theories draw from Media Richness Theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986), suggesting that one's mode of communication is determined by the equivocality of the message itself (ambiguity of information) and the richness of the communication channel (some modes of communication are always seen as superior, i.e., face to face communication is seen as ideal). Media Synchronicity Theory also influences social media classification theories; Dennis and colleagues (2008) suggests that, in this age of digitalization, features of social media and synchronicity must be part of the conversation.

Alternatively, Kaplin and Haenlein (2010) classify social media platforms by user social presence (that is, how well can an individual platform convey user information) and media richness (how much information can be transmitted). Some platforms are more effective than others; these platforms are classified as "self presentation/ self disclosure" platforms, allowing users to express themselves and share a large degree of personal information (platforms include Facebook, LinkedIn, and Tumblr). On the lower end of the spectrum, with low richness and little means by which users might present their "selves" is collaborative social medias (such as Wikipedia). While most social media platforms are considered "ideal" for presenting user information, the authors point out that even they are somewhat limited in richness, compared to, for example, virtual social worlds, like Second Life **(**see **Table 2.1 Kaplan & Haenlein Social Media Classification).**

		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Table 2.1 Kaplan & Haenlein Social Media Classification

When classifying social media platforms, boyd & Ellison employ feature sets and user bases. For example, under this classification, Facebook should be categorized with LinkedIn because it primarily users text-based user content (as opposed to a video-based platform, like YouTube), though Facebook's user base (consisting of friends, family members, colleagues, etc.) is considerably broader than LinkedIn's user base (professional contacts) (2008). Pearlson and Saunder classify social media platforms by user behaviors of innovating, collaborating and engaging (2008).

Finally, social media platforms may be classified by its purpose along a continuum of "hedonic" (fun, frivolous) or "utilitarian" (more purposeful) (Van Der Heijden, 2004). Hedonic social media platforms have feature sets that allow users to be entertained, or freed from boredom (Babin, 1994), while utilitarian social media platforms are more goal-driven, with a purpose of accomplishing a task (Strahilevitz & Myers, 1998). For example, Farmville, a platform where users build and decorate their own farms, fits on the "hedonic" end of the continuum, while LinkedIn, a platform built around creating professional networks, falls on the "utilitarian" end of the spectrum.

Social media in the literature

Social media is discussed in a number of literature streams and the contributions may be categorized as follows: impression management/identity formation, networks and network structures, bridging online and offline issues and privacy issues. Note, because this study is conducted at an individual level, this review focuses on literature streams germane to understanding individuals' beliefs and behavior, rather than the organization's' activities.

Impression Management / Identity Verification

This literature stream discusses how social media is a conduit for crafting one's online identity or "persona," and suggests that social media creates new avenues for presenting one's identity or "self" online, through user profiles. Blanchard & Markus observed members of an online sports community. Coupling their observations with user interviews, the authors found examples of self-presentation through the use of online member signatures (2004). Further, Ma & Agarwal, indicated that social media provides an avenue for identity verification, answering the question, "Who am I?." The authors surveyed members of an online banking community and found that users presented their "selves" through avatars, websites, digital signatures, etc. and that these self-presentation behaviors improved how much banking knowledge the users contributed to the community. More active users used more identity verification behaviors (2007).

Studies "pull" from the Impression Management literature, maintaining that individuals try to control the impressions other users form of them (called "impression management" or "self presentation"). Individuals use impression management because they believe it will impact how they are treated. As a result, then, the theory holds that

individuals behave in ways that are consistent to the impression they have created (Goffman, 1959; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Users may also purposefully create inauthentic profiles (originally termed "Fakesters" by Heer and boyd, now popularly known as "catfishing"), such as false profiles of public figures. In the study of Fakesters, the authors suggest that all social media profiles are "false" in a sense, due to the impression management behaviors used (2005).

The Impression Management and Identity Verification literature stream does not provide many answers regarding social media and HR screening decisions, especially regarding "outside" or recruiter reactions to applicant identity verifications or impression management. Little to no information is provided about the consequences job seekers may incur due to impression management or identity verification behaviors, particularly behaviors that reflect controversial attitudes the user may have.

Networks and Network Structures

Network and network structure studies attempt to study the composition of user "connections" within a particular social networking platform (Wellman et al, 1996). Many of these studies draw from Social Capital Theory, suggesting that a user's social ties make him/her privy to resources of the individuals the user is connected to (Borgatti et al, 2003), including intellectual capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Studies examine user social circles ("friendships"); for example, Golder and colleagues' 2007 study examined user social networks via the hundreds of Facebook messages the users had, in an effort to understand user messaging behaviors.

Recruiters may be interested in learning applicants' friends and connections, though the conclusions they draw may depend upon the platform being checked. For

instance, a hedonic website like Facebook might offer insight into friends and colleagues, while LinkedIn might show recruiters professionals the applicant is connected to. Being exposed to this public information can impact employer screening decisions (as noted below).

Bridging Online and Offline Social Networks

Scholars examine the interplay between online and offline relationships. Studies answer the question, "How do online interactions inform offline interactions, and vice versa?" Social Capital Theory influences much of the research. Ellison and colleagues surveyed undergraduate students and concluded that online relationships and relationship-building behaviors on social media are used to reinforce real-life relationships (2007). Another study examines the connection between meeting an individual in real-life and then searching for them in an online context (Lampe et al, 2007). The research does not consider the real-life/online interaction from a job screening context.

Privacy Issues

Studies investigate user willingness to post private information on social media platforms. This is also known as the "privacy paradox." Users post information publically, without considering the consequences or audience (parents, employers, schools, etc.). This research asks the question, "whom does public data belong to and should it be used for marketing?." Privacy solutions may be technical, social or legal in nature (Barnes, 2006).

Very little information is provided on organizational HR practices for social media use, though every company should have a privacy policy for employee and

customer data. In fact, according to the Society for Human Resource Management, 60 percent of businesses do not have a social media policy (2011). This raises important questions about how private applicant information, including applicant attitudes, impacts employee screening decisions.

Social Media in Practice

Practical journals cover an assortment of topics regarding organizational use of social media. Social media is viewed as a resource companies may use to gain a competitive advantage (Pearlson & Saunders, 2009) and many online applications are available for quantifying successful social media use (for example, Tweetreach.com measures how many Twitter users have read a company's tweets at any given time). The most popular topics discussed in practice are social media governance and hiring decisions.

Regarding social media governance, practical journals call for organizations to set up clear social media policies (Neumann, 2013) and many authors offer up tips for doing so (Pugen, 2013; Angelotti, 2013). Databases are also available for chronicling organizational social media policies used by firms (for example, socialmediagovernance.org has a comprehensive list of organizations that have social media policies). However, it is important to note that there is not an established "pattern" or established set of procedures companies may use to create their social media policy.

In practice, it is known that employers use social media to make screening decisions. Most employers claim to be concerned most with user behaviors, particularly negative behaviors. For example, a CareerBuilder.com survey of 2,303 hiring managers and human resource professionals suggests employers pass on candidates who post

provocative/inappropriate pictures (50 percent) or show evidence of using drugs (48 percent), though the respondents sometimes focused on positive behaviors as well (such as "behaving like a professional" at 57 percent; Erwin, 2013). Another study by analyst firm On Device Research shows that 1 in 10 job seekers lost a job opportunity because of their social media profile (Sherman, 2013). A Eurocom study of 300 European firms suggests that as many as 1 in 5 job seekers lost a job offer due to their social media activity (Eurocom Worldwide, 2012).

Given the widespread use of social media in recruiting, it is not surprising that the majority of the practical literature focuses on "how-to" guides for managers (Bates, 2013; Charlton, 2012) or overviews how employers use social media, discussing who uses it, what platforms they use, what information they take in about candidates and so on (Schwabel, 2012). Despite the advice coming from many sources, there is a lack of rules or standards for using social media to screen employees.

Without clear legal boundaries or procedures for using social media to screen employees, discrimination issues are a problem in practice (Neumann, 2013; Bates, 2013). That employers use information presented in social media profiles and discriminate against certain job seekers is suspected and some evidence, discussed in practical journals, exists suggesting this is the case. For example, car dealers have been accused of "profiling" employees in an effort to improve sales. Social media adds another layer to this problem, as some automotive dealerships use social media to make hiring decisions (Radogna, 2013). In practice, recruiters are warned to avoid private information that is "off limits" in an effort to avoid legal ramifications (Radogna, 2013).

Recruiters are considered to be "at risk" if they (Radogna, 2013): view information regarding age, race, religion, sex, disability, or other protected characteristics, such as pregnancy, illness or disability; check social media or the Internet only on applicants of a certain race or gender; search all applicants, but using the same information differently against one particular type of applicants; reject an applicant based on conduct protected by lawful off-duty conduct laws or reject an applicant because his/her political activities may violate state constitutional law.

Decision-making Theories

How managers make decisions has been a topic of much interest over the years. Managers face a number of challenges, including an uncertain and ambiguous environment. It is important to note, managerial decisions can range from decisions about simple, routine problems to complex, unwieldy problems (Hitt & Barr, 1989). For the purpose of this study, this discussion of theory focuses on employee hiring decisions. Originally, Rational Choice Theory (RCT) dominated the discussion. Under this theory, managers calculate outcomes of all sets of alternatives and choose best alternative, given limited information and constraints (Heath, 1976). However, critics note that managers are not often given choice between alternatives, sometimes having to opt for a "yes" or "no" response. Further, managers are not always rational and can be influenced by emotions, stereotypes, heuristics, intuition, experience and so on. Studies indicate humans go through decision rules in order of increasing cognitive effort (Svenson,1996; Siedl & Traub, 1998).

Managers also do not always possess perfect information for optimal decision-making. The environment is dynamic and may offer up complex and contradictory

information. When screening employees, managers try to gain a glimpse into who a job applicant is, through resumes, word of mouth, interviews and now, social media. Still, the manager is only receiving a snapshot of the applicant on the whole (in conjunction with information about other job applicants also being considered) and the snapshot may contain varying amounts of job related information.

Then, when in possession of a large amount of information, which often needs to be processed to give a better sense of who a job seeker is, managers have cognitive limits on how much information can be used to make a decision before suffering from "analysis paralysis." Simon calls this "bounded rationality" (1982) and explains that humans have limited "computational capabilities" and that rational decisions are made within constraints. That is, humans make decisions that are rational with the information that can be taken in ("satisficing"), though the decision may not be optimal. The theory assumes that managers behave rationally and in the face of environmental ambiguity and uncertainty (Simon, 1991). In sum, managers' ability to make decisions is limited by incomplete information and their own cognitive limits.

Social media complicates decision making, because it opens up a new avenue for gaining personal information that otherwise might be unattainable or illegal to capture, including information about physical appearance, education, ethnicity, gender, political beliefs, religious beliefs, etc. Thus, a recruiter who has limited information processing ability, may feel even more overwhelmed by the information he is given by the applicant or he has secured about the applicant in question. Instead, rather than adhering to best practices, the recruiter may focus on the most salient information in the social media profile (which may not be job related, e.g., partying), which will "cue" his hiring

evaluations. For example, a manager might immediately screen out an employee who constantly posts political views that oppose his own; these cues are most salient for the manager.

Managers can also use heuristics particularly for routine, simple decisions, such as screening out job applicants, and to save deeper cognitive processing for more complex decisions (Hastie & Dawes, 2009). Heuristics are "problem-solving strategies which serve to "keep the information processing demands of a task within bounds" (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001, p. 2) and are often used unconsciously. For example, a common heuristic might be to immediately screen out applicants who post pictures with drugs or alcohol. Heuristics are used because they can be used to at least partially compensate for lack of information. Heuristics may also be beneficial, freeing up valuable mental resources for other endeavors. However, using heuristics may lead to stereotyping.

Stereotyping and Demographic Similarity Theory

Stereotypes are fixed, overgeneralized views of people or groups of people (Hastie & Dawes, 2009). Demographic Similarity Theory is a mechanism for describing why managers stereotype and suggests that managers are concerned with their perceived demographic similarity to job applicants. Demographic Similarity Theory draws from two theories, Social Identity Theory and the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm.

Social Identity Theory suggests that individuals define their personal identities by the social groups they claim membership to (ex: family, friends, alma mater, sports teams, religion, etc.) (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). To reduce cognitive dissonance and affirm their identities, individuals prescribe positive characteristics to groups they belong to and negative ones to groups they do not belong to (McCarthy, 2010). "The cornerstone

of the SIT literature is that individuals seek to maintain positive self-identities. Consequently, groups that contain the self are generally regarded more positively" (Goldberg, 2003, p.566).

The Similarity-Attraction Paradigm suggests that managers are "attracted" to other individuals who they perceive to be similar to them in attitudes (Byrne, 1961). Individuals are friends with other individuals who often share the same likes, dislikes and viewpoints. The Similarity-Attraction Paradigm states that friendship is the result of a positive reciprocal interaction (when we perceive an individual has the same attitude or opinion, it validates our own attitudes) and thus, perceiving an individual has a dissimilar attitude creates a negative reciprocal interaction (we feel the other person is uninformed, uncaring, illogical or "out of it") (Newcomb, 1956). When we learn we have an attitude in common with another individual, it creates a rewarding interaction and leads to a positive relationship, a "birds of a feather, flock together" phenomenon (Byrne, 1961). This theory is illustrated in **Figure 2.1 (The Similarity-Attraction Paradigm, Illustrated)** below:

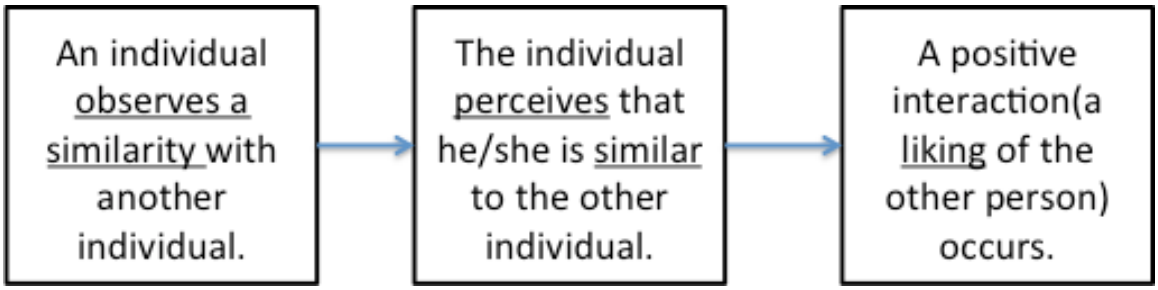


Figure 2.1 The Similarity-Attraction Paradigm, Illustrated

This theory has important implications for practice and may result in positive outcomes for individuals perceived as "similar" and negative outcomes for individuals perceived as

"dissimilar," including impacting hiring decisions, workplace performance, employee turnover and so on (McCarthy, 2010), though this study is primarily concerned with making screening decisions.

It should also be noted, there are multiple triggers for similarity that may impact whether managers screen in or screen out employees. Many studies tend to focus on gender and ethnicity as a main effect in an interview context (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998). For example, Wendelkin and Inn (1981) studied interviews for 551 applicants for police sergeants and lieutenants. They used a structured interviewing format and found no evidence indicating sex or race impacted job performance. Sacco et al (2003) tested 700 recruiters working for a large manufacturing company (with over 8,000 applicants) and found no ethnicity similarity effects. McCarthy and colleague's study (2010) of over 19,000 applicants and 200 interviewers using HLM analysis showed no gender effects (though females tended to score slightly higher on performance tests). McFarland et al examined the influence of race on hiring decisions. The authors analyzed a sample of 1,334 individuals applying for employment as a police officer. A structured interview was used, as was a panel of three raters. The study found that predominantly White rater panels evaluated applicants of all ethnicities most favorably. Another interesting conclusion resulted from a three-way interaction between rater race, applicant race, and panel race: Black raters evaluated black applicants more favorably when serving on a predominantly Black panel (2004). The authors wrote that they believed the Black supervisors were excited by the opportunity to make their organization more diverse.

These studies are examples of what we know about Demographic Similarity Theory in hiring: many studies focus on gender and ethnicity, indicate little to no

evidence for demographic interactions influencing the hiring process (though the results are sometimes inconclusive and may depend, to a certain extent, on the methodology of the study) and in studies with structured interviews, interactions are rare (e.g., with the McFarland and authors study, among notable exceptions).

Though gender and ethnicity are popular demographic variables, managers can also be attracted to individuals with similar attitudes (such as similar political leanings or attitudes about controversial issues). For example, Chattoppadhyay et al, 2004 indicated females tended to prefer males because of perceived similarities in attitude (this study focused primarily on gender as the exogenous variable, however). Perceived similarity, gained through learning another individual's personal attitudes, has been largely neglected (virtually ignored) in the organizational literature. The social media context is especially important and requires more attention in the literature because it is a channel through which job applicants may publically post their personal attitudes, especially political attitudes, making it available for an unintended audience, managers.

Individuating Information

Demographic Similarity Theory only tells part of the story of the information managers may "pull" on applicants. Theories of individuating information indicate that, as managers try to glean a more overall image of job seekers, they are also exposed to job-related information about applicants as well, including attributes such as knowledge, skills, abilities or personality traits (McCarthy et al, 2010). Fiske and Neuberg (1990) suggest that managers know their decisions will be examined and compared, so they are highly motivated to present an accurate portrayal of each candidate. They suggest that, as managers pay more attention to job applicants, they form a more complete picture of who

that candidate is and are particularly in tune with information inconsistencies (so, for example, a job seeker's extremely vocal opinions about illegal immigration would be considered with information about her education, experience, and so on).

Individuating information is powerful because it "forces managers to focus on information that is reflective of job performance" (McCarthy et al, 2010, p. 337). Studies indicate that the presence of individuating information lessens the likelihood of managers using stereotypes to make decisions (for example, a Dunn & Spellman, 2003 study requiring managers to look up individuating information showed diminished memory for stereotypical information on applicants). Caldwell and Burger's (1998) study of undergraduate employment interviews showed that personality traits impact hiring decisions. In a meta-analytic study consisting of large sample and meta-analytic studies of the Big Five Personality Traits and general mental ability, Le and colleagues (2007) found personality and cognitive ability predicted job performance. Further, in an experiment of 97 male and 98 female graduate students found that providing behavioral information about job applicants reduced the influence of demographic information (here, applicant gender) and stereotyping (Locksley et al, 1980). An implication of these studies is that when job seekers supply individuating information on social media, it might mitigate the negative impact of their demographic or attitudinal characteristics.

Image Theory

Finally, managers may compare information gathered about job applicants to their own values and beliefs. According to Image Theory, managers base their decisions on how well their decision is compatible with their own values (manifested as a "Value Image" consisting of beliefs, values and morals). Mitchell, Rediker and Beach (1990)

studied top-level executives and found that this image was most fundamental in executive decision-making; managers make decisions that line up with their own beliefs.

According to Image Theory, managers are faced with two kinds of decisions, progress decisions (these are used as a control measure and ask, "is the organization still progressing towards its goals? Is our projected state (trajectory image) in line with our goals (strategic image?)," or "how are we doing?") and adoption decisions. Adoption decisions ask whether new goals or plans be considered. Now, most decisions managers make, especially adoption decisions, are decisions to *not* do anything, that is, managers make the decision to not continue considering applicants (i.e., screen out employees). It is only after screening that managers make their own suitability evaluations (Morrell, 2004). The theory has been tested again Rational Choice Theory (RCT) in a business ethics context (with financial employees) and outperformed RCT (Morrell, 2004) and was tested in three experiments with over 400 participants. Using scenarios, the theory's propositions held up but were moderated by contrast effects (i.e., when participants were given information comparing candidates, Pesta et al, 2005). The theory's propositions were also tested in 2 lab settings and supported (Dunegan, 1995), and were then further verified in a laboratory setting (Seidl & Traub, 1998).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter highlighted the two different topics that drive this paper. First, it defined social media and social media platforms. It discussed how social media is covered in academic literature, as well as in practical journals, showing there is a gap between how social media is discussed in academia and how it is discussed in practice (that is, that academia needs to "catch up" to research and articles published in a practical

context). The chapter also delineated important decision-making theories, focusing primarily on theories from an individual-level of analysis. These theories included stereotyping and decision-making theory, individuating information and image theory. **Table 2.2 (Key Constructs and Theories)** also summarizes the key constructs and theories in this chapter.

Theory	Key Aims	Foundation Studies	Application Studies	Relevance to this study
Image Theory	Managers make decisions that lineup with their own beliefs ("images" – trajectory, strategic, and value images)	Beach & Mitchell (1987; 1988; 1990; 1993)	Dunegan, 1995; Morrell, 2004; Pesta et al, 2005; Siedl & Traub, 2001	Recruiters make screening decisions with social media based on their own beliefs
Bounded Rationality	Humans are limited by the amount of information they can take in and process	Simon (1972, 1991)	Abelson & Levi, 1985; Lau, 2001; Simon, 1981	Recruiters are exposed to information via social media profiles but little research indicates what information is most important
Demographic Similarity Theory (Stereotyping)	Individuals evaluate each other by group membership, ascribing positive characteristics to perceived group members and negative characteristics to those who are not part of the group.	Tsui et al, 2002; Ashforth & Mael, 1989	Goldberg, 2003; Kirchmeyer, 1995; Purkiss et al, 2006	Recruiters may respond more favorably to applicants perceived as similar to them in terms of religion, political beliefs and ethnicity
Individuating Information	The presence of individuating information (knowledge, skills and abilities) makes demographic information less powerful	Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Kunda & Thagard, 1996	Copus, 2005; Huffcutt & Roth, 1998; McCarthy, 2010	The presence of individuating information on social media may negate the influence of demographic user characteristics

Table 2.2 Key Constructs and Theories

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

We develop research hypotheses to test our formal research model. We will begin with the attitudes-screening decision relationship, moving into the individuating information-screening decision relationship, and following with the screening decision-suitability evaluation relationship. Finally, we will develop the moderating nature of the social media platform on the attitudes-screening decision relationship.

The research model (**Figure 3.1 Research Model**) hypothesizes that, when managers perceive a similarity in attitudes with applicants, this will influence their liking of applicants, and as a result, their evaluations of how "hireable" the applicant is for the organization. Individuating information, the knowledge, skills and abilities presented on the applicant's social media profile, will also influence hiring decisions. Finally, the social media platform itself will serve as a moderator.

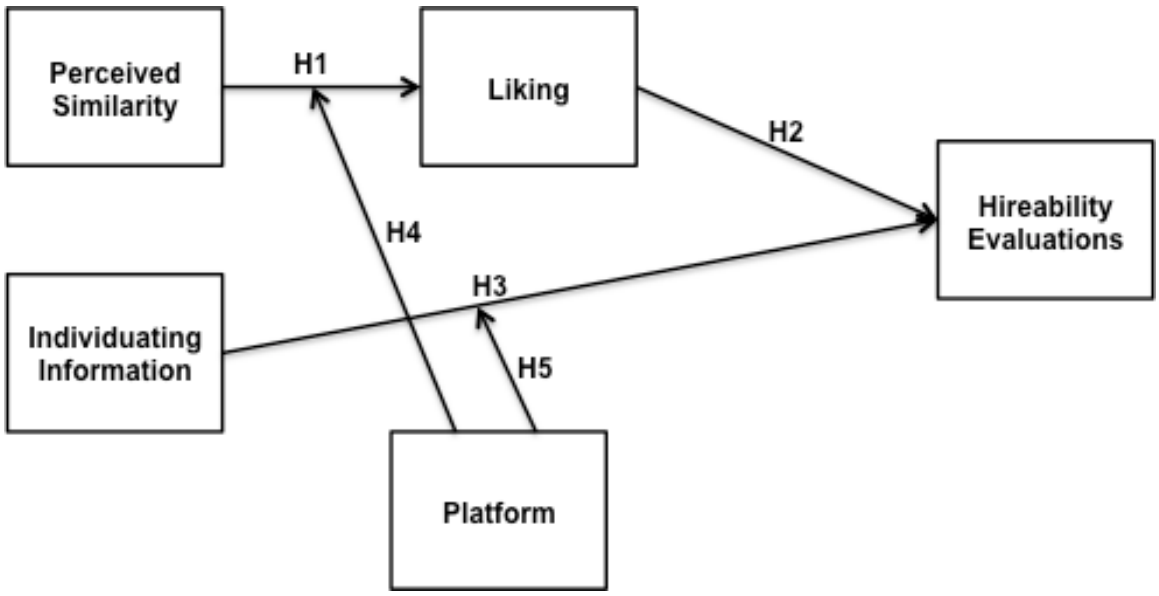


Figure 3.1 Research Model

Perceived Similarity – Liking Relationship

This relationship has its roots in Demographic Similarity Theory, which investigates the importance of similarity in regards to personal characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, attitudes, socioeconomic status, education levels and so on. The theory is related to the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm and Social Identity Theory. Demographic Similarity Theory has been thought to relate to important work-related outcomes and has received some empirical support across a number of studies in laboratory settings (Graves & Powell, 1996; Borman & Motowidlo, 1993), with most studies tending to focus on demographic traits, particularly gender and ethnicity.

The theory suggests that, when forming an impression, individuals take in information to make observations about how similar they perceive they are to each other, whether it is by demographic characteristics or personal attitudes. Social media is a channel through which managers can glean information about job applicants and through what they view, managers can observe how similar they are to each applicant. For example, Chris, a manager who has a strongly positive attitude about the Affordable Healthcare Act, might look at Jackie's LinkedIn profile and based on the information he observes in Jackie's affiliations, judge Jackie to be dissimilar to him because she is a member of the "Defund Obamacare Alliance." Empirically (again), this type of relationship has been studied through using variables such as gender and ethnicity. For example, Harrison, Price and Bell studied racial similarity with a sample of 39 work groups (443 people in groups of 4 to 25 employees) in a private hospital and a sample of employees from 32 work groups in the deli section of grocery store chains (1998). Sacco, Scheu, Ryan and Schmitt used multilevel modeling in employment interviews,

surveying 708 interviewers and 12,203 applicants to test for similarity affects in gender and ethnicity (2003).

Graves and Powell coined the phrase “demographic similarity,” maintaining that demographically similar managers may perceive they are similar to applicants of the same race, gender, etc. in attitudes and beliefs as well (“perceived similarity”). That is, through a social interaction (in this case, a one-sided interaction of reading a social media profile), the manager may conceive a likeness in how a job candidate is predisposed towards evaluating an object or issue (Engle & Lord, 1997).

However, it is important to note that managers may not only be influenced by gender and ethnicity; they may be swayed, for example, by “verbal and nonverbal communication, physical appearance and dress” (Graves & Powell, 1995, p. 86). This reasoning may also extend to personal attitudes, "an individual's tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or the symbol of that object in a certain way" (Katz & Stotland, 1960, p. 428). In fact, Byrne indicates that these individual predispositions, when perceived to be conflicting, can negatively impact work-related outcomes; likewise, when an individual perceives another individual to be likeminded or attitudinally similar, this can lead to positive work-related outcomes (Byrne, 1971).

Demographic Similarity Theory has the potential to extend understanding of the connection between recruiters’ viewing social media posts and their assessments of job seekers. Social media websites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, provide a channel through which applicants can disclose information about themselves. For example, Facebook users can indicate personal attitudes through status updates, including them in their “About Me” section in their user profile, through comments they make to other

social media users in their network, and so on. Further, through social media, individuals disclose their attitudes about a variety of topics on social media websites; a Pew Research Poll (n = 1,011) of global attitudes indicates that a number of Americans feel comfortable discussing an assortment of topics on Facebook, including politics (37 percent) and religion (32 percent) (pewglobal.org, 2012). Political attitudes include attitudes about gun control, marijuana usage and the Affordable Healthcare Act (or "Obamacare"). So, for example, a Facebook member might express her distaste for healthcare reform through updating her status, sharing a politically-charged meme or video, posting a picture or link to a website, joining a group of like-minded individuals, and so on.

Social media also enables managers the opportunity to view publically available job seeker profiles that disclose information on individual attitudes. It serves not only as a channel for presenting one's self, but also as a channel by which other users can learn about this presentation of self. Demographic Similarity Theory indicates that managers may perceive job applicants as similar (or dissimilar) to themselves upon discerning an applicants' personal attitudes. Since social media websites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, offer up an opportunity for individuals to post their attitudes in a public forum and recruiters can access many job seeker profiles via social media, recruiters can glean how similar they are to potential employees with a click of the button. For instance, Tom, who is seeking employment, might post his political rants against healthcare reform in the form of a status update on his Facebook page. Pat, a strong supporter of healthcare reform, can then view Tom's Facebook profile and gauge, from the information she observes ("Observed Attitudinal Similarity") in the form of Tom's status update, that she is dissimilar to Tom in her political beliefs about healthcare reform.

Further, Demographic Similarity Theory suggests that individuals develop a "liking" for other individuals who are perceived as attitudinally similar to them. "Liking" is positive interaction or "attraction" between individuals; for instance, Jane, in reading Dave's status about legalizing marijuana on Facebook, might feel that Dave "gets it," is logical and is similar to her; Jane is feeling an attraction, or liking towards Dave. The two theories that underpin Demographic Similarity Theory explain why this is the case. Social Identity Theory maintains that managers form their personal identities through the groups they associate with, from work groups to extracurricular activities. To maintain a positive sense of identity and decrease cognitive dissonance, managers will ascribe positive characteristics to those employees who belong to the same groups and negative characteristics to employees who do not (Abrams & Hogg, 1988). In a social media context, through being privy to information cues made publically accessible through social media profiles, this indicates that managers will prescribe positive characteristics to applicants whose status updates, affiliations, pictures, etc. are similar to their own.

Similarly, the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm suggests that, when managers perceive they are attitudinally similar to job applicants, this creates a positive "interaction" (or attraction) between the manager and the applicant; in other words, managers prefer the company of likeminded individuals. This attraction is formed because managers can understand how job applicants of perceived similarity think (to them, it is logical), but individuals who are perceived as dissimilar may be regarded as illogical, uninformed or not thinking through the issue carefully enough (Reskin et al, 1999). For a variety of reasons, including having a positive identity and personal attraction, managers "like" employees who they perceive are similar to them.

The above example, and the theoretical justification, leads us to hypothesize:

H1: Perceived similarity positively influences liking of job applicants.

Liking – Hireability Relationship

When managers perceive they are similar to and like a job applicant, Demographic Similarity Theory suggests this will positively influence subsequent judgments of the job applicant (Goldberg, 2005). This liking has been "…related to many positive work-related outcomes, such as more positive superior–subordinate and mentoring relationships, communication, and job satisfaction" (Sacco et al, 2003, p. 853; McCarthy et al, 2010; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Green et al, 1996; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989; Turban & Jones, 1988; Vecchio & Bullis, 2001).

Though there is a rich literary history examining the impact of perceived similarity and liking on job-related outcomes, especially interviewing and selection, with a degree of empirical support backing it, the results of many studies are decidedly mixed (McCarthy et al, 2010). However, these mixed outcomes are generally attributed to the method employed, with regards to sample size and more importantly, the amount of structure employed, where more structured interviews with clear procedures and lengthy training sessions, did not find significant relationships between perceived similarity, liking and selection (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998).

Hiring decisions that are high in structure, with clear procedures and policies, appeared to eliminate the impact of "liking" applicants on hireability evaluations. The social media context for this experiment is important then because using social media for making hiring decisions, notably, is lacking in structure, with over 54 percent of organizations claiming they do not have a social media policy in place to use for hiring

decisions (SHRM report, 2014). Managers, who research multiple candidates, are inundated with a vast amount of information about job applicants, straining their cognitive bounds. This lack of structure surrounding the use of social media, an environment that provides managers with many information cues, may inform the liking-hireability relationship. Further, the screening process takes little time for the manager (is brief) – "although the focus is on gathering employment-related information, the relative amount of information gleaned in these limited inter- actions is likely to be low as compared with information gathered from extended interactions at work" (Sacco et al, 2003, p. 854). With this limited time frame and overabundance of information, managers may turn to heuristical thinking, using their liking of individual job candidates to make important decisions, such as hireability evaluations. Managers evaluate the hireability of applicants when they determine how suitable an individual is for employment at an organization. In sum, because there is a lack of structure in organizational use of social media, this may result in recruiters relying overly on heuristics when assessing applicants. Using heuristics, particularly based upon perceived similarity and liking of an applicant based on social media information, is problematic, because it may introduce bias into the decision-making process.

This example will also illustrate the point. A recruiter may look at Sally's Facebook profile and find information about her age, place of residence, work experience, friends, status updates, religious beliefs, political leanings, pictures, family members, relationship status, marital status and so on. Presented with this sheer volume of information, the recruiter may notice Sally's status update about illegal immigration and notice that Sally's attitude is similar to his own. That he and Sally have this attitude

in common creates an "attraction"; the recruiter feels as if he has found a logical and likeable individual. ,This positive attraction (or "liking") might lead the manager to positively evaluate Sally on a hireability survey. The theoretical reasoning, coupled with empirical support suggests that:

H2: Liking of job applicants positively influences hireability ratings.

Individuating Information-Screening Relationship

Individuating information, (e.g., job-related information about an applicant), such as knowledge, skills or abilities, will also play a role in the decisions managers make (McCarthy et al, 2010). Managers may attempt to gain an overall view of job seekers, researchers suggest, and besides demographic and attitudinal information they pull from social media profiles, they are also exposed to individuating information (for example, an applicant might list his education on his Facebook profile). Individuating information is powerful, with some studies showing managers pay decreasing amounts of attention to demographic information once exposed to individuating information; suggesting that it has a stronger impact on managerial judgment than gender information (Olian et al, 1988). The effect of attributes, such as personality (Caldwell & Burger, 1998) and cognitive ability (Schmidt et al, 2007) have been documented (McCarthy et al, 2005; Copus, 2005; Kunda & Thagard, 1996; Jackson et al, 1993).

Social media may be an important channel for gaining access to individuating information about job applicants. Through social media, job applicants routinely post individuating information, such as education, work experience, evidence of cognitive ability (via writing), and so on, about themselves, through the user profile, status updates, pictures, groups one is a member of, etc. If a job applicant has a publically accessible

social media profile, these sources of individuating information are accessible to a broad audience, including recruiters and managers. For example, Kluemper and Rosen, using a sample of undergraduate students, found that the students could accurately discern Big Five personality traits from social media profiles (2009). When managers are exposed to individuating information, research indicates it influences managerial decision-making, and through social media, recruiters are exposed to job-related information about applicants. With this in mind, we hypothesize:

H3: Individuating information influences hireability ratings.

Social Media Platform as a Moderator

The social media platform will impact how information is conveyed to recruiters. Research indicates that while social media can be classified by feature sets, often platforms have the same or similar feature sets, especially social networking websites, like Facebook and LinkedIn (boyd & Ellison, 2008). However, Facebook and LinkedIn are used for notably different reasons. LinkedIn is predominantly utilitarian and is used for building professional networks, while Facebook is hedonic; users detail personal details about their daily lives, professional or otherwise (Beer, 2008; van der Heijden, 2004).

The Facebook social media platform is built for hedonic individual use; that is, members may consider the social network to be "fun" and "entertaining" (Babin, 1994); a 2008 social network analysis of 800 undergraduate students indicated many students used Facebook to communicate with friends and relieve boredom (Lampe et al, 2008). In fact, 19 percent of all Facebook studies investigate motivation to use Facebook (Wilson et al, 2012), with most studies suggesting users primarily use Facebook to keep in touch with

friends in an informal manner and present their "authentic identities" to friends (Ellison et al, 2006). Some studies indicate that this perceived audience (of one's friends and/or peers) influences what user's posts. For example, a study of American and German Facebook users indicated Americans were more likely to post inappropriate content than their German counterparts due (in part) to their perceived audiences (Karl et al, 2010).

Structurally, Facebook and LinkedIn have a number of similar features that are also used for differing purposes. For example, both platforms are built around networks of relationships or connections, but LinkedIn networks are constructed of professional contacts, while Facebook networks are much more heterogeneous (for example, spanning friends, family members, schoolmates, alumni, professional contacts, and so on). Both platforms allow for a "newsfeed" or "pulse" to share important information. However, Facebook members are updated on any new changes to a profile or status; LinkedIn tends to only share updates when, for example, a LinkedIn member gets a new job or a promotion. Also similarly, each individual profile has a "wall," an electronic bulletin board consisting of status updates, profile updates, friend comments and so on. Facebook users, however, are more intrinsic (sharing information for their own enjoyment) and hedonically share information, photos, conversations, and so on, while LinkedIn users are more extrinsic (sharing information to make money or network), sharing only major changes in their careers, research, etc. or soliciting endorsements of their skills. These differences are highlighted in the table, below **Table 3.1: Platform Differences**).

Feature*	Facebook	LinkedIn
The network	- Varies. Consists of friends, family members, colleagues, professional contacts, members of groups, complete strangers, etc.	- Consists of professional contacts and colleagues. - Delineates shared contacts and workplace - Contacts can

	- Delineates "friends of friends" and if the friend is from a similar network (ex: "Clemson University")	recommend or endorse other contacts
Groups	Groups form around similar interests (musical groups, athletic teams, favorite foods, etc.)	Groups form around institutions (alumni associations, political parties, organizations, etc.)
"Likes"	Used often. Members "like" status updates, groups, favorite companies, pictures, picture albums, etc.	Used occasionally. Members "like" status updates or Pulse updates.
Status Updates	Used often. Members chronicle daily activities.	Used occasionally. Members update about new jobs, promotions, etc.
Trending Topics	Called "Trending." Chronicles topics members are discussing at the moment. Generally based on Hollywood gossip, political news, large world events, etc.	Called "The Pulse." Focused more on "hot" articles in practical journals, world events, the economy, etc.
User Pictures	- Profile pictures vary, from the user with friends, to pictures of pets or babies. - User may have multiple photo albums and/or mobile uploads. Can be be connected to Instagram or other photo-sharing Apps. - User may also be tagged in additional photos	- Generally consist of user by him/herself - Users do not have an option to create photo albums - Users cannot connect to photo-sharing platforms, such as Instagram
User Profile Picture **- Disclosure of Demographic Characteristics**	- Birthday (age) - Relationship status - Family members, including number of kids - Religion - Political views/party	- Location or currently living - Languages spoken
- Personal Information/Interests	- Favorite quotes - Favorite books - Favorite movies - Favorite t.v. shows - Items users have	- Background -Volunteer work, causes - Interests - Personal website

	"liked" or followed: games, sports teams, stores, people, etc. - Cover photo in profile background - Interests - Personal Website	
Professional Information		
	Employment history: - Job title(s) - Location - Company - Duration - Job duties - Languages spoken - Contact info - Professional website(s)	- Industry - Experience - Skills and expertise - Summary - Projects - Orgs - Test Scores - Patents Certifications -Publications - Honors and Awards Employment history: - Job title(s) - Location - Company - Duration - Job duties - Languages spoken - Contact info - Professional website(s)

Table 3.1 Platform Differences (*as of March 16, 2013)

Since users are most often motivated to use Facebook to have fun, be entertained (or relieved from boredom) and build and maintain relationships with a welcoming perceived audience (friends), users may share a larger variety of personal information spanning a greater subject matter than more utilitarian platforms, such as LinkedIn. With more personal information, including user attitudes, that they otherwise would not be privy to, managers may perceive that a job applicant is similar (or dissimilar) attitudinally, and like (or dislike) that applicant as a result. That is, with Facebook, a platform that offers more information regarding applicant attitudes, recruiters will be more likely to perceive a similarity and like or dislike an applicant:

H4: The social media platform will moderate the perceived similarity and liking relationship. The use of a Facebook platform will be associated with a stronger relationship than the use of a LinkedIn platform.

Since LinkedIn's purpose is for professional networking, one should expect to see more individuating information on it (work-related individual attributes), such as awards and honors, skills and expertise, and publications. Facebook, on the other hand, offers users an opportunity to discuss almost any subject of their choosing, offering a much more holistic view of applicants, from favorite books, movies and t.v. shows to personal status updates about their days and moods to education and work experience. Since the LinkedIn platform provides more opportunities for finding individuating information, we expect recruiters will make less screening decisions based on applicant attitudes. As a result, the social networking platform is hypothesized to be a moderator:

H5: The social media platform will moderate the relationship between individuating information and hireability ratings. The LinkedIn platform will increase the strength of this relationship, while the Facebook platform will decrease it.

The relationships described above are from the following hypotheses table (**Table 3.2 Hypotheses**):

Hypotheses
H1: Perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants.
H2: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings.
H3: Individuating information influences hireability ratings.
H4: The social media platform will moderate the perceived similarity and hireability relationship.
H6: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship.

Table 3.2 Hypotheses

Key constructs to be tested are discussed in the table (**Table 3.3 Constructs and Definitions**).

Construct Name	Constitutional Definition
Attitude	"An individual's tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or the symbol of that object in a certain way" (Katz & Stotland,1959, p. 428)
Perceived Similarity	An impression, formed during a social interaction, of a likeness in attitudes, or tendencies in evaluating an object a certain way (Engle & Lord, 1997); the extent to which a managers perceive themselves as similar to a job applicant
Liking	An attraction or positive interaction towards another individual (Byrne, 1961)
Hireability Evaluation	A judgment or determination about how suitable a candidate is for employment at an organization
Individuating Information	Job-related information about an applicant, such as knowledge, skills or abilities (McCarthy et al, 2010)
Platform	Varying interfaces and software combinations designed for user-generated content, interaction and connectivity (operationalized as Facebook vs. LinkedIn)

Table 3.3 Constructs and Definitions

CHAPTER FOUR:

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

To test the proposed model that examines how perceived similarity, liking, individuating information and social media platform influences hireability evaluations, we conducted our experiment in three separate political conditions. An experimental design was selected over the commonly used survey methodology (see **Figure 4.1 Overview of the Methodological Development)**, because we were interested in evaluating relationships from individual political attitudes and individuating information in a social media context on assessments of hireability (e.g., we sought to manipulate political affiliation variables). While the experimental design detailed below was authentic and emulated real world conditions, the experimental design manipulated conditions (information cues). For this dissertation, internal validity was deemed more important than external validity (though attempts were made to balance or maintain both aspects of internal and external validity).

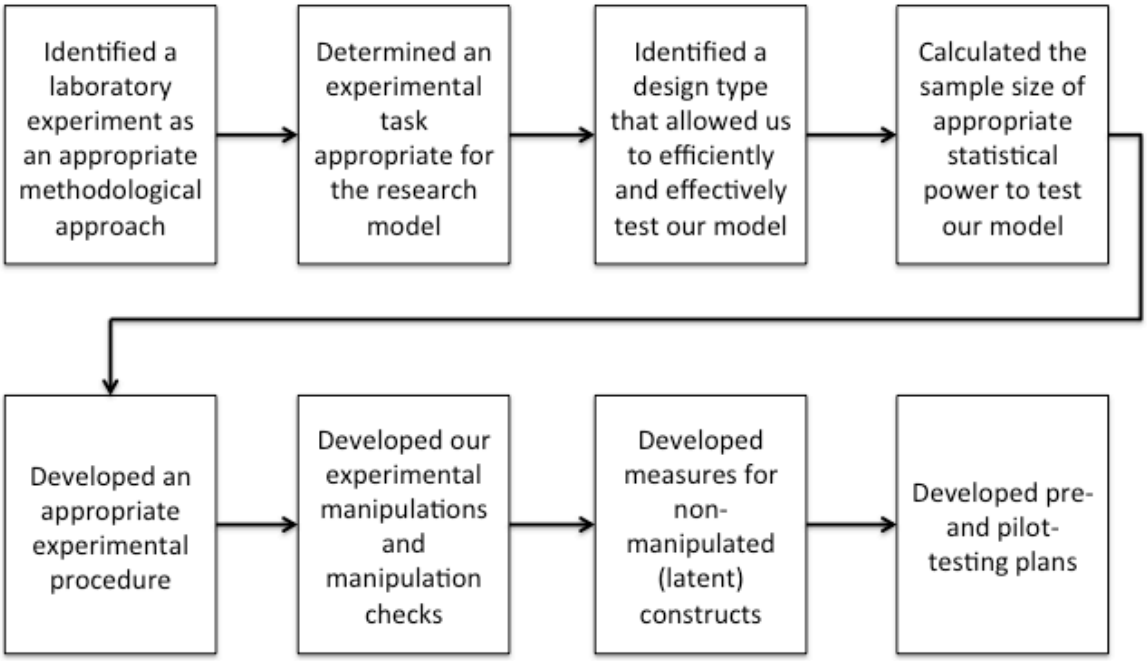


Figure 4.1 Overview of the Method's Development

This chapter first discusses the participants in our experiment. Next, it discusses the experimental task used in this study, including a discussion on internal validity. Then, the chapter explains the procedure used in the experiment, followed by details on constructs' measurement, control variables, experimental factors, experimental conditions, and sample size estimates. Finally, the chapter details the pre- and pilot-testing and data analyzing techniques.

Participants

For this study, our purpose was to emulate recruiters, or individuals who are in a position to make hiring decisions. We recruited students and professionals who live in the Greenville/Spartanburg area as our sample frame. The majority of the sample consisted of MBA students because many of them have business experience and have been or will be involved with recruitment. Though the majority of the sample consisted of MBA students, we also recruited graduate students in the business concentration, such as

Master's students in Marketing and Accounting, as well as practicing managers. As a data check, we inserted a survey item at the end of the experiment, asking subjects if they have experience with interviewing candidates for jobs (see **Table 4.1 Sample Characteristics**).

Using student samples is consistent with other research studies into social media (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009; Mazer et al, 2007). For instance, Kluemper and Rosen relied on student samples to in their study of whether evaluators can determine Big Five personality characteristics from social media profiles, and Mazer and authors used student samples to determine how students evaluate professors based on self-disclosure on social media. We note (again) that our students were master's level students and many had business experience as opposed to focusing solely upon undergraduates.

Variable	Frequency Count	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	110	57.7
Female	81	42.3
Ethnicity		
Asian	27	14.6
Black	9	4.9
Hispanic	7	3.8
White	102	63.4
Other	6	1.6
Current Degree Program		
Master's – Accounting (MPA)	5	2.7
Master's – Business Administration (MBA)	113	61.1
Master's – Economics (MS)	1	.5
Master's – Management (MS)	5	2.7
Master's – Marketing (MS)	7	3.8
PhD – Economics (PhD)	5	2.7
PhD – Psychology (PhD)	2	1.1
Other – Industry	39	20.5
Experience Interviewing Job Applicants		
Yes	122	65.9
No	54	29.2
Trained in using Social Media to Evaluate Applicants		
Yes	22	11.9
No	154	83.2

Table 4.1 Sample Characteristics

Prior to beginning the experiment, subjects were informed of their rights; in particular, they were informed, in recruiter letters and emails, as well as in the informed consent letter at the beginning of the only survey, that participation in this study was voluntary and could be withdrawn their consent for participation at any point during the experiment (see IRB Materials in Appendix B). They also were informed that their personal information and responses would remain completely confidential and were

ensured that there are no right or wrong answers (a social desirability scale at the end of the survey also controls for this). Incentives for participating included a raffle drawing for $25 Amazon gift cards (participants had a 1 in 10 chance of winning), as well as extra credit points.

Experimental Task

Since our model posits that perceived similarities and individuating information impact recruiter evaluations, the experimental task needed to depict/vary both of those kinds of information in a social media context. Further, the task was to show individuating information and individual attitudes across two different platforms to determine how the different platforms influence candidate evaluations.

So that we could understand the effects of these conditions, an experimental design was selected as a means to reduce outside "noise" or distractions and as such, increase internal validity. To complete the experimental tasks, social media profiles were created that emulated Facebook and LinkedIn environments. To properly measure variables in our research model, we created stimuli that exemplified political attitudes supporting and opposing important issues as well as included high and low levels of individuating information to answer Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 in our research model. To measure the impact of platform, we created profiles in Facebook and LinkedIn (in an effort to answer Hypotheses 4 and 5 in our research model). In all, we created 12 profiles for Facebook and 12 for LinkedIn, summing up to 24 profiles.

The process of creating the profiles for the experiment was a time-intensive effort (detailed in **Figure 4.2 Development of Social Media Profiles**). When crafting the social media profiles, our aim was to create/emulate what recruiters can access on Facebook and

LinkedIn profiles without being intrusive (e.g., without asking for passwords or befriending the job applicant). First, we considered that many Facebook and LinkedIn profiles use "Privacy Settings," only allowing for certain information to be viewed globally, or publically (for example, a Facebook user may elect to make some information available worldwide and other cues available only to "all friends" or "select friends"). Next, even profiles that are entirely accessible generally only display recent information, requiring a considerable amount of effort to pull up data beyond the previous month. Finally, since the study's objective was to evaluate managerial decision-making, all information provided on profiles was presented in the same manner (for example, the applicant posted the same article in both platforms) or was held constant (for example, profile pictures were the same in all conditions within one of our studies).

Still, in order to ensure profiles appeared realistic, the first author used real-life Facebook and LinkedIn profiles belonging to the same user (an individual from the University of Colorado, used with the individual's permission) as a starting point/reference. The social media profiles evolved throughout pre-and pilot-testing in an effort to appear as authentic as possible while still using equivalent forms of information across platforms and conditions (see Appendix C for profiles used in the experiments).

Our primary concern in creating the social media profiles was to approximate profiles that one might encounter in a real world (e.g., publically accessible Facebook or LinkedIn profiles). To approximate authentic, publically-accessible social media profiles, the researcher reviewed over fifty Facebook and LinkedIn profiles of college students, paying particular attention to pairs of profiles (that is, individuals who had both a Facebook and a LinkedIn profile) and recording similarities and differences between the

platforms, including information cues and their forms presented on each profile, as well as how information was presented (depicted in **Table 3.1 Platform Differences**). We were especially concerned with maintaining the "spirit" of each social media platform. For example, on Facebook, a user might express him feelings using more profane and/or casual language than on LinkedIn; the Facebook user would probably also post status updates at a greater frequency than on LinkedIn. Despite this, it was important to present information in a way that it remained consistent across both platforms as well, so as not to confound our experimental results.

To create the social media profiles, the author first created real profiles in Facebook and LinkedIn and obtained permission from close friends and family members to use their profile pictures. Using the real profiles and Adobe Photoshop, the author created initial Facebook and LinkedIn profiles exemplifying each experimental condition. The initial profiles had identical information and were very sparse in terms of content and appearance: for example, though the fictionalized job applicants had different names (Mark Matthews, Shane Smith and Trent Thompson), their status updates for the individuating information condition and workplace history were identical.

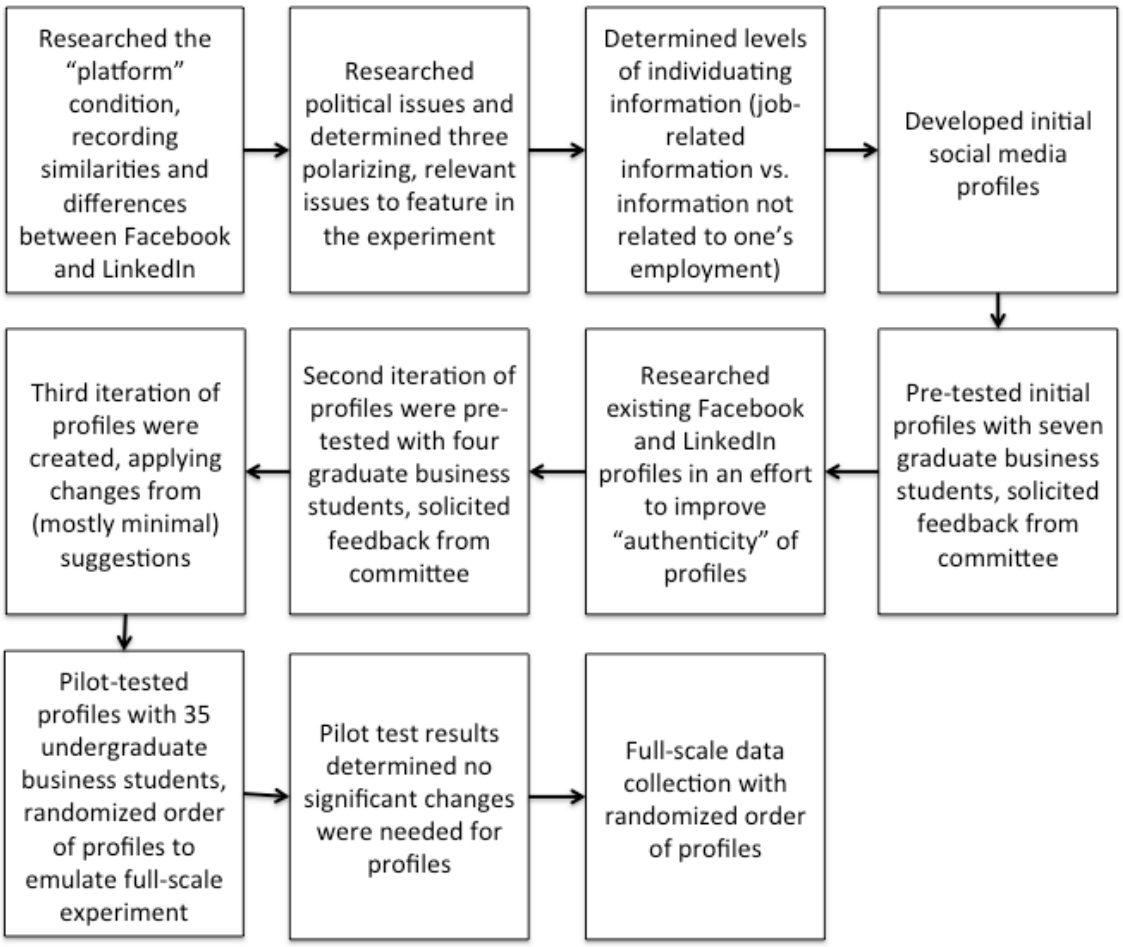


Figure 4.2 Development of Social Media Profiles

After that, the researchers discussed political issues appropriate for stimuli cueing judgments of similarity in the research model. Three separate and salient political issues were used for similarity judgments. Each condition focused on a different political attitude about marijuana legalization, gun control laws, and the Affordable Healthcare Act. These three political issues have been extensively covered in the press (a quick search in Lexis Nexis from January 1, 2012 to October 17th, 2014, indicates 2,642 articles about legalizing marijuana, 999 articles about gun control laws and 992 articles about the Affordable Healthcare Act or "Obamacare"). These were salient because of several events that occurred in the broader environment.

Legalized Marijuana: Though many states have legalized the use of medicinal marijuana, Colorado was the first state to legalize the use of recreational marijuana in 2012 (Ferner, 2012) and has since been the subject of debate over whether the rest of the nation should follow suit.

Gun Control: After a tragic elementary school shooting in December of 2012, President Barack Obama took "…23 executive actions to access to restrict guns. However, an Obama-backed bill for stronger background checks for gun purchases could not get enough support to pass the… Senate" (Lucas, 2014). Following another high school shooting in Oregon of 2014, it was expected there will be more discussions in the U.S. Senate regarding gun control laws (Mapes, 2014), even while some states, such as Georgia, are in the midst of passing bills allowing for guns in churches, airports, bars, and schools (Buchsbaum, 2014).

The Affordable Healthcare Act: The Affordable Healthcare Act was signed into law in 2010, under the core principal that every American should have some form of healthcare (Stolberg & Pear, 2010), though support of this act usually splinters along party lines (supported by Democrats and opposed by Republicans). It is currently a subject of intense debate, with House Republicans still promising to work to repeal it (O'Keefe, 2014).

All three of these issues are salient and/or polarizing issues that elicit emotional responses and debate among United States citizens. For example, for the first time in the nation's history, a 2013 Gallup poll indicated 58 percent of Americans indicated marijuana use should be legalized (compared to 39 percent who believe it should not be legal). This is a 10 percent upswing from the previous year's results (2013). Gun Control is also highly polarizing, with a 2013 Pew Center Poll showing 50 percent of all

Americans support control laws, as opposed to 48 percent, who oppose them. Finally, a 2013 Gallup poll indicates that American opinions over the Affordable Healthcare Act are very split, with 50 percent of Americans favoring it and 48 percent not favoring it. The United States is very divided about how to approach each issue. For these reasons (the issues are current and are polarizing), the issues of legalizing marijuana for recreational use, gun control, and the Affordable Healthcare Act were selected (these reasons are summarized in **Table 4.2 Political Conditions**).

Political Attitudes	Recent	Polarizing
Legalizing marijuana	Colorado was the first state to legalize the use of recreational marijuana in 2012 (Ferner, 2012)	58% of Americans favor legalizing marijuana for recreational use (2013 Gallup poll)
Gun control	23 executive actions were taken in 2012 but a bill failed to pass the Senate (Lucas, 2014). More discussion following recent shootings and state legislations (Buchsbaum, 2014).	50% of Americans support stricter gun control laws while 48% oppose them (2013 Pew Center Poll)
The Affordable Healthcare Act	Passed in 2010 (Stolberg & Pear, 2010) and Republicans still vow to repeal it (O'Keefe, 2014).	50% of Americans favor the Act; 48% oppose it (2013 Pew Center Poll)

Table 4.2 Political Conditions

After determining what political issues to use, the authors then determined how to emulate individuating information in social media. Much discussion surrounded how to properly represent profiles that were low in "individuating information." This issue was especially difficult because both Facebook and LinkedIn allow users to provide

information about work experience (and even in Facebook, this is generally filled out, though not in as much detail as on LinkedIn), a form of individuating information. It was decided, then, to use the organizational psychology (McCarthy et al, 2010) definition of "individuating information" to interpret that our "high" condition would clearly be related to the fictional job applicant's job and the "low" condition would be other information that was not at all related to the applicants' employment. To exemplify this, it was determined that the individuating information would come in the form of a status update. In the first iteration of the profiles, individuating information was consistent across all three experiments (that is, all three experiments used the same worded status update) but over the course of pre-tests and pilot testing, the individuating information status updates became different (though of equivalent content) across each experiment.

Initial profiles were pre-tested to determine how effective they were at emulating our desired conditions. Seven graduate business students met with the author and viewed three randomized profiles and their corresponding questions from established surveys. The research subjects spoke or recorded thoughts or concerns they had about the survey and profiles and provided feedback for improving the profiles. In particular, concerns were raised that the profiles did not appear "authentic" enough and simply did not contain enough information to appear "real" to subjects (this is discussed further in the next chapter as well). Drawing on the pre-test results, the author further researched Facebook and LinkedIn again, paying attention to real-life "pairs" of profiles (individuals who had a Facebook and LinkedIn profile) and how the information and its presentation changed across platforms. A second iteration of profiles were created and populated with more innocuous information, such as likes, places and pictures, in an effort to improve

authenticity of the profiles. Feedback indicated the profiles only needed minimal changes (for example, mapping "places" and status updates together) and the third iteration was then pilot-tested (n=35) with undergraduate business students. Eight different surveys were used, all of them randomizing the order of experimental profiles shown to the students. Results indicated no significant changes were needed prior to conducting full scale data collection.

We then programmed a website to randomly send students to one of eight different surveys. Each survey contained three profiles to view, followed by a series of questions. We ensured that subjects saw a profile from each political issue/condition (that is, subjects would not view two Trent profiles in a row, which would certainly lower authenticity of the profiles) but randomized the condition and order in which our subjects viewed each profile. Subjects received a recruiting email that linked them directly to the randomized surveys with randomized profiles (results will be discussed in detail in the next chapter).

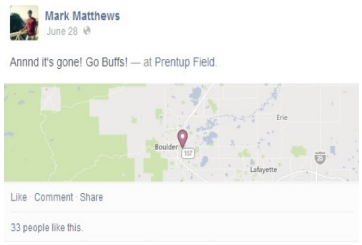
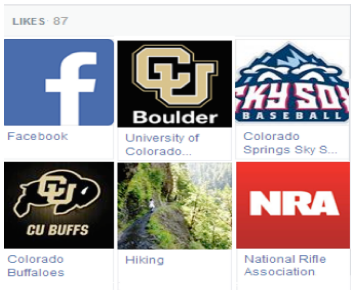
Experimental Design

Like our research model, the experiment included three factors (individual political attitudes, individuating information, and the platform) with two levels each. The table below (**Table 4.3 Factor Table**) shows the six experimental selections and manipulations.

Factor	Factor Type	Selection/Manipulation	Level
Political Attitudes	Between	For	1
	Between	Against	2
Individuating Information	Between	High	1
	Between	Low	2
Platform	Within	Facebook	1
	Within	LinkedIn	2

Table 4.3 Factor Table

These six experimental selections are associated with a 2 x 2 x 2 design. Individual attitudes ("for" or "against" one of three political issues consisting of legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act) and individuating information ("high," or containing job-related information or "low," or containing random information unrelated to one's employment) were used as between-subjects variables and platform (Facebook or LinkedIn) was used as the within-subjects design. Within each platform, subjects were divided into seeing profiles that contained individuating information ("high") or did not contain individuating information ("low;" these profiles contained innocuous, non-job-related information). Profiles reflected the three political conditions (legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act), though we assumed (and tested, with empirical evidence presented in the following chapter) that there was no variation between conditions (so, the design is a 2 X 2 X 2 design, as opposed to a 2 X 2 X 2 X 3 design). Examples of the conditions and their levels used in each experiment can be found in the table, **Table 4.4 Experimental Manipulations**.

Political Issue	Condition	High Level	Low Level
Legalizing Marijuana	Political Attitude		
Legalizing Marijuana	Individuating Information		
Gun Control Laws	Political Attitude		
Gun Control Laws	Individuating Information		
The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")	Political Attitude		

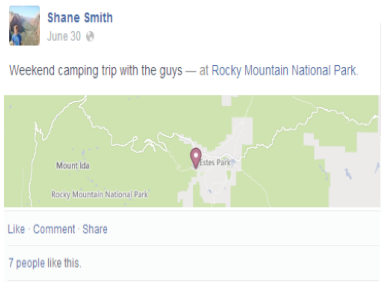
The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")	Individuating Information		

Table 4.4 Experimental Manipulations

The experiment was a post-test only randomized experiment with random selection that assigned participants to different conditions (Campbell et al, 1963; Shadish et al, 2002). Participants were randomly assigned to different treatments (i.e., viewed the social media profiles). Then participants were asked to respond to the manipulation checks and survey questions corresponding to the experimental conditions applied. Previous social media studies used similar designs (Mazer et al, 2007; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009).

To estimate the number of participants needed for this design to have adequate statistical power, a power analysis was conducted. The number of experimental conditions (in this study, there are eight conditions) provided the basis for the power analysis. The power analysis involved assuming an effect size in the population, the desired level of statistical power, and the correlations among the measures. Population effect sizes may be classified as small, medium, or large, and as the effect size increases, the recommended sample size decreases. Regarding desired level of power, general consensus recommends a power of .8 (Cohen, 1988; 1992; Cohen et al., 2003). Since a within-subjects design was used for the platform, the correlation between repeated measures needed to be taken into account. Generally, the correlation coefficient among repeated measures is assumed to be .5 (Cohen, 1988).

The statistical power analysis software package for the social and behavioral sciences, G*Power 3.1, was used to calculate the required sample size. Prior to specifying input, we selected Repeated Measures ANOVA for Testing because this option works best for design testing within factors. Following that selection, the following input parameters were selected: eight groups (for eight conditions), a moderate effect size (f=.25), an alpha level of .05, a desired power level of .80, and a correlation of .5 between the repeated measures. The results indicated a sample size of 192 (24 participants per group) was acceptable. The figure below (**Figure 4.3 Sample Size and Power Relationship**) illustrates the relationship between sample size and power level (that is, the greater the sample size, the better the power of the test).

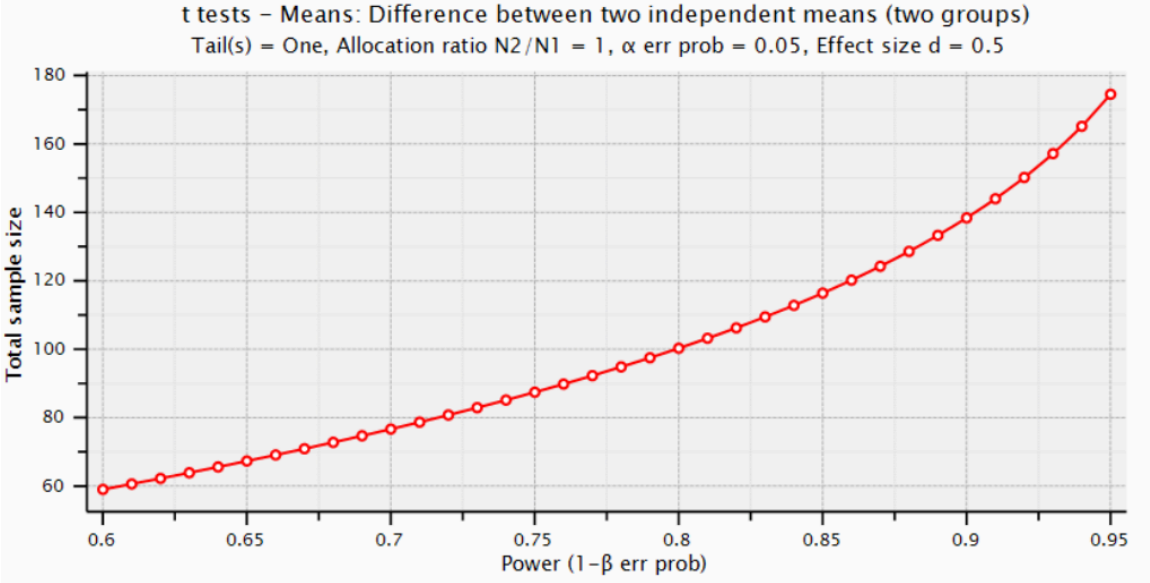


Figure 4.3 Sample Size and Power Relationship

Experimental Procedure

Upon receiving the recruitment email (some classes also received an announcement about the study), participants clicked on a link that randomly assigned them to one of eight potential research surveys created using Qualtrics, an online survey

software, containing randomized social media profiles for each of the three political issues. Each participant was informed of his/her IRB rights and signed the approved Informed Consent Letter (in this case, they clicked the radio button saying, "I consent." This letter is shown in **Figure 4.4 Informed Consent Letter**).

The Questionnaire

Phil Roth, Jason Thatcher and Julie Wade are inviting you to take part in a research study. Phil and Jason are professors at Clemson University and Julie is a PhD student there. The purpose of this research is to examine the role of social media information in hiring decisions. We ask you to look at these social media pages and tell us some of your reactions to them. The study will take 20 to 25 minutes.

We think you will find the study interesting and do not see any risks or discomfort from viewing social media information. You might find it interesting to consider the use of social media pages in the hiring process and we hope to learn how people react to them.

We are not interested in any one particular person's reaction to the social media pages. Instead, we will only report data aggregated across all participants. As such, we will do everything we can to protect your privacy and confidentiality. We will not tell anybody outside of the research team that you were in this study or what information we collected about you in particular.

You do not have to be in this study. You may choose not to take part and you may choose to stop taking part at any time. You will not be punished in any way if you decide not to be in the study or to stop taking part in the study. If you decide not to take part or to stop taking part in this study, it will not affect your grade in any way.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Phil Roth at Clemson University at 864-656-1039 (rothp@clemson.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights in this research study, please contact the Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at 864-656-6460 or irb@clemson.edu. If you are outside of the Upstate South Carolina area, please use the ORC's toll-free number, 866-297-3071.

You must consent before you can complete this experiment.
❍ I consent.

Figure 4.4 Informed Consent Letter

Then, participants were supplied with instructions for viewing each profile and completing the questionnaires corresponding to them, as well as being told, "Remember that this profile is intended to represent a college student who is applying for an entry level management job in your organization. You are in the role of a hiring manager who is trying to hire the best people for your organization." Subjects were asked to form an impression of that job candidate and after viewing the profile, subjects filled out a brief questionnaire asking them to evaluate the job candidate. The questionnaire included manipulation checks for each attitude-based condition. The table below outlines the experimental procedure (**Table 4.5 Experimental Procedure**).

Experimental Procedure
Step 1: Subject clicks on survey link provided in e-mail
Step 2: Subject is randomly assigned to a questionnaire in Qualtrics
Step 3: Subject reads IRB rights and signs "Informed Consent" page (clicks the corresponding radio button)
Step 4: Subject reads instructions for completing each experiment and questionnaire
Step 5: Condition Administered – Subject views first social media profile
Step 6: Subject fills out questionnaire for first social media profile
Step 7: Condition Administered – Subject views second social media profile
Step 8: Subject fills out questionnaire for second social media profile
Step 9: Condition Administered – Subject views third social media profile
Step 10: Subject fills out questionnaire for third social media profile
Step 11: Subject completes demographic information questions
Step 12:Subject is debriefed

Table 4.5 Experimental Procedure

Measures and Manipulations

The following subsections explain the perceptual measures and experimental manipulations used in the experiments. First, measures of perceived similarity, liking and hireability will be discussed. Next, the experimental manipulations will be explained in more detail, followed by a section on control variables.

Perceptual Measures

After viewing a social media profile (experimental condition), our respondents were instructed to fill out a brief set of questions about the profile. This subsection describes the perceptual measures used in this study.

Perceived Similarity

Perceived similarity refers to the extent to which managers perceive themselves as similar (or alike) to a job applicant (Engle & Lord, 1997). Assessment tools for perceived similarity should measure whether the evaluator or experiment subject felt that he/she can relate with or was analogous to the job candidate he/she evaluated. We used the five-item scale by Tepper, Moss, and Duffy (2011) and adapted it to assess job applicants instead of subordinates. Our items began with the stem "This job applicant and I…" and the statements were "…are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values," "…analyze problems in a similar way," "…think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem," "….are alike in a number of areas," and "…see things in much the same way." Responses were made on a seven point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree," = 7, "strongly agree"). In previous research endeavors, the items have tested at an overall reliability of .96. The scale in its entirely is detailed in **Table 4.6 Perceived Similarity Scale.**

Perceived Similarity Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
This subordinate and I…	This job applicant and I…
1. Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	1. Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values
2. Analyze problems in a similar way	2. Analyze problems in a similar way
3. Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem	3. Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem
4. Are alike in a number of areas	4. Are alike in a number of areas
5. See things in much the same way	5. See things in much the same way

Liking

Liking refers to an attraction or positive feeling towards another individual (Byrne, 1961). A measure of this construct should evaluate whether the study participants felt positively toward the job candidate they evaluated. We used the interpersonal attraction/liking scale from Wayne and Ferris (1990). It was adapted from liking a subordinate to liking an applicant by changing the word "subordinate" to "job applicant" in the items. The statement included:

How much do you like this job applicant?

Ratings and anchors: 1 = I don't like this job applicant at all, 3 = I neither like nor dislike this job applicant, 5 = I like this job applicant very much.

The next three items all used a different response scale. We adapted the number of items on the scale from 5 to 7 to increase clarity of scale readings and added the word "likely" to the statement, "I think this job applicant would make a good friend" to keep consistent language throughout the statements. Wayne and Ferris tested the Cronbach's alpha for this scale at .86 in their study. **Table 4.7 Liking Scale** details the scale and its items.

Liking Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
How much do you like this subordinate? Indicate your agreement with the following statements. 1. I would likely get along well with this subordinate. 2. Supervising this subordinate would likely be a pleasure. 3. I think this subordinate would likely make a good friend.	How much do you like this applicant? Indicate your agreement with the following statements. 1. I would likely get along well with this job applicant. 2. Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure. 3. I think this job applicant would likely make a good friend.

Table 4.7 Liking Scale

Hireability

We measured overall hireability in two ways. First, we used items from the highly cited job performance scale of Williams and Anderson (1991) that included both in-role and extra-role behaviors. We pared the scale down by including only those items that loaded most highly on their relative factors in Williams and Anderson's factor analysis (for a similar approach see Shoss, Eisenberger, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013). We chose in-role performance behaviors with the highest loadings (e.g., above .80) (3 items). We chose OCB-Individual items with loadings above .75 (3 items) and OCB-Organization items were chosen above .75 loading (1 item) (see **Table 4.8 Williams and Anderson's Factor Analysis**).

Results of Factor Analysis of Performance Items – Oblique Rotation (n = 127)

Scale Items	IRB	OCBI	OCBO
1. Adequately completes assigned duties.	.83*	−.09	.20
2. Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.	.88*	.05	−.00
3. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.	.87*	.01	.06
4. Meets formal performance requirements of the job.	.83*	.04	−.09
5. Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation.	.52*	.12	−.11
6. Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform. (R)	.64*	−.04	.22
7. Fails to perform essential duties. (R)	.72*	−.05	.04
8. Helps others who have been absent.	−.11	.75*	.17
9. Helps others who have heavy work loads.	.07	.73*	.14
10. Assists supervisor with his/her work (when not asked).	.21	.42*	.17
11. Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.	−.10	.75*	.01
12. Goes out of way to help new employees.	.08	.82*	−.17
13. Takes a personal interest in other employees.	.00	.77*	.01
14. Passes along information to co-workers.	.24	.57*	.01
15. Attendance at work is above the norm.	.00	.17	.58*
16. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	−.12	−.04	.80*
17. Takes undeserved work breaks. (R)	.20	.02	.57*
18. Great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations. (R)	.18	.01	.36*
19. Complains about insignificant things at work. (R)	.10	.13	.35*
20. Conserves and protects organizational property.	.21	.10	.12*
21. Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.	.18	.20	.36*
Eigenvalue (Unrotated solution)	8.37	2.29	1.57
Percent variance explained	39.9%	10.9%	7.5%
Cumulative percent variance explained	39.9%	50.8%	58.3%

Note. *Indicates the loading that should be the highest for each item. Underlined items were included in IRB, OCBI, and OCBO scales.

Table 4.8 Williams and Anderson's Factor Analysis

We also changed the tense and focus such that we asked recruiters to rate how well they would expect a job applicant to perform in these areas. We used the following items for in-role performance (i.e., asked participants viewing social media stimuli to rate the extent to which the applicants could be expected to): adequately complete assigned duties, perform tasks that are expected of him/her, and meet formal performance requirements of a job. We used the following OCB-Individual items: help others who have heavy work loads, go out of his/her way to help new employees, and take a personal interest in other employees. The OCB-Organization item was "give advance notice when unable to come to work." A seven point rating scale was used, as per Williams and Anderson. Details about the scale are in **Table 4.9 Hireability Scale.**

Hireability Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
1. Adequatelys complete assigned duties . 2. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her. 3. Meets formal performance requirements of a job. 4. Helps others who have heavy workloads. 5. Goes out of way to help new employees. 6. Takes a personal interest in other employees. 7. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	1. Adequately complete assigned duties . 2. Perform tasks that are expected of him/her. 3. Meet formal performance requirements of a job. 4. Help others who have heavy workloads. 5. Go out of his/her way to help new employees. 6. Take a personal interest in other employees. 7. Give advance notice when unable to come to work.

Table 4.9 Hireability Scale

Experimental Manipulations

To test our research model, an experiment with three separate political issues was conducted. For each issue (legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act), eight social media profiles were created (all of these profiles are shown in Appendix C: Social Media Profiles). All profiles contained the same information: the job candidate graduated from a university located in Colorado in the class of 2014 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. This university was selected, first, because it has an even Democrat- to Republican split (according to a 2014 Gallup poll, 40.3 percent of all citizens identify as "Democrats" and 44.1 percent identify themselves as "Republicans."). Further, Colorado has reached national prominence for being the first state to legalize the use of recreational marijuana.

Social Media Platform

Social media platform was manipulated in this study. Profiles were created in two separate social media platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn. Facebook was selected because since its inception in 2004, it has the most users, with 757 million members (Sedghi, 2014, numbers recorded as of December 31, 2013). Facebook is used in a number of social media studies (Nosko, 2006; Mazer et al, 2006; Kluemper & Rosen, 2009). It is

also considered a “fun, entertaining” website, creating the “hedonic” platform needed for this manipulation. LinkedIn was selected because it is a popular professional networking website, founded in 2003, with over 332 million members logging in (from LinkedIn’s press center, as of November 2014). This site is known for enabling professional networking as well as corporate recruitment and exemplified our “utilitarian” condition.

Social media platform was manipulated by creating distinct profiles. Four profiles were created to emulate Facebook as a platform (having the “for” political attitude and “high” level of individuating information, having the “for” political attitude and “low” level of individuating information; having the “against” political attitude and the “high” level of individuating information; and having the “against” political attitude and “low” level of individuating information) and four profiles were created to emulate LinkedIn as a platform (having the “for” political attitude and “high” level of individuating information, having the “for” political attitude and “low” level of individuating information; having the “against” political attitude and the “high” level of individuating information; and having the “against” political attitude and “low” level of individuating information) (see, **Table 4.2 Experimental Manipulations** illustrates this).

Political Conditions

Profiles manipulated job candidates’ political attitudes. An individual's political attitude is his/her tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or the symbol (in this case, a political issue) of that object in a certain way" (Katz & Stotland,1959, p. 428). For each experiment, there was a “for” level of expressed political attitudes (in support of a particular political issue, for example, one condition posts an event supporting the Affordable Healthcare Act), and an “against” level of expressed political attitudes (in

opposition of a particular political issue, for example, one condition posts an article against legalizing marijuana).

It should be noted, translating information across platforms was a concern for this study. Though Facebook and LinkedIn have similar feature sets, members use them differently and thus, information conveyed in one platform does not necessarily seamlessly transfer to the other platform. Since LinkedIn is primarily used as a professional networking and job search platform with a utilitarian purpose, members are less likely to express political attitudes, for example, through posting long, ranting status updates (a practice that is acceptable and in the norm for a hedonic platform, such as Facebook). When manipulating political attitudes within profiles, it was important to consider the means by which this information might manifest itself in a way that remained appropriate for the platform. Across platforms, political attitudes may be manifested in sharing articles in status updates; "liking" politically-charged posts, pictures and articles; and joining political groups, among other ways.

Legalizing Marijuana Condition

This condition involved the political issue of legalizing marijuana in the United States. For the "for," or supporting condition, the employment candidate supported the legalization of recreational marijuana. To operationalize this condition, social media profiles were created for a job applicant, "Mark Matthews," a fictional recent business graduate from the University of Colorado. An article was posted to his profile (note, all manipulations are posted in **Table 4.2 Experimental Manipulations** and full profiles are indexed in Appendix C). Our fictional applicant indicated his support of marijuana legalization in the form of a status update that shared an article on his profile (note, this

manipulation was used across both the Facebook and LinkedIn profile in the "For" condition) called, "Five Reasons Legalizing Marijuana is Great!," along with a small picture indicating support of this political issue.

For the "against" condition, our job applicant opposed the legalization of marijuana. Our fictional Mark Matthews indicated he did not support marijuana legalization by posting an article as a status update; this condition was used across both Facebook and LinkedIn profiles. The article was called, "Five Reasons Legalizing Marijuana Stinks" and was accompanied by a small picture indicating opposition to the issue.

As a manipulation check, respondents were asked, on their post-viewing survey, "Does this applicant support about legalizing marijuana?," followed up by an item asking the respondent if he/she supports legalizing marijuana (Yes/Maybe/No/Decline to Specify), and how strongly he/she supports or does not support legalizing marijuana, on a 7-point Likert scale (where 1 = Strongly Don't Support and 7 = Strongly Support).

Gun Control Condition

This condition involved gun control laws in the United States. For the "for" condition supporting a political issue, the applicant supports the second amendment and signals he does not support passing gun control laws. Our fictional job applicant was named "Trent Thompson" and had the "National Rifle Association" listed under his "Likes." This condition was administered in both the Facebook and LinkedIn platform conditions.

For the "against" condition in opposition of a political issue, the candidate signaled he did support passing gun control legislation. Trent, a recent business graduate

from the University of Colorado, had "Americans for Common Sense Gun Control" listed under his "Likes." This condition was administered in both the Facebook and LinkedIn platform conditions.

These manipulations were checked by asking the respondents in the following survey, "Does this applicant like the National Rifle Association?" They were then asked, "Do you support passing stricter gun control laws?" (Yes/Maybe/No/Decline to Specify), followed by a question asking how strongly they supported this position (where 1 = Strongly Don't Support and 7 = Strongly Support").

Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") Condition

This political issue involved The Affordable Healthcare Act (also referred to as "Obamacare."). In our "for" condition supporting this political issue, the job candidate, named "Shane Smith," supported the passage of The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare"). Fictional Shane posted a status update. The status update showed that this job applicant was attending an event called, "We Stand For Obamacare." This status update was posted across both platform conditions (Facebook and LinkedIn).

For the "against" condition in opposition to this political condition, the applicant did not support the The Affordable Healthcare Act. The fictional job candidate profile feature a post (status update) in the form of an event the applicant was attending. The event read, "Taking a Stand Against Obamacare." This status update was posted across both platform conditions (Facebook and LinkedIn).

To check the manipulation, respondents were asked, "Does this applicant support the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")?" They were then asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "I support the Affordable Healthcare Act"

(Yes/Maybe/No/Decline to Specify) and to indicate the strength of this statement on a 7-point Likert scale where 1= Strongly Don't Support and 7 = Strongly Support).

Individuating Information

The fictional job candidates' individuating information was also manipulated in this study. Individuating information is any job-related information about an applicant, such as knowledge, skills or abilities; individuating information includes any information that is job-related (McCarthy et al, 2010). For each political issue, two different levels of individuating information were used ("high" levels of individuating information indicated the presence of job-related, or individuating information and "low" levels of individuating information indicated a lack of individuating information and were instead populated with innocuous information in the same media form).

Transferring information across platforms was a notable issue for this particular variable under consideration. Since LinkedIn is a professional networking website and members can recreate their entire resume on their profile, members may supply more individuating information on this particular platform. For example, when editing one's profile, LinkedIn members have the option to provide information about their work experience with dates and descriptions, tag relevant skills and endorsements, discuss honors and awards, and so on. Facebook users can discuss work experience but do not have a specific area in which they may delineate relevant skills and endorsements or discuss their honors and awards. On LinkedIn, colleagues or supervisors can recommend or "promote" skillsets of job candidates, while this option is not available on Facebook (for example, a manager might post "Great job today" on his/her employee's wall

instead). For this reason, it was important to create profiles with individuating information that were appropriate for the platform itself and its main purposes for use.

For the "high" condition of individuating information, the condition needed to contain job-related information about our fictional employment candidates. In each case and in each platform condition, the fictional employment candidate posted a manipulation in the form of a status update containing job-related information (for example, Trent Thompson posted "I was named Employee of the Month for having top sales numbers in June!!" Posts for Shane and Mark were created in the same media form – text-based status updates – and used similar wording).

For the "low" condition of individuating information, the condition needed to contain information that was not related to the job applicant's job, or KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities appropriate for employing a job applicant). Instead, it was important to post information that was more innocuous in nature. For example, each fictional employment candidate posted individuating information on his Facebook or LinkedIn condition in the form of a status update containing information that was clearly not job-related (for example, Mark Matthews posted a status update saying "Annnd it's gone! Go Buffs!" in support of the local minor league baseball team). Posts for Shane and Trent were created using similar versions of innocuous information in the same text-based form (more discussion on developing innocuous information is discussed in the following chapter, as the profiles were populated with innocuous information in order to appear "authentic").

Control Variables

We controlled for relevant demographic and psychological variables. Control variables, their definitions, and their measures are presented in Appendix A**.** Though research results as to the impact of gender and ethnicity are mixed in psychology (as per the discussions in Chapters 2 and 3), they are popular variables in many studies using demographic similarity theory (McCarthy et al, 2010). We measured these demographic factors, as well as sexual orientation.

We also measured individual cognitive absorption, a user's deep involvement with social media, was evaluated using the Cognitive Absorption scale developed by Agarwal and Karahanna (2000). We were concerned that a more "entertaining" platform, such as Facebook, might engage our subjects more, possibly influencing our results, so this scale was used to account for how engaged subjects were with the two different platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn. The scale consists of five components (control, focused immersion, curiosity, heightened enjoyment and temporal disassociation), all with reliabilities ranging from .83 to .93. Items, such as "time appears to go by very quickly when I am using the web," are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree").

In the study's instructions, we clearly informed respondents that there was no right or wrong way to answer our survey items. We also suggested that viewing the social media profiles could be seen as a "fun" activity as well in an effort to alleviate pressure respondents might feel to answer in a socially desirable way. We also felt that, since our subjects were judging others instead of reporting on their own behaviors, our subjects might be more honest (Collerton et al, 2006). However, since the political beliefs we

manipulated are considered polarizing, some applicants might still attempt to respond in a way they deem more socially appropriate. As such, we controlled for social desirability, an individual's proclivity to respond to items in a way they might feel is socially admired, using a shortened version of the Marlow and Crowne social desirability scale (Reynolds, 1982). The scale had a reliability of .82 in the literature. The scale consists of statements, such as "I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble" and operates on a 7-pt Likert scale.

As a procedural control, we also controlled for information presented in the profiles that was not directly relevant to the manipulations. All profiles, not including the experimental manipulations, contained the same information in forms appropriate for the platform condition. For example, for each political issue, the same profile picture was used for every condition of the experiment. All fictional job applicants were business graduates from the University of Colorado with similar work experience (note, across experiments, the wording was varied and the names of the companies the applicants currently worked for were also varied).

Finally, we controlled for relevant professional and educational experience. our research subject were also asked, "Have you ever interviewed anyone before?," "Have you been trained in how to evaluate social media?" and "have you served in a human resources management position before?."

Pre- and Pilot-Testing

Pre- and pilot tests were conducted before performing our full scale experiment. We started with two pretests to study measures, manipulations and procedures. After the pretests, we conducted a pilot-test (n=35 undergraduate business students) to simulate the

full-scale experiments. The pilot test was conducted to test the experimental materials and to ensure the materials, manipulations and procedures worked as intended, including testing for reliability and validity of survey instruments (Dennis & Valacich, 2001). The pilot test also gave us an overall time estimate for how long the procedure would take. Though the sample size was small, we also tested the reliability of the survey instruments for perceived similarity, liking and hireability. Pilot test results are discussed in the next chapter.

Data Analyses

To analyze the hypotheses in our research model, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. Structural equation modeling was selected because our study sought to simultaneously test the paths between the variables in our research model. EQS, a multivariate statistical software analysis package, was used to run our structural equation models.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

A laboratory experiment was designed to test our research model. This chapter explained who the experiment participants were, what task was used, how the experiment was designed including experimental procedures and how constructs in our model were manipulated and measured. We also discussed how the research model will be tested (using structural equation modeling) and why this analysis technique was selected. In the next chapter, assumption tests, measurement and structural model analyses and results of the experiments will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE:

RESULTS

This chapter reports the results from the experiment. It starts with a description of the instrument development process. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was run for all three political issues to test the factor structure and reliability and validity of our latent variables in the research model; this process will be explained in more detail below. Next, we describe the research sample. After that, the chapter details the quality criteria and descriptive statistics of our study variables and manipulations. Finally, it examines the results from the hypotheses testing.

To test the hypotheses, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was selected. This analysis combines path and factor analyses to measure the predictive order of latent variables (variables that cannot be directly measured; in this experiment, for instance, "perceived similarity" is an example of a latent variable). Structural Equation Modeling allows researchers to simultaneously assess multiple relationships within a model and to assess it for its "goodness-of-fit" using the normal chi-square statistic and the Satorra-Bentler chi-square statistic, a robust measure of fit, where the smaller the size of the chi-square statistic, the better the model fit. We also measured the model fit using robust measures, such as Bentler's Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and RMSEA intervals, and the non-robust measure, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) (Kline, 2011). Similarly to our CFA process, three separate models for each political issue were run and based on the results of these analyses of each model, we ran one complete model to encompass the data sets from these models. In addition to SEM, we used general linear modeling to study our

moderated relationships. Below, we outline the process taken to analyze the experimental data in more detail and how the data was analyzed.

Experimental Materials and Survey Instrument

Here, we describe the development of the task and manipulations, as well as the questionnaire used in this study. First, we will describe how we developed and pretested the experimental task and manipulations. Then, we detail the pre- and pilot testing of the survey instrument, which accompanied the experimental task, as well discuss the changes made to the research instrument in response to the pilot. In particular, we focus on creating the social media platforms, since they provided the social media context in which the experiment was conducted.

Experimental Task and Manipulations

Below, we describe how the experimental task was created, as well as how it was pre-tested and pilot tested to calibrate the instrument and manipulations.

Pre-testing Initial Survey Instrument and Experimental Manipulations

The initial survey instrument was extensively pretested to calibrate and adjust it prior to full scale data collection. More importantly, the pre-test was conducted to (Dennis & Valacich, 2001):

1. Ensure respondents were able to identify and notice experimental manipulations, particularly differing information cues ("liking" the National Rifle Association vs. posting an article about legalizing marijuana), thus ensuring the manipulations were a valid level of stimuli.
2. Ascertain whether the profiles appeared authentic to respondents.

3. Determine how to best display social media profiles to respondents. We were concerned with requiring respondents to "memorize" the profiles but our survey software, Qualtrics, did not have an option for displaying the profiles and question sets side by side. We debated between showing respondents profiles above or below question sets, or showing a profile then requiring respondents to progress through to a question set, going back and forth from profile to questions to profile again. Another concern was the time required for each social media profile to load (on some computers, the time was much slower, adding to exhaustion respondents might feel during testing).

3. Evaluate the experimental procedure and questionnaire.

Our sample consisted of graduate students in separate business majors (n = 10) who were instructed to closely examine a set of initial social media profiles and go through the questionnaire. As each respondent took the survey, they were instructed to record any thoughts or comments they had about the profiles or the survey itself. Respondents also pointed out errors they found with questions on the survey.

From our feedback, we determined the initial profiles did not appear or look authentic enough. With only experimental manipulations and identical employment and personal information, the profiles appeared too sparse in information (most social media profiles, especially on Facebook, are loaded with applications, pictures, status updates, personal information and advertisements, though publically accessible profiles do generally contain much less information, generally in the form of pictures and summaries of general information). The researchers devoted time to studying (via being a member of and visiting Facebook and LinkedIn, reading articles about the social network, asking

friends and "friends of friends" for information about their profiles, etc.) more real-life Facebook and LinkedIn profiles, taking notes about features and applications used most often, as well as their location in profiles (in these platforms, users may choose how to arrange their applications). The authors also discussed ways to add innocuous information to each profile used consistently across each platform, such as status updates, likes, dates, places visited, pictures added, and so on, without confounding experimental results. The authors discussed status updates that were similar in wording and in tone (as well as researching popular venues and hobbies in Colorado) that could be used across each condition to populate each social media profile with more information so as to appear authentic without taking away focus from experimental manipulations. Examples of innocuous information are in the table below (in **Table 5.1 Innocuous Information and its Equivalents**).

"About" and Timeline Information on Facebook – Profile on Mostly "Public" Settings	**Application Function**	**Suggested Innocuous Information and its Equivalents (final experiments *italicized)***	**LinkedIn Equivalent**
Places *(also connected to some status updates)*	Marks where the user has been	Parks: *Mesa Verde National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Chipeta State Park* *Hiking/Dog Walking/Running: Bear Lake Trail, Fountain Valley Loop Trail*, on campus, Rim Rock Nature Trail Sports areas*: *Colorado Springs Sky Box* (minor league baseball*), Folsom Field* (CU football), *Prentup Field* (CU baseball) Restaurants: *Chili's,* O'Charley's, *Outback Steakhouse*, Applebee's	Not quite – the closest is possibly joining a group – but it would generally be more difficult for the employer to see that

		Other places: Denver Zoo, *Elitch Gardens Theme Park*, Downtown Aquarium (Denver), *Ogden Theatre,* Pepsi Center (auditorium)	
Likes		Activities: *Hiking, running/jogging*, fishing, bike riding Sports Teams (can also be a separate section in Facebook): *Colorado Buffalo football*, baseball, basketball; Sky Sox baseball (minor league baseball), *Denver Broncos,* Denver Nuggets (basketball), *Colorado Rockies* (MLB) Place of employment Other: *University of Colorado, Facebook (website), Youtube (website), Coca-Cola*, *Starbucks*, music (interests), *oreos*, curly fries, MTV, Skittles, Red Bull, I Flip My Pillow Over to Get to the Cold Side, Buzzfeed (website), dancing, traveling, golf, *camping*, skiing, boating, bowling, McDonalds, Arby's, Hardee's, Wendy's…	Interests in Profile
Groups		*University of Colorado Alumni*, Pac-12 Football Conference, I love my dog, Can we get all Facebook users in one group???, group for employment, Denver Broncos Nation, The Real No Shave November, Outdoor Activity Center (Denver), Photography, AT &T, Verizon, HBO	LinkedIn has groups – difficult to access from a manager's perspective – some of this can be put under "Interests"
Status Updates for Individuating Information *–tied to places where appropriate*		*Took my dog for a walk today, Went for an awesome jog today, Going hiking this afternoon* Let's go Buffalos!!! (tied	Status Updates

		to stadium), *...And it's gone!* Yeah Rockies!!!, Cheering on the Sky Soxx *I was just named Employee of the Month for great customer service numbers, I earned a bonus this month for bringing in most new customers, I had the highest sales numbers this month*, Gave a successful sales presentation this week!, Earned great customer evaluation this week!, etc.	
Place of Employment – sales associate		*New Solutions Inc., Forward! Org., Great Directions Co.*	

Table 5.1 Innocuous Information and its Equivalents

The pre-test enabled development of appropriate social media profiles. Primary comments made by respondents indicated the initial profiles were much too "vanilla-looking" and appeared inauthentic, prompting the author to research sources of innocuous information to give the appearance of authenticity without drawing focus from the experimental manipulations, leading to a second iteration of profiles used in the experiments. A sample social media profile is pictured below in **Figure 5.1 Sample Social Media Profile for Legalizing Marijuana Condition**. This profile was created for Experiment 1: Legalizing Marijuana and contains a condition of high political attitudes about legalizing marijuana and a low instance of individuating information. Note, in this particular profile, sources of innocuous information populating the applicant's profile, including his list of likes (the Denver Broncos, Youtube, Starbucks, etc.) and places he visited (Prentup Field, Longhorn Steakhouse, etc.) provide additional authenticity; the status updates all have a number of "likes" to them and a few of the status updates may

were also mapped correctly with the “places” the applicant has visited. The remaining social media profiles are included in Appendix C of this document.

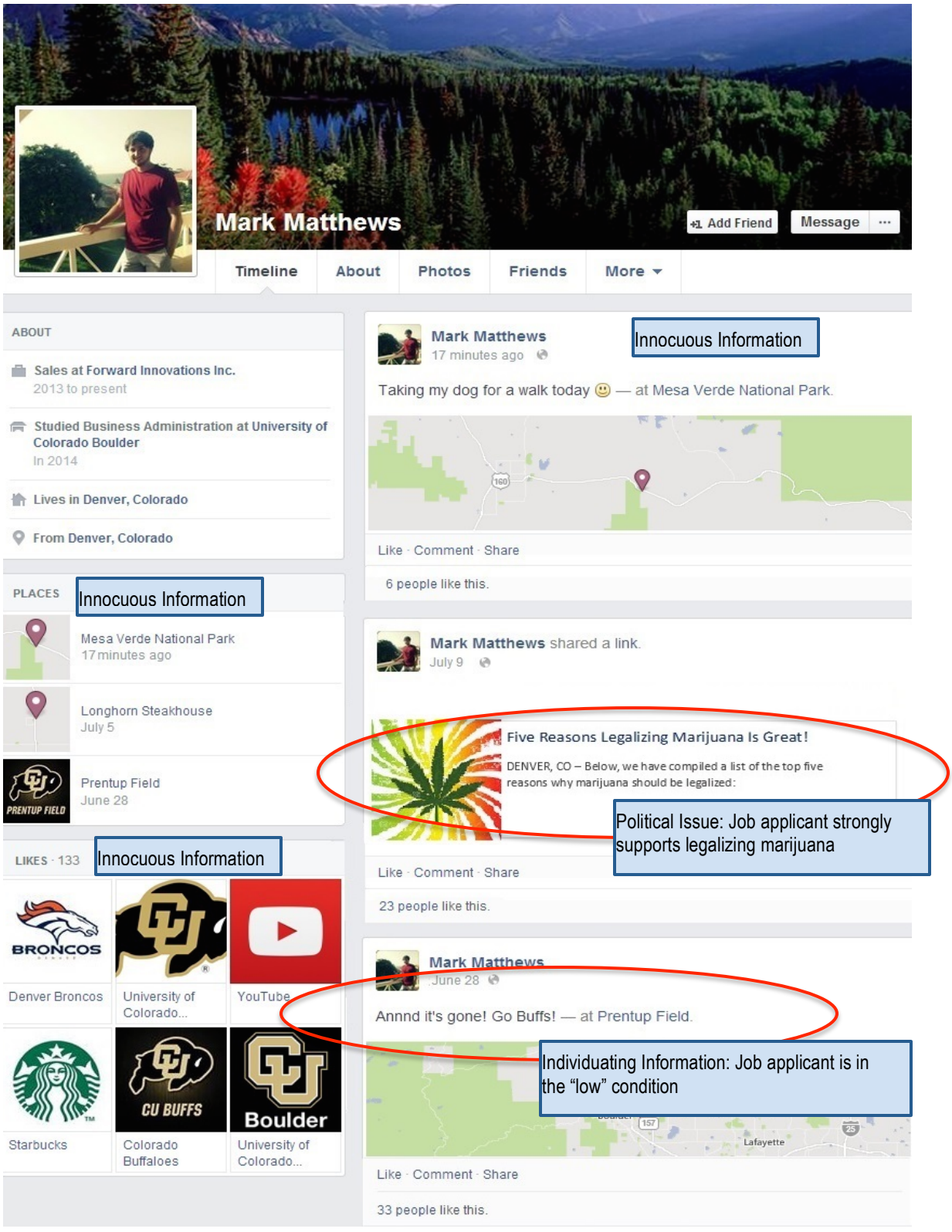


Figure 5.1 Sample Social Media Profile for the Legalizing Marijuana Condition

Development of the Survey Instrument

Along with the development of the experimental task and procedures, we also developed the survey instrument. As indicated in previous chapters, we used established surveys to measure our variables. We elected to use Qualtrics to create a computerized survey. Research indicates respondents tend to prefer computerized surveys to paper-and-pencil surveys and that computerized surveys yield similar results (Collerton et al, 2006; Noyes & Garland, 2007).

Pilot Testing

After developing our preliminary instrument, we conducted a pilot study to simulate the full-scale experiment. This study required the participants to sign the approved Informed Consent Letter (to click the radio button indicating "I consent"). In particular, we had two major objectives for conducting a pilot test: to uncover logistical problems with our survey and to establish an estimate of the total time required to complete the survey (Dennis & Valacich, 2001).

Due to our relatively small sample size for the pilot test (n=35), we were unable to run statistical analyses of our research model. However, we did determine that the experiment ran smoothly and required around 20-25 minutes to administer. We determined that showing the profile at the bottom of each question set was ideal for survey respondents. Further, to ensure respondents were responding to experimental manipulations, as well as providing manipulation checks, we asked an open-ended question, "What did you notice most about this social media profile?" with each profile. In all, for each political issue, we determined the experimental manipulations, regardless of the cue, were visible to our respondents (using descriptive statistics and frequency

charts, we determined 100% of applicants noticed our manipulations in the legalizing marijuana, 98% for gun control and 95% for the Affordable Healthcare Act conditions). We also examined the reliability of our scales, finding acceptable reliability for all of them (ranging from .85 to .93). On the basis of these results, we determined no significant changes needed to be made to our social media profiles or the survey instruments and we should continue on as planned. Below, we discuss the results from our main experiment.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 191 individuals participated in our survey, which was one person short the 192 needed to conduct the experiment according to our power analysis. Of the 270 individuals contacted (this was determined by taking attendance and asking instructors to take and provide attendance numbers), 191 individuals participated, putting our response rate at 71 percent. Consistent with prior research that examines social media and HR decisions (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009), our sample frame consisted of individuals living in the Greenville/Spartanburg area and survey respondents consisted primarily of graduate students from a Southeastern university in the United States and recruiters from a local company (n > 300 employees) through contacts of the dissertation author. Among participants, the survey population consisted of 57.7 percent male respondents and with the majority of respondents indicating an age in the 22-25 year-old range. The majority of respondents identified as White (63.6 percent), Asian (16.8 percent) or Black (5.6 percent), and classified their sexual orientations as heterosexual (88.4 percent). Finally, 80 percent of respondents were classified as graduate students and of that percentage, 61.1 percent consisted of MBA students. Sample characteristics are described in **Table**

5.2 Sample Characteristics (below):

Sample Characteristic	Value
Gender Age	Male (57.7 percent) 22-25 years old (66 percent)
Ethnicity	White (63.6 percent)
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual (88.4 percent)
Education Level	Master's – Business Administration (MBA) (61.1 percent)

Table 5.2 Sample Characteristics

Data Collecting and Cleaning

We collected the data using Qualtrics. Qualtrics provides online survey software that allows customers, companies and academics to collect data from a sample population. This software enables the creation of questionnaires, offers a variety of methods for asking questions, including open text boxes and multiple choice and matrix questions. It also has a "forced validation" option that enables the researcher to require respondents to answer a question before progressing through the survey. The researcher must activate the survey and will then be supplied with a survey link that can be passed on to survey respondents so they may access the survey and complete it. The software has some data analysis capabilities but this is mainly limited to cross tabs. Response data is downloaded into a variety of data analysis software packages, such as SPSS and SAS.

Using the Qualtrics blocking option, we "blocked" survey respondents into eight groups surveys who viewed three social media profiles (one per experiment, randomized) each. Respondents clicked on the survey link and were randomly assigned to one of the eight surveys. Note, the survey questions were the same for each question block; the only difference between surveys was the profiles, or stimuli, our respondents were subjected to. Unfortunately, with the more complex blocking system, we encountered some difficulties when downloading survey results. First, the software counted all survey

responses as "complete;" our closer inspection indicated this was not the case. Qualtrics generally only displays surveys that have been filled out to completion and also has a tab that records responses-in-progress by percentage (the range can run from 0 to 99 percent). However, with the blocking system, Qualtrics recorded all responses as "completed" and appropriate for analysis, even instances where individuals merely clicked on the survey link and then exited the survey (a 0 percent completion). After parsing through this data, of the 225 recorded responses, only 191 responses were actually deemed usable (completed) for data analysis.

Another problem we encountered with Qualtrics was how it coded our variables. Qualtrics provides many options for downloading survey data, including SPSS and Excel. When downloading the data into SPSS, it was discovered that Qualtrics coded variables differently across surveys (for example, for the Liking Scale, item 1, in Survey 1, Block 1, responses were correctly coded on a scale of 1 to 7, as per the Likert scale. Individuals who used other surveys had responses that were coded "7,8,9,18,19,20,21" and "20,21,22,23,24,25,26"). The coding appeared to be different across each item for each scale and was not always uniform across surveys. To clean the data set, we exported survey responses in Excel and created a spreadsheet to fix formatting issues and organize the data. We split each survey response (their evaluations of three social media profiles exemplifying the three experiments) into three responses based on responses per political issue (legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act). Using Excel, we were able to clean and organize the data. From there, the data was exported into SPSS. Further, in SPSS, some variables were "transformed" into separate variables as a reverse code (i.e., negatively-worded items, such as Items 4 and 9 on the cognitive

absorption scale, item five on the liking scale and items 6-10 on the social desirability scale) and then the variables were mean-centered.

Measurement Properties

We detail below the descriptive statistics and quality criteria of our measures and manipulations, as well as the correlations between the construct measures used in this study (see Table 5.3). Before calculating these statistics, we verified that our data met the major assumptions of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). We tested for normality using Mardia's Coefficient, a statistic that identifies nonnormality of data and the cases that contribute most to it (Ullman, 2006). Our normalized estimate was over the recommended statistic of 3.00, indicating nonnormality of data (Ullman, 2006). Based on the Mardia's Coefficient, we identified one case as an outlier and removed it from the analysis (this gave us a change from 47.73 to 39.74) (seen in **Table 5.3 Mardia's Coefficient for Normality of Data (CFA).** Note, this is the coefficient after deleting the outlier. Byrne (2006) provides a solution for non-normal data, suggesting that using a robust methodology and the Satorra-Bentler chi-square statistic provides stable and correct statistics, so we used the ML robust method in EQS for our confirmatory factor analysis.

Multivariate Kurtosis					
Mardia's Coefficient =	440.49*				
Normalized Estimate =	39.74*				
Case Numbers With Largest Contribution To Normalized Multivariate Kurtosis:					
Case Number	8	19	25	48	102
Estimate	702.52	999.62	756.79	877.5	898.11

* After deleting one outlier case

Table 5.3 Mardia's Coefficient – Test for Normality of Data (CFA)

We also checked that our data was normal by looking for skewness and kurtosis; the values fell within the required bounds (were <3 on skewness and though there is some debate as to what makes kurtosis a "problem," all scale points fell under the conservative "rule of thumb," SI<10.0) (Kline, 2011). Skewness and kurtosis statistics and standard deviations are shown in **Table 5.4. (Skewness and Kurtosis Values and Standard Deviations).**

Construct Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Similarity – Condition 1				
Item 1	-0.27	-0.31	-0.71	1.39
Item 2	-0.19	-0.21	0.40	1.11
Item 3	-0.20	-0.37	0.55	1.12
Item 4	-0.27	-0.29	-0.21	1.30
Item 5	-0.20	0.03	-0.41	1.38
Similarity – Condition 2				
Item 1	-0.04	-0.13	-0.59	1.45
Item 2	-0.04	0.15	1.23	1.15
Item 3	0.00	0.05	1.44	1.11
Item 4	0.05	-0.34	-0.15	1.32
Item 5	0.00	-0.14	0.01	1.26
Similarity – Condition 3				
Item 1	0.34	-0.25	-0.26	1.22
Item 2	0.22	0.10	0.34	1.07
Item 3	0.22	-0.01	0.44	1.05
Item 4	0.24	-0.39	-0.14	1.19
Item 5	0.24	-0.17	-0.15	1.20
Liking - Condition 1				
Item 1	-0.21	-0.48	-0.11	0.87
Item 2	-0.24	-0.73	0.46	1.15
Item 3	-0.26	-0.11	0.23	1.14
Item 4	-0.26	-0.32	1.03	0.99
Item 5	-0.20	-0.37	-0.49	1.21
Item 6	-0.27	-0.40	-0.21	1.14
Liking - Condition 2				
Item 1	0.01	-0.33	0.69	0.77

Item 2	0.07	-0.52	0.42	1.14
Item 3	0.02	-0.05	-0.07	1.08
Item 4	0.07	-0.48	0.46	1.16
Item 5	0.07	-0.68	0.49	1.19
Item 6	-0.11	-0.18	-0.54	1.19
Liking - Condition 3				
Item 1	0.32	-0.57	0.68	0.83
Item 2	0.29	-0.47	0.31	1.09
Item 3	0.38	-0.05	-0.78	1.06
Item 4	0.30	0.03	-0.17	1.05
Item 5	0.25	-0.53	0.00	1.20
Item 6	0.24	-0.47	-0.08	1.23
Hireability – Condition 1				
Task Behavior				
Item 1	0.38	-0.05	-0.78	1.06
Item 2	0.38	-0.05	-0.78	1.06
Item 3	0.30	0.03	-0.17	1.05
OCB Individual/Citizen				
Item 4	-0.46	0.02	0.28	1.15
Item 5	-0.47	-0.27	0.31	1.05
Item 6	-0.50	0.05	-0.02	1.22
Hireability – Condition 2				
Task Behavior				
Item 1	-0.31	0.24	-0.61	1.25
Item 2	-0.38	0.20	-0.55	1.26
Item 3	-0.25	0.23	-0.50	1.20
OCB Individual/Citizen				
Item 4	-0.25	0.25	-0.46	1.20
Item 5	-0.30	0.20	-0.32	1.11
Item 6	-0.23	0.25	-0.12	1.19
Hireability – Condition 3				
Task Behavior				
Item 1	-0.30	-0.02	-0.40	1.14
Item 2	-0.26	-0.01	-0.19	1.11
Item 3	-0.18	0.37	0.15	1.07

OCB Individual/Citizen				
Item 4	-0.18	0.45	0.00	1.01
Item 5	-0.15	0.35	0.11	1.01
Item 6	-0.15	0.35	-0.07	1.03

Table 5.4 Skewness and Kurtosis Values and Standard Errors

Manipulation Checks

We conducted manipulation checks to verify the validity of our political attitude manipulations. For the legalizing marijuana political issue, 92.3 (n=176) percent of respondents indicated they saw our manipulation (the status update sharing an article about legalizing marijuana) while the remaining respondents claimed "I did not notice" on the manipulation check. For the gun control political issue, 87 (n=166) percent of all subjects caught our manipulation check (the applicant "liked" an National Rifle Association or Americans for Commonsense Gun Control application). For the Affordable Healthcare Act issue, 98.4 percent (n=188) of respondents claimed they noticed our manipulation check (the manipulation was a status update in the form of an accepted invitation to an "event"), with the remaining 1.6 percent checking "I did not notice." Based on these results, we concluded that the participants perceived our manipulations as intended, implying that our manipulations were successful.

Hypotheses Testing

To test the model hypotheses, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. SEM allows researchers to assess the measurement model and structural model separately (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Using this two-step approach allows the researcher to assess the relationships between the latent constructs, constructs that cannot be

objectively measured and instead are measured using "indicators" or "items" (in our case, our latent measures included perceived similarity, liking and hireability) before assessing the causal relationships that might exist between the variables. To test the measurement and structural models EQS (version 6.1, build 97) was used (Bentler, 1995).

Scale Reliability and Validity

In Chapter 4, we discussed the scales selected for this study and the established reliabilities for them. This section describes the reliability and validity of this sample data. Reliability refers to how consistently a scale measures results and may be indexed with Cronbach's alpha, a statistic that measures internal consistency of measures (how consistent responses are in a measure). (Cohen et al, 2003). Construct validity asks whether a study's scale items actually measure the construct they intend to measure. From this, scales with convergent validity have items that intercorrelate at least moderately with other items the scale, and have discriminant validity if intercorrelations with other scales in the survey are not as high (Klein, 2011).

To verify the dimensionality and reliability of the scales used in this study, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for all three of our political issues; first, we conducted a CFA for each political condition on its own, individually, until good fit was realized. We took care to note any modifications to fit that needed to be made to each individual condition, noting "patterns" of covarying error terms in each conditions. From there, the factor structures for all three conditions were stacked and analyzed. We used these CFA analyses to note reliability and dimensionality problems across issues and to do determine if, for example, an error term correlation in the legalizing marijuana condition would also exist in the gun control issue. The CFA models with their fit

indicates are presented in **Table 5.5 CFA Model Fit Indices – All Political Conditions** and **Table 5.6 CFA Model Iterations and Fit Indices - All Political Conditions.**

Fit Index	Definition	Good	Our Study
Satorra-Bentler Chi-square (S-B Chi-square)	Measures goodness-of-fit for small sample sizes, large models and/or nonnormal samples (Satorra & Bentler, 1988)	NA	**2023.2**
Bentler's Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	An incremental or comparative fit index that assesses fit of a structural model in comparison with the null model (Hu & Bentler, 1999	>.90	**0.96**
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), RMSEA Intervals	A "badness" of fit index, where values closer to 0 are better; includes model parsimony and sample size (Hu & Bentler, 1999)	≤.05, 0,.08	**0.05, .05,.06**
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	The square root of the difference of residuals of the sample covariance matrix and hypothesized model (Hooper et al, 2008)	≤.08	**0.08**

Table 5.5 CFA Fit Indices – All Political Conditions

CFA Model Fit Indices							
	Normal Chi-Square*	**S-B Chi-square***	**p-value**	**CFI***	**RMSEA***	**RMSEA Intervals***	**SRMR**
Initial Model	7293 (d.f. = 1596)	4214.7 (d.f. = 1527)	<.001	0.7	0.1	.1,.1	0.338
Model - Split Hireability	6899.88 (d.f. = 1431)	2771.77 (d.f. = 1340)	<.001	0.83	0.08	.07,.08	0.18
Model - Split Hireability, Deleted Item	6899.88 (d.f. = 1338)	2051.4 (d.f. = 1306)	0.02	0.9	0.06	.05,.06	0.08
Final Model	5271.362 (d.f. = 1304)	2023.2 (d.f. = 1155)	0.01	0.96	0.05	.05,.06	0.08

*** = robust fit indices, S-B = Satorra-Bentler**

Table 5.6 CFA Model Iterations and Fit Indices – All Conditions

Our first model showed substantial misfit (Satorra-Bentler chi-square = 4214.7, CFI = .7, RMSEA = .1) and in the second iteration of our CFA, we measured hireability using a single scale but based upon the results of our analysis, we determined that the hireability scale was multidimensional (measuring two separate components of hireability) and split it into Hireability – Task and Hireability – Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Next, we removed an item from the hireability scale because our fit indices indicated it had multiple error covariances, providing evidence that the item was multidimensional. Our final CFA model involved covarying error variances between the final items in the Hireability –Task and Hireability – OCB scales ("Meet formal performance requirements of a job" and "Go out of his/her way to help new employees," respectively), as our fit index, the Lagrange Multiplier (LM) test indicated doing so improved the overall fit of our model. This model demonstrated acceptable fit (Satorra-Bentler chi-square = 2023.2 with 1155 degrees of freedom, CFI = .96 and RMSEA = .05). Based on these results, we determined the reliability and convergent and discriminant validity of the Similarity, Liking and Hireability two-part scales.

Our similarity scale, which measured how much respondents felt they had in common with our fictional job applicants, had Cronbach's alphas of .92, .92 and .94, and Composite Reliability scores of .93, .93 and .94 in the legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") conditions. The general rule of thumb is that an alpha greater than .7 is an acceptable reliability score (Cohen et al, 2003), while Composite Reliability was calculated using the formula in Fornell & Larcker (1981). We determined the convergent validity by examining the average variance extracted (AVE) for all construct items, with scores of .5 or higher indicating

convergent validity. The AVEs of this scale were .71, .72 and .76, showing convergent validity. The square root of the construct's AVE (along the diagonal in **Table 5.8 Latent Variable Correlations)** was higher than the inter-construct correlations, so the measure was determined to be reliable and valid.

The liking scale, based on the positive feelings subjects had about the job applicant, had Cronbach's alphas of .9, .9 and .87, and Composite Reliability scores of .91, .9 and .88 in the legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") conditions. We determined the convergent validity by examining the average variance extracted (AVE) for all construct items, with scores of .5 or higher indicating convergent validity; the AVE = .61, .61 and .74, indicating convergent validity for the legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and Affordable Healthcare Act. The square root of the construct's AVE was higher than the inter-construct correlations, so the measure was determined to be reliable and valid.

The hireability-task scale, based on the hiring evaluations, had Cronbach's alphas of .92, .92 and .92, and Composite Reliability scores of .97, .97 and .97 in the legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") conditions. We determined the convergent validity by examining the average variance extracted (AVE) for all construct items, with scores of .5 or higher indicating convergent validity; the AVEs = .81, .82 and .8, indicating convergent validity. The square root of the construct's AVE was higher than the inter-construct correlations, so the measure was determined to be reliable and valid. The hireability-OCB scale, based on the hiring evaluations, had Cronbach's alphas of .9, .89 and .89, and Composite Reliability scores of .9, .9 and .9 in the legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable

Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") conditions. We determined the convergent validity by examining the average variance extracted (AVE) for all construct items, with scores of .5 or higher indicating convergent validity; the AVE = .73, .71 and .73 indicating convergent validity. The square root of the construct's AVE was higher than the inter-construct correlations, so the measure was determined to be reliable and valid. The reliability and validity of the scales used in this study is summarized in **Table 5.7 Factor Loadings and Scale Reliabilities** and **Table 5.8 Correlation Matrix.**

Scale and Item Description	Standardized Factor Loading (unstandardized)	S.E.	Alpha	Rho
Condition 1 - Legalizing Marijuana				
Similarity			0.92	0.93
The job applicant and I…				
Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	.86(.93)	0.09		
Analyze problems in a similar way	.82(.91)	0.08		
Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution to a problem	.87(.93)	0.05		
Are alike in a number of areas	.85(.92)	0.06		
See things in much the same way	.87(.93)	0.09		
Liking			0.90	0.91
How much do you like the job applicant?	.78(.89)	0.04		
I would likely get along well with this job applicant.	.84(.92)	0.06		
Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure.	.83(.91)	0.06		
I think this job applicant would likely make a good friend.	.70(.84)	0.06		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.83(.91)	0.08		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.70(.84)	0.11		
Hireability - Task			0.92	0.97
The job applicant can be expected to…				
Adequately complete assigned duties	.92(.96)	0.06		
Perform tasks that are expected of him/her	.91(.96)	0.07		
Meet formal performance requirements of a job	.87(.93)	0.07		
Hireability - OCB			0.9	0.9
The job applicant can be expected to…				

Help others who have heavy workloads	.89(.94)	0.07		
Go out of his/her way to help new employees	.82(.90)	0.08		
Take a personal interest in other employees	.85(.92)	0.09		
Condition 2 - Gun Control Laws				
Similarity			0.92	0.93
The job applicant and I…				
Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	.86(.93)	0.07		
Analyze problems in a similar way	.85(.92)	0.05		
Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution to a problem	.83(.91)	0.05		
Are alike in a number of areas	.82(.90)	0.08		
See things in much the same way	.88(.94)	0.06		
Liking			0.9	0.9
How much do you like the job applicant?	.63(.81)	0.04		
I would likely get along well with this job applicant.	.86(.93)	0.06		
Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure.	.83(.91)	0.07		
I think this job applicant would likely make a good friend.	.81(.90)	0.1		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.86(.93)	0.14		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.69(.83)	0.15		
Hireability - Task			0.92	0.97
The job applicant can be expected to…				
Adequately complete assigned duties	.96(.98)	0.04		
Perform tasks that are expected of him/her	.93(.97)	0.06		
Meet formal performance requirements of a job	.82(.91)	0.11		
Hireability - OCB			0.89	0.9
The job applicant can be expected to…				
Help others who have heavy workloads	.85(.92)	0.08		
Go out of his/her way to help new employees	.78(.88)	0.13		
Take a personal interest in other employees	.89(.94)	0.09		
Condition 3 - The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")				
Similarity			0.94	0.94
The job applicant and I…				
Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	.83(.91)	0.06		
Analyze problems in a similar way	.88(.94)	0.04		
Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution to a problem	.88(.94)	0.05		
Are alike in a number of areas	.82(.90)	0.06		
See things in much the same way	.93(.96)	0.04		
Liking			0.87	0.88
How much do you like the job applicant?	.79(.89)	0.03		

I would likely get along well with this job applicant.	.82(.91)	0.08		
Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure.	.81(.90)	0.06		
I think this job applicant would likely make a good friend.	.79(.89)	0.07		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.60(.78)	0.24		
Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the [Facebook or LinkedIn] website	.63(.80)	0.19		
Hireability - Task			0.92	0.97
The job applicant can be expected to…				
Adequately complete assigned duties	.91(.96)	0.05		
Perform tasks that are expected of him/her	.92(.96)	0.05		
Meet formal performance requirements of a job	.85(.92)	0.07		
Hireability - OCB			0.89	0.9
The job applicant can be expected to…				
Help others who have heavy workloads	.86(.93)	0.04		
Go out of his/her way to help new employees	.85(.92)	0.07		
Take a personal interest in other employees	.86(.93)	0.05		

* = significant loadings

Table 5.7 Factor Loadings and Scale Reliabilities

	Sim(1)	Like(1)	Task(1)	OCB(1)	Sim(2)	Like(2)	Task(2)	OCB(2)	Sim(3)	Like(3)	Task(3)	OCB(3)
Sim(1)	**0.85**											
Like(1)	0.55	**0.78**										
Task(1)	0.28	0.45	**0.9**									
OCB(1)	0.29	0.45	0.62	**0.85**								
Sim(2)	0.36	0.23	0.2	0.13	**0.85**							
Like(2)	0.26	0.28	0.19	0.14	0.58	**0.78**						
Task(2)	0.25	0.19	0.14	0.1	0.36	0.45	**0.91**					
OCB(2)	0.24	0.17	0.09	0.13	0.49	0.47	0.62	**0.84**				
Sim(3)	0.22	0.14	0.28	0.26	0.2	0.19	0.13	0.11	**0.87**			
Like(3)	0.12	0.17	0.32	0.25	0.21	0.31	0.13	0.17	0.58	**0.75**		
Task(3)	0.17	0.27	0.25	0.17	0.2	0.29	0.07	0.02	0.32	0.47	**0.89**	
OCB(3)	0.14	0.2	0.16	0.15	0.29	0.3	0.07	0.06	0.31	0.47	0.63	**0.85**

Sim = Similarity Like = Liking Task = Hireability –Task OCB = Hireability - OCB
Conditions: 1 = Legalizing Marijuana 2 = Gun Control Laws 3 = Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")

Table 5.8 Latent Variable Correlations

Measurement Equivalence in Confirmatory Factor Analyses

For this study, comparison between groups was of importance. Our study was conducted using three separate fictionalized job applicants representing three political conditions for legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare"). Before moving into our structural model, we tested to ensure our

confirmatory factor analyses of the three political conditions had the same pattern of fixed and free factor leadings (that is, that the three conditions were equal, or showed "metric invariance"; Vandengerg & Lance, 2000; Horn & McArdle, 1992). Metric invariance can be tested by comparing the Satorra-Bentler chi-squares of the study's factor structure to a constrained model (with constrained factor loadings, a more restrictive model). The Satorra-Bentler chi-square for our model (2023.2 with 1155 degrees of freedom) was compared to the Satorra-Bentler chi-square (2,000 at 1184 d.f.), yielding a scaled difference of 29.49. This difference was not significant ($p>.2$), providing evidence of metric invariance (the factor structures across each condition have the same factor structure, or are equivalent) (Bryant et al, 2012; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

Common Method Bias

Since common method bias can threaten inferring causality in behavioral science research, we used both procedural and statistical remedies to control for method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). For procedural remedies, we attempted to reduce common method bias by using multiple methods, protecting of respondent anonymity and reducing evaluation apprehension. First, we measured constructs through the use of multiple methods, where possible. For example, to measure "Liking," we used both Likert scales and multiple choice questions. We also varied the anchors of our measures (for example, Hireability was evaluated with a 7-pt Likert scale, as well as a 5-point overall evaluation).

Also, when informing subjects of their IRB rights in their informed consent letter, we assured respondents that their answers were anonymous, and all personally identifying information was secure and confidential. We also repeated this guarantee in

the recruiting email. We also told our participants that there were no right or wrong answers, and to respond to all questions as honestly as possible. Social desirability was unlikely to occur in this study, since respondents were judging other people (not reporting on their own behavior), though we did control for it as an extra precaution. As a result of our precautions, the likelihood that common method bias might occur was effectively reduced.

Overview of Hypotheses Tests

To test our research model, we used Structural Equation Modeling, a technique that examines relationships between constructs. Our continuous latent variables were mean-centered prior to analyzing them to create stable variables (Cohen et al, 2003).

We ran a structural equation model (SEM) with the EQS 6.0 modeling software. We chose this software because it tests for data normality with Mardia's test and the Cox-Small test. Our Mardia's test statistic = 34.69, indicating evidence of multivariate nonnormality; one case was deleted from the analysis as a result (originally, the statistic was 53.28) (shown in **Table 5.9 Mardia's Coefficient – Test for Normality of Data (Structural Model));** this table reflects the coefficient after deleting the outlier case). Byrne (2006) offers a solution for non-normal data, stating that the use of a robust methodology and the Satorra-Bentler chi-square statistic provides correct statistical analyses, so we used the ML robust method in EQS for our measurement models (note, for our parameter estimates, there was evidence of suppression and non-robust estimates were therefore more reliable).

Multivariate Kurtosis					
Mardia's Coefficient = 406.69*					
Normalized Estimate = 34.69*					
Case Numbers With Largest Contribution To Normalized Multivariate Kurtosis:					
Case Number	8	19	25	48	102
Estimate	665.53	931.86	762.59	875.48	856.04

* = after deleting one outlier case

Table 5.9 Mardia's Coefficient – Test for Normality of Data (Structural Model)

We ran the model to account for responses to social media profiles created in the legalizing marijuana, gun control and Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") Act conditions. Overall, the model Satorra-Bentler chi-square statistic was 1882.35 with (p=.04) (Satorra & Bentler, 1988). The general rule-of-thumb for RMSEA, a parsimony-adjusted index, is that the RMSEA should be under .08 and a 90% confidence interval of RMSEA with a lower bound under .05 and an upper bound under .1 indicates good fit. Our model demonstrates an RMSEA of .05 and sits between between a confidence interval of .05 and .06 (Klein, 2011). The Comparative Fit Index compares fit of the measurement model with a null model with values of over .95 indicating good fit; our model is close to this value at .92 (Hooper et al, 2008). The model fit and hypotheses tests (not including interactions) are included in **Table 5.10 Fit Indices and Model Fit** and **Table 5.11 Model Fit and Parameter Estimates.**

Fit Index	Definition	Good	Our Study
Satorra-Bentler Chi-square (S-B Chi-square)*	Measures goodness-of-fit for small sample sizes, large models and/or nonnormal samples (Satorra & Bentler, 1988)	NA	**1882.35**
Bentler's Comparative Fit Index (CFI)*	An incremental or comparative fit index that assesses fit of a structural model in comparison with the null model (Satorra & Bentler, 1988)	>.95	**0.92**
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA),* RMSEA Intervals*	A "badness" of fit index, where values closer to 0 are better; includes model parsimony and sample size (Klein, 2011)	≤.08, .05,.1	**0.05, .05,.06**
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	The square root of the difference of residuals of the sample covariance matrix and hypothesized model (Hooper et al, 2008)	≤.08	**0.08**

*** = robust fit indices**

Table 5.10 Fit Indices and Model Fit

Model Fit				
Normal Chi-square	5523, d.f. = 1431			
S-B Chi-square*	1882.45, d.f. = 1304, p = .04			
CFI*	0.92			
RMSEA*	0.05			
RMSEA Intervals*	.05,.06			
SRMR	0.08			
Tests of Hypotheses				
Legalizing Marijuana				
	b(β)	**S.E.**	**t-value**	**p-value**
H1	0.49(.72)	0.06 (.06)	8.74 (8.18)	**
H2a	1.15(.67)	0.21 (.25)	5.57 (4.6)	**
H2b	0.99(.67)	0.18 (.21)	5.59 (4.7)	**
H3a	0.08(-.04)	0.14 (.14)	-0.59 (-.59)	>.05
H3b	0.14(.07)	0.13 (.13)	1.1 (1.11)	>.05
Gun Control Laws				
H1	0.37(.77)	0.05 (.06)	7.68 (6.64)	**
H2a	1.26 (.5)	0.32(.35)	3.97 (3.57)	**
H2b	1.15(.57)	0.27 (.28)	4.32 (4.19)	**
H3a	0.8(-.33)	0.15 (.15)	-5.34 (-5.38)	**
H3b	0.43(-.22)	0.12 (.12)	-3.52 (-3.54)	**
The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")				
H1	0.51(.78)	0.05 (.06)	9.47 (9.19)	**
H2a	1.64(1.02)	0.23 (42)	7.02(3.94)	**
H2b	1.13(.85)	0.17 (.21)	6.62 (5.51)	**
H3a	0.83(.4)	0.12 (.12)	7.13 (7.26)	**
H3b	0.66(.37)	0.1 (.1)	6.44 (6.43)	**

Parentheses = robust estimates
*** = robust fit indices, ** = p < .001**

Table 5.11 Model Fit and Parameter Estimates

Legalizing Marijuana Condition

Our manipulation for this experiment involved a fictionalized job applicant named Mark Matthews, who posted a status update in the form of sharing an article to indicate his support or lack of support for the legalization of marijuana.

Hypothesis 1 stated that perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants. Our SEM was conducted to test this hypothesis when subjects were shown social media

profiles of job applicants who posted about the polarizing political issue of legalizing marijuana. Our model showed a significant relationship (b =.49, β = .72, SE = .06, t= 8.74, p < .001), indicating hypothesis 1 was supported. Hence, in a social media context where job applicants post about legalizing marijuana, respondents appear to like applicants who they perceive to be more similar to them.

Hypothesis 2a stated that liking job applicants influences hireability ratings of task behaviors. Our model showed a significant relationship with task (b = 1.15, β = .67, SE = .21, t = 5.57, p <.001) implying hypotheses 2a was supported. It appears that our subjects also gave likeable job applicants significantly higher hireability ratings of expected task performance. Hypothesis 2b (involving organizational citizenship behaviors) was also supported (b = .99, β = .67, SE = .18, t = 5.59, p <.001), indicating this relationship also exists for organizational citizenship behaviors.

Hypothesis 3a and 3b, that individuating information, job-related information about our job applicants, leads to hireability ratings, was not supported in this model for either task (b=.08, β = -.04, SE = .14, t = -.59, p > .05) or OCB (b = .14, β = .07, SE = .13, t = 1.10, p < .05). Individuating information was dummy-coded to reflect profiles that were "low" in individuating information (=0) and "high" in individuating information (=1). For profiles that were "high" in this job-related information, or contained random, innocuous information, the slopes were positive, suggesting that the individuating information to hireability evaluation relationship, in the social media context in this context, was a positive one but was not significant.

To test hypotheses H4 and H5a and H5b, we created interaction terms and ran a general linear model in SPSS using composite variables, following it up by examining the

simple slopes of the significant interactions. We also tested the interactions using latent variables in our structural model in EQS and by running a multilinear model using composite variables. Hypothesis 4 claimed that social media platform, Facebook or LinkedIn, will moderate the perceived similarity and liking relationship. We examined the standardized residuals for outliers (values higher than 3 are considered outliers) and removed one case from this analysis that was considered an outlier. Using the interaction term, we found that this relationship was not significant at F(1,126) = <1.0, .72 We dummy-coded the platform measure (0 = Facebook, 1 = LinkedIn) and individuating information (0 = low individuating information, 1 = high individuating information). Overall, the platform, whether it was Facebook or LinkedIn, did not impact the relationship between similarity and liking in a social media context in the legalizing marijuana condition.

Hypothesis 5 stated platform will moderate the individuating information → hireability relationship. That is, we expected that the individuating information → hireability – task relationship would be strengthened under the Facebook platform, as opposed to a platform designed around working professionals (LinkedIn). We found that this interaction was supported for task performance F(1,171) = 17.65,<.001. We tested this further using analysis of variance (with our hireability variables serving as dependent variables, interactions as fixed factors and all other variables, including control variables, set as covariates). We found that, the means for the Facebook platform are significantly stronger than for the LinkedIn platform (mean difference for Facebook = 2.43, $p < .05$; mean difference for LinkedIn = 1.39, $p = .06$). The means are shown in **Table 5.12 Simple Effects for H5a – Legalizing Marijuana Condition.**

Test of Simple Effects Hireability - Task Behaviors	Platform	
Individuating Information	**Facebook**	**LinkedIn**
Low	0.003	0.55
High	2.43	1.93
Mean difference	2.43*	1.39

Table 5.12 Simple Effects for H5a – Legalizing Marijuana Condition.

We also found that this interaction was supported for hireability regarding evaluations of organizational citizenship behaviors F(1,171) = 15.02,<.001. We tested this further using analysis of variance (post hoc tests) and found that, the Facebook platform had a stronger simple effect (mean difference = 2.11, p = .03), indicating that hireability ratings increase when moving from conditions of low individuating information to high individuating information and the Facebook platforms appears to strengthen this effect. The means are shown in **Table 5.13 Simple Effects for H5b – Legalizing Marijuana Condition.**

Test of Simple Effects Hireability - OCB	Platform	
Individuating Information	**Facebook**	**LinkedIn**
Low	0.48	.44
High	2.59	1.81
Mean difference	2.11*	1.86*

Table 5.13 Simple Effects for H5b – Legalizing Marijuana Condition.

Gun Control Condition

This condition focused on the political condition of gun control. Our experimental manipulation for this experiment involved a fictionalized job applicant named Trent Thompson, who indicated his support or lack of support for the gun control through using

the “Likes” application and “liking” either the National Rifle Association or Americans for Common Sense Gun Control.

Hypothesis 1 stated that perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants. Our measurement model was conducted to test this hypothesis when subjects were shown social media profiles of job applicants who posted about the polarizing political issue of gun control. This model showed a significant relationship ($b = .37$, $\beta = .77$, $SE = .48$, $t = 7.68$, $p < .001$) indicating hypothesis 1 was supported. Hence, in a social media context where job applicants post about gun control laws, respondents appear to like applicants who they perceive to be more similar to them.

Hypothesis 2 stated that liking job applicants influences hireability ratings of task behaviors. Our model showed a significant relationship ($b = 1.26$, $\beta = .5$, $SE = .32$, $t = 3.97$, $p < .001$) implying hypothesis 2 was supported. It appears that our subjects also gave likeable job applicants significantly higher hireability ratings in task performance expected. Our subjects also gave likeable job applicants significantly higher hireability ratings of organizational citizenship behaviors. Hypothesis 2b (involving organizational citizenship behaviors) was also supported ($b = 1.15$, $\beta = .57$, $SE = .27$, $t = 4.32$, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3a and 3b, that individuating information, job-related information about our job applicants, leads to hireability ratings, was supported in this model for task performance expectations ($b = .80$, $\beta = -.33$, $SE = .15$, $t = -5.34$, $p < .001$) and organizational citizenship behaviors ($b = .43$, $\beta = -.22$, $SE = .12$, $t = -3.52$, $p < .001$). Individuating information was dummy-coded to reflect profiles that were “high” in individuating information (=0) and “low” in individuating information (=1). For profiles that were “high” in this job-related information, hireability evaluations involving both

evaluations of expected task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors increased. That is, the presence of individuating information influences hireability evaluations, where high levels of individuating information increased hireability evaluations, while low levels decreased it.

To test hypotheses H4 and H5a and H5b, we created interaction terms and ran a linear regression in SPSS, following it up by examining the simple slopes of the significant interactions. Hypothesis 4 claimed that social media platform, Facebook or LinkedIn, will moderate the perceived similarity and liking relationship. Using the interaction term, we found that this relationship was not significant F(1,118) = >1.0,.67. Overall, the platform, whether it was Facebook or LinkedIn, did not moderate the relationship between similarity and liking in a social media context.

Hypotheses 5a and 5b stated platform will moderate the individuating information→hireability relationship. That is, we expected job-related information would not have as much of an impact on a website designed around working professionals (LinkedIn), as it would for Facebook. We found that this interaction was not supported for task performance F(1,174) = <1.0, p=.38, though we found support for organizational citizenship behaviors F(1,177) = 4.26, p=.04. We tested this further using analysis of variance and found that the Facebook platform strengthened the individuating information → hireability – OCB relationship (mean difference = 1.5, p < .05). The means are shown in **Table 5.14 Simple Effects for H5b – Gun Control Condition.**

Test of Simple Effects Hireability - OCB	Platform	
Individuating Information	**Facebook**	**LinkedIn**
Low	0.3	1.35
High	1.8	1.45
Mean difference	1.5*	0.11

Table 5.14 Simple Effects for H5b – Gun Control Condition

Affordable Healthcare Act Condition

In the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") political condition, Shane Smith, posted a status update in the form of accepting an invitation to an event to support or show opposition to The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare").

Hypothesis 1 stated that perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants. Our model was conducted to test this hypothesis when subjects were shown social media profiles of job applicants who posted about the polarizing political issue of the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare"). The model showed a significant relationship ($b = .51$, $\beta = .78$, $SE = .21$, $t = 9.47$, $p < .001$) indicating hypothesis 1 was supported. Hence, in a social media context where job applicants post about the Affordable Healthcare Act, respondents appear to like applicants who they perceive to be more similar to them.

Hypothesis 2a stated that liking job applicants influences hireability ratings of task behaviors. Our model showed a significant relationship ($b = 1.64$, $\beta = 1.02$, $SE = .23$, $t = 7.02$, $p < .001$) implying hypothesis 2a was supported. It appears that our subjects also gave likeable job applicants significantly higher hireability ratings in task performance expected. Our subjects also gave likeable job applicants significantly higher

hireability ratings of organizational citizenship behaviors. Hypothesis 2b (involving organizational citizenship behaviors) was also supported ($b = 1.13$, $\beta = .85$, $SE = .17$, $t = 6.62$, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3a and 3b, that individuating information, job-related information about our job applicants, leads to hireability ratings, was supported in this model for task performance expectations ($b = .83$, $\beta = .4$, $SE = .12$, $t = 7.13$, $p < .001$) and organizational citizenship behaviors ($b = .66$, $\beta = .37$, $SE = .10$, $t = 6.44$ $p < .001$). Individuating information was dummy-coded to reflect profiles that were "high" in individuating information (=0) and "low" in individuating information (=1). For profiles that were "high" in this job-related information, hireability evaluations involving both evaluations of expected task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors increased. That is, the presence of individuating information influences hireability evaluations.

To test hypotheses H4 and H5a and H5b, we created interaction terms and ran a linear regression in SPSS, following it up by examining the simple slopes of the significant interactions. Hypothesis 4 claimed that social media platform, Facebook or LinkedIn, will moderate the perceived similarity and liking relationship. Using the interaction term, we found that this relationship was not significant $F(1,128) = 1.09$, $p = .37$. Overall, the platform, whether it was Facebook or LinkedIn, did not impact the relationship between similarity and liking in a social media context.

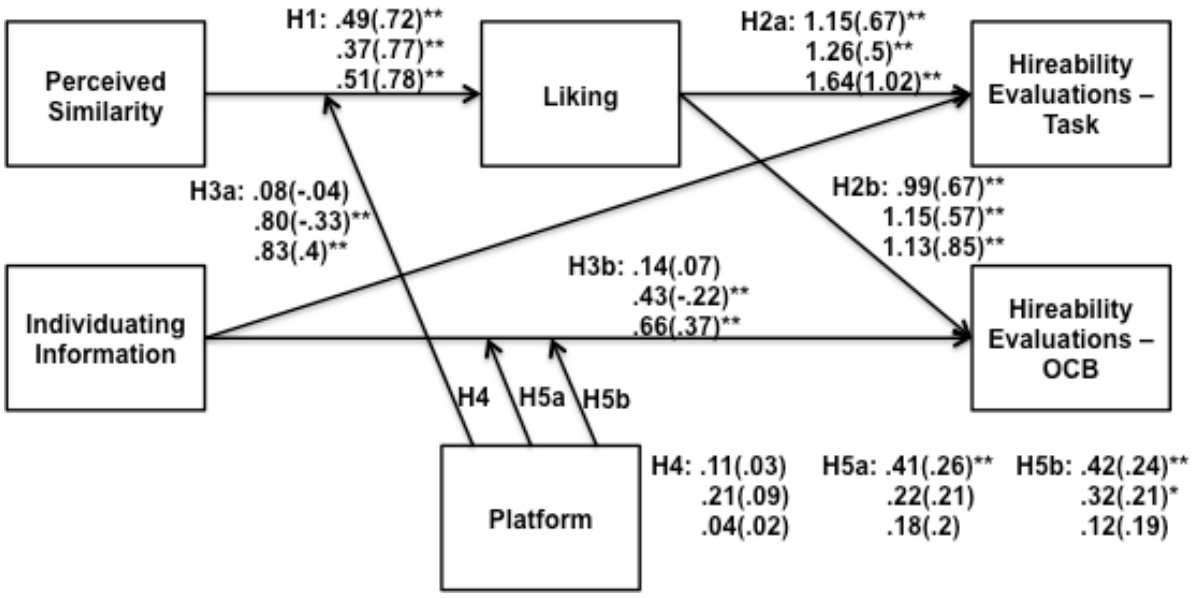
Hypothesis 5 stated platform will moderate the individuating information→hireability relationship. That is, we expected job-related information would not have as much of an impact on a website designed around working professionals (LinkedIn), as it would for Facebook. We found that this interaction was marginally

supported for task performance F(1,170) = 2.75, p= .1. Also, we did not find a significant interaction for Hypothesis 5b at F(1,170) = 1.4, p=.24.

The hypotheses, whether they were supported or not, as well as the statistical evidence, are presented in **Table 5.15 Research Model Hypotheses** and **Figure 5.16: Structural Model with Results.**

Hypotheses	Condition	Supported?
H1: Perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants.	1	✓
H1: Perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants.	2	✓
H1: Perceived similarity influences liking of job applicants.	3	✓
H2a: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (task).	1	✓
H2a: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (task).	2	✓
H2a: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (task).	3	✓
H2b: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (OCB).	1	✓
H2b: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (OCB).	2	✓
H2b: Liking of job applicants influences hireability ratings (OCB).	3	✓
H3a: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (task).	1	✗
H3a: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (task).	2	✓
H3a: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (task).	3	✓
H3b: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (OCB).	1	✗
H3b: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (OCB).	2	✓
H3b: Individuating information influences hireability ratings (OCB).	3	✓
H4a: The social media platform will moderate the perceived similarity and liking.	1	✗
H4a: The social media platform will moderate the perceived similarity and liking.	2	✗
H4a: The social media platform will moderate the perceived similarity and liking.	3	✗
H5a: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (task).	1	✓
H5a: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (task).	2	✗
H5a: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (task).	3	Marginally
H5b: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (OCB).	1	✓
H5b: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (OCB).	2	✓
H5b: The social media platform will moderate the individuating information and hireability relationship (OCB).	3	✗

Table 5.15 Research Model Hypotheses



Order of results: legalizing marijuana, gun control, Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")
( ) = standardized coefficients, * = p<.05, ** = p < .001
Figure 5.2 Structural Model with Results

Structural Invariance in our structural model

For this study, comparison between groups was of importance. Our study was conducted using three separate fictionalized job applicants representing three political conditions for legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and The Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare"). We tested to determine whether three political conditions had the same pattern of parameters (that is, that the three conditions were equal, or showed "structural invariance"; Vandengerg & Lance, 2000; Horn & McArdle, 1992). Structural invariance can be tested by comparing the Satorra-Bentler chi-squares and independent chi-squares of the study's structural model to a constrained model (with constrained relationship, a

more restrictive model). This test was done to determine whether the relationships in our model were moderated by the political condition (or not).

We first compared Condition 1 (legalizing marijuana) to Condition 2 (gun control laws). Two equality constraints significantly harmed model fit, indicating these relationships were not equal across conditions. The equality constraints for liking→hireability relationships for task (b = 1.15 and 1.26 in the legalizing marijuana and gun control laws conditions) and organizational citizenship behaviors (b =1.15 and 1.13 in the legalizing marijuana and gun control laws conditions) resulted in significant Chi-squares of 18.17 ($p<.001$) and 10.572 ($p <.001$), respectively, where the results for our legalizing marijuana condition were significantly higher than the gun control laws condition for these particular relationships. No other relationships across models tested as significant, indicating the relationships did not differ significantly across conditions.

For Condition 2 (gun control laws) and Condition 3 (the Affordable Healthcare Act), three constraints harmed model fit. Indicating these relationships were not equal across conditions. The liking →hireability relationship constraints for task (b = .1.26 and 1.64 for the gun control and Affordable Healthcare Act conditions, indicating a significantly higher relationship in the Affordable Healthcare Act condition) and organizational citizenship behaviors (b = 1.15 and 1.13 for the gun control and Affordable Healthcare Act conditions, showing a significantly higher relationship for the gun control laws condition) resulted in significant Chi-square values of 5.89 ($p = .015$) and 9.747 ($p = .002$). The individuating information → platform → hireability – OCB constraints harmed model fit as well (b = .41 and .22 for legalizing marijuana and gun control laws, Chi-square = 16.57, $p = .001$), showing a significantly higher relationship

for the legalizing marijuana condition. No other relationships across models tested as significant, indicating the relationships did not differ significantly across conditions.

Finally, for Condition 1 (legalizing marijuana) and Condition 3 (The Affordable Healthcare Act), two constraints harmed model fit, including the individuating information → hireability (b = .08 and .83 for the legalizing marijuana and Affordable Healthcare Act conditions) link for task behaviors (Chi-square = 15.15, p = .02, with a significantly higher relationship in the Affordable Healthcare Act condition) and for the individuating information → platform → hireability – task behaviors (b = .41 and .18 for the legalizing marijuana and Affordable Healthcare Act conditions; Chi-square = 5.802, p = .03). This relationship was significantly higher in the legalizing marijuana condition. No other relationships across models tested as significant, indicating the relationships did not differ significantly across conditions.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reported the results from our data analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM). It detailed how we designed our research instrument, including a description of developing the social media profiles, which created a context surrounding our experimental manipulations. We also discussed the pre-test and the pilot-test. The chapter also examined our measurement scales used in our three different experiments, including reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. We also described the procedural remedies used to reduce potential common method bias, including multiple methods, protecting respondent anonymity, and reducing evaluation apprehension.

Then, we discussed hypotheses testing. Using SEM, three models were tested for our three political conditions concerning legalizing marijuana, gun control and the

Affordable Healthcare Act. Our results indicated significant relationships between a number of relationships, including the similarity to liking (H1 $p<.001$ for all conditions) to hireability (for task – H2a, $p<.001$ for all conditions - and organizational citizenship behaviors – H2b, $p<.001$ for all conditions) relationships, individuating information to hireability evaluations of expected performance (H3a, $p<.05$ for condition 1 and $<.001$ for conditions 2 and 3) and organizational citizenship behaviors (H3b, $p<.05$ for condition one and $<.001$ for conditions 2 and 3), and interactions between individuating information, platform and hireability evaluations (H5a, $p<.001$ for condition 1, and H5b, $p<.001$ for condition 1). We did not find support for the interactions between similarity and liking of job candidates (H4 at $p= .72$, .67, and .37 in conditions 1,2 and 3). We also provided statistical evidence, including models and parameter estimates. In the next chapter, we will discuss these results in more detail, as well as potential implications for research and practices, limitations and concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER SIX:

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine how political attitudes, reflected through three separate political conditions, influences how managers evaluate job applicants on social media. In particular, we focused on the Demographic Similarity Theory as a mechanism for describing how perceived similarity and liking of job applicants influences hireability evaluations in terms of task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors.

In Chapter 2, we reviewed the theoretical perspectives underlying our research model. In particular, we focused on how social media has been covered in the literature and in practical journals. We examined a number of decision-making theories, paying attention to the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm and Demographic Similarity Theory, as well as notions of Individuating Information. Through this literature review, it was determined that much of the research into social media does not involve hiring decisions and in reverse, most literature on the organizational behavior and human resources management side on hiring does not examine decisions from a social media perspective.

Chapter 3 outlined our research model. We hypothesized that perceived judgments of similarity on the manager's part would influence liking of job applicants, which would, in turn, influence hireability evaluations of job applicants. We also hypothesized individuating information, job-related information, would influence hireability evaluations of expected task performance and organizational citizen behaviors. The social media platform, whether it was hedonic (Facebook) or utilitarian (LinkedIn) was also hypothesized to take a role as a moderator between the perceiving similarity and

liking relationship, as well as the individuating information to hireability relationships.

Chapter 4 expanded upon our research model by identifying how our experiment was developed. First, we discussed how the experimental task and social media profiles were developed, including the iterative process used to develop the social media profiles. We created 24 social media profiles, with 8 profiles created for the three political conditions of legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare"). We also discussed the latent variables being used in the study and the development of the questionnaire for this study.

Chapter 5 discussed the findings of our experiment and questionnaire in detail. The rest of this chapter is devoted to interpreting the findings of the study. The results of our study indicate that, in a social media context, perceived similarity influences how much respondents liked our pseudo applicants, which in turn impacted hireability evaluations. Individuating information, or the presence of job-related information also influenced hireability ratings in two out of our three political conditions (the legalizing marijuana condition did not have significant results). We did not find statistical evidence of a moderating effect for platform on the perceived similarity → liking relationship, and found some evidence that platform, whether it was Facebook or LinkedIn, moderated Hireability – Task and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors in the legalizing marijuana condition and a marginally significant moderating effect of platform on the individuating information → Hireability – Organizational Citizenship Behaviors relationship in the gun control laws condition. Our evidence also suggests there is little structural invariance between the three political conditions (relationships harming the model fit are discussed in the "Structural Invariance in our Structural Model" section).

Our study provides statistical evidence that, in a social media context consisting of two platforms (Facebook and LinkedIn), political attitudes, positions taken on polarizing issues such as legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") influences decision-makers in spite of the presence of individuating information and with evidence of structural invariance across conditions. We will start this chapter by interpreting these findings, followed up by implications for theory and practice. Finally, our chapter closes with study limitations directions for future research.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, we will discuss and interpret the findings in this study. First, we will detail the similarity to liking to hireability relationship and the individuating information to hireability relationship. Finally, we will interpret the impact of the social media platform

Similarity → Liking → Relationship

Demographic Similarity Theory and the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm suggests that this relationship exists because individuals are interested in commonalities they have with each other, including personal characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, attitudes, socioeconomic status, education levels and as we researched, political attitudes (Byrne, 1961). The majority of research studies have considered the importance of gender and ethnicity. In contrast, this study was the first of its kind to address the importance of political attitudes about polarizing political issues.

While many research endeavors have considered how, for example, structured and unstructured interviews, influence various job-related outcomes (Huffcutt & Roth,

forthcoming), few research endeavors have examined the influence of social media. Through social media, user-generated Web content, job applicants express who they are and managers can readily access publically-available information provided via social media. This media channel is largely unstructured and organizations are lacking in clear-cut policies and procedures for evaluating job applicants, leaving the process open to bias on the evaluator's part (SHRM Report, 2014).

In our experiment, we expected to find a relationship between perceived similarity and liking of applicants, and in every political condition, this relationship was empirically supported. As expected, a strong positive relationship existed between perceived similarity and liking of job applicants. When our respondents perceived that they had a lot in common with the fictional job applicants in our experiments, or rated perceived similarity highly, they increasingly liked, or positively related with, the job applicant. An implication then, is that in a social media context, managers may feel positively towards job applicants who they perceive are similar to them in some way.

Demographic Similarity Theory and the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm posits that feeling positively about, or liking, a job applicant can impact work-related outcomes, and empirically, studies have shown that feelings of liking have influenced, for instance, work-related outcomes such as communication, and job satisfaction" (Sacco et al, 2003, p. 853; McCarthy et al, 2010; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Green et al, 1996; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989; Turban & Jones, 1988; Vecchio & Bullis, 2001). We argued that, in a social media context, positive feelings towards job applicants would positively influence hireability evaluations as well (that is, increasingly liking a job applicant would increase hireability rankings). A strong positive relationship was found between liking and

hireability. Hireability was measured in terms of expected task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. In both cases, across all of the political conditions, this relationship was significant. When our respondents indicated increasing numbers for "liking" the fictional job applicants via information provided on their social media profiles, the respondents also ranked the applicants as increasingly hireable in terms of task performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. This indicates that, if managers like an applicant, based on a social media profile, this may influence whether the job applicant is screened in or out of a potential job.

Individuating Information → Hireability Relationship

Research also shows that managers and recruiters are influenced by job-related information about employment applicants, such as knowledge, skills, abilities or personality traits. The presence of individuating information has been shown to decrease the influence of demographic information and personal characteristics of job applicants (McCarthy et al, 2010). Social media provides the opportunity for applicants to post information about themselves that provides evidence of job-related skills, such as education levels, personality traits, employment experience and even writing and blogging skills.

In our experiment, we manipulated individuating information in two levels using a status update as the information cue for our respondents. We measured the presence and lack of individuating information. For two of the three political conditions (gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act), the profiles with individuating information (for example, a status update about bringing in new customers at work) generally had higher hireability rankings across our political issues in terms of both task and organizational

citizenship behaviors. To measure "low" individuating information, the profiles contained information that was not specifically related to a job (for example, a status update about going camping with friends). Thus, the profiles that were low in individuating information had lower hireability evaluations across our political conditions. In all, the significance of this relationship suggests that individuating information is important and does have an impact on hireability evaluations managers make when examining job applicants' social media profiles.

Impact of Social Media Platform

In this study, we hypothesized that the social media platform would serve as a moderator for many of the relationships hypothesized in our research model. The moderating relationships will be described in more detail in this section. First, we will describe the impact of social media platform on the similarity → liking relationship. Then, we will discuss how platform moderates the relationship between individuating information and hireability evaluations.

Social Media Platform as a Moderator between Similarity and Liking

Our study hypothesized the social media platform would moderate the relationship between similarity and liking in our research model. This hypothesis was based partially on existing MIS theory. While some research does argue that social media platforms can be classified by feature sets, it is also useful to classify social media by its intended use, or "spirit" of the platform. We examined reactions on both Facebook and LinkedIn, due to their popularity and widespread use. Practical and scholarly research provides evidence that Facebook is a hedonic platform where users go to alleviate boredom, have fun and be entertained (Beer, 2008; boyd & Ellison, 2008; van der

Heijden, 2004), while LinkedIn is a primarily utilitarian platform for networking and building professional contacts. Structurally, we also argued that Facebook and LinkedIn have very similar feature sets though they are also used for different purposes (hedonic for Facebook and utilitarian for LinkedIn). We hypothesized that, with these notable differences in mind, a fun, entertaining environment like Facebook would strengthen the relationship between similarity and liking, with LinkedIn doing the opposite.

Upon testing for an interaction, or moderation, of the social media platform we found that, across all political conditions, this relationship was *not* supported in our study (though results were marginally significant in the legalizing marijuana condition); this study also provides evidence of structural invariance across all political conditions. It is not unreasonable to think that managers view and respond to information the same way, regardless of the platform (for example, a manager might view a politically-worded status update the same way on LinkedIn as one Facebook; we assumed that managers might be more appalled by contrasting political beliefs expressed on LinkedIn, a professionally-oriented network that may be considered less appropriate for posting about politics, causing managers to have stronger negative feelings about applicants. This was not the case, however). The implication is that, in a social media context, managers do have feelings of liking job applicants they perceive they are similar to and this process occurs across social media platforms

Social Media Platform as a Moderator between Individuating Information and Hireability

As indicated earlier, this study confirmed that a relationship exists between individuating information and manager's evaluations of hireability in terms of task and

organizational citizenship behaviors; that is, job-related information about job applicants expressed over social media has a positive influence on hiring decisions. This study also hypothesized a moderating relationship between the social media platform (Facebook or LinkedIn) and the individuating information to hireability relationship. Similarly to the platform moderating similarity-to-liking relationship, we argued that managers have more individuating information available to them on LinkedIn, such that they will tend to focus on it more with the LinkedIn platform, strengthening the relationship between individuating information to hireability ratings. We believed the LinkedIn platform would strengthen the individuating information-to- hireability relationship, while the Facebook platform would weaken it.

Across two political conditions, the legalizing marijuana and Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare") condition, the moderation relationship was significant for Hireability – Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. The social media platform impacted the strength of the influence job-related (individuating information) had on hireability evaluations. However, through examining the simple slopes of the interaction, we saw that the moderation relationship was actually different than we hypothesized. Our evidence indicates that the Facebook platform actually strengthens this relationship, though we hypothesized that the utilitarian platform, LinkedIn, would strengthen it. Perhaps managers expect to see individuating information on a purposeful platform, such as LinkedIn, where individuals largely broadcast their job applications (work experience, personal accomplishments, awards won, professional skills and abilities, etc.), but on a more fun, entertaining platform, such as Facebook, where an assortment of information is arranged in a number of ways, work-related status updates may "stand out" to managers

more and prove to be more salient cues.

There are a few implications from our results. First, the moderating relationship between individuating information to hireability evaluations was supported for OCB-Citizenship Behaviors. Individuating information had a positive relationship with hireability evaluations that strength depended upon the social media platform our subjects were looking at and this relationship is strengthened (in our legalizing marijuana and gun control laws conditions) on a fun, frivolous platform like Facebook, as opposed to a professionally-oriented platform, such as LinkedIn.

Conclusion

Our study provides statistical evidence that political attitudes did influence hireability evaluations and the results indicated that, in a social media environment, across political conditions of legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act, managers who perceive they are similar to job applicants, based upon information they have viewed on the applicants' user profiles, tend to have feelings of liking the applicant; these feelings also positively influence how they evaluate how the job applicant will perform at his or her job (hireability – task) and if he/she will be a coworker who demonstrates good organizational citizenship behaviors. In the legalizing marijuana condition, these relationships existed in spite of individuating information, which was not supported. Further. Whether the social media platform was Facebook or LinkedIn did not moderate the relationship either in any of the three conditions. Individuating information about job applicants also influenced hireability rankings in two of our three conditions, and this relationship was moderated by the social media platform, with generally higher rankings coming from the hedonic platform, Facebook.

Implications for Research

The following section discusses our study's implications for MIS research and its referent fields. Some of these findings were identified a priori in Chapter 1 and some of these findings unfolded as we analyzed the data for our experiment. First, we discuss how this study informs study into the subject of social media. We also offer contributions for organizational behavior, a referent field. Finally, we offer implications for individuating information, a subject that is becoming more important in psychology and studies involving hiring. The implications of our study are outlined in **Table 6.1 Implications for Research.**

Research Stream	Our Study's Aim	Our Study's Contribution
Management Information Systems – social media	- Identifies a gap in current social media literature: little to no existing literature examines social media from a human resources angle	- Studies hiring practices used when viewing information in social media profiles - Examines the moderating relationship of social media platform on the similarity to liking relationship – insignificant relationship - Examines the moderating relationship of social media platform on the individuating information to liking relationship – significant relationship
Organizational behavior – the role of perceived similarity	- Identifies that little to no research examines hiring practices and the theories from a social media context - Identifies that little to no existing research focuses on individual attitudes expressed by job applicants	- Uses social media as the context surrounding our hypothesized relationships - Uses social media platform as a moderator - Studies similarity and liking based on political attitudes expressed on

	on social media - Identifies that many research designs are based on questionnaires or interviews	Facebook and LinkedIn platforms - Provides evidence that political attitudes influence hireability evaluations, regardless of the social media platform -Utilizes an experimental design to study research model
Organizational Psychology – Individuating Information	- Identifies little to no research looks at this theory base from a social media context	- Contributes to a growing literature stream - Examines how individuating information expressed on social media influences hireability rankings and provides evidence of its influence - Examines social media platform as a moderator in the relationship between individuating information and hireability rankings

Table 6.1 Implications for Research

Implications for MIS Research

The idea that social media research has been lacking from the HR side was discussed in Chapter 1. In the following pages, this idea was explored further. In Chapter 2, we defined social media and social media platforms, as well as social media classifications. We also discussed boyd and Ellison's (2008) classification of how social media, a literature stream in MIS, has been discussed in previous research endeavors. In particular, previous studies have examined presentation of identity on social media, privacy concerns, the juncture between real-life and online relationships and security issues surrounding social media. We identified a gap in MIS literature where little to no

current literature examines social media from a human resources standpoint.

To contribute to the field, we studied social media from a human resources angle, asking how managers use it to make screening and hiring decisions. First, we conducted the study from a social media context (more will be discussed in the section below as well), using an experimental design to create realistic-looking social media profiles and then asking our subjects, MBA students and other graduate business students to evaluate the job applicants based upon the information presented in the social media profiles.

Next, we evaluated the importance of the social media platform on the relationships tested within the research model. Our results indicated that social media platform does influence how managers evaluate individuating information (knowledge, skills and abilities of job applicants). That is, our subjects evaluated job applicants with low levels of individuating information with lower scores and higher levels of individuating information also netted higher hireability evaluations overall, and this relationship was strengthened in our hedonic platform, Facebook. What platform managers view individuating information on, Facebook or LinkedIn, influences how much impact individuating information has on job evaluations.

Though the moderating relationship between platform and similarity to liking judgments was not supported, it does have an interesting implication that, regardless of the platform, when managers evaluate job applicants as being similar to them in terms of political attitudes, they will like those applicants and this will, in turn, influence the job-related outcome of how hireable they believe the applicant is.

In sum, this study contributes to MIS research in a variety of ways. First, it examines social media from the largely unexplored human resources angle, focusing in

particular on cognitions surrounding hiring practices. Next, it evaluates the moderating impact of the social media platform. Our implications suggest that the platform does moderate the individuating information to hireability relationship, but does not influence the similarity to liking relationship.

Implications for Organizational Behavior Research – Decision Making Theories

In the introductory chapter of our study, we explained that little to no previous studies of hiring in organizational behavior deal with how managers make decisions based on information viewed in a social media context. In particular, we focused on Demographic Similarity Theory, hypothesizing that managers like applicants who they have a little in common with, or are similar to, and that liking job applicants can influence a variety of job-related outcomes, including screening decisions. In Chapters 2 and 3, we described this theory, as well as a theory influencing it, the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm, in more detail. From there, we indicated that few research studies consider how the relationships in this theory will hold up in a social media context. That managers look at social media when making theories is well-known, and that few companies have a comprehensive social media screening policy is also known; we designed our study to tackle this issue.

Many of the studies in this particular theory base focus primarily on demographic variables, especially gender and ethnicity, with few studies covering the importance of individual attitudes. Our study focuses especially on political attitudes expressed on social media user profiles. Across the different political attitudes represented in our experimental design, we did find that the relationships posited in Demographic Similarity Theory held up; subjects who evaluated job applicants as highly "similar" to them liked

those job applicants more and gave them higher hireability evaluations. To learn more about the similarity to liking relationship, we also tested to see if the social media platform managers used to view user profiles, Facebook or LinkedIn, was a moderator. Our findings showed that it was not; in this study, the relationship was equally strong regardless of what website the subjects viewed the profiles on.

Implications for Organizational Behavior Research – Individuating Information

A growing literature stream in Organizational Behavior, one of MIS's referrant fields, is that of individuating information. We discussed this construct in Chapter 1, explaining that, when creating user profiles on a social media platform, job applicants provide personal information, such as favorite quotes and t.v. shows, as well as information related to their employment, like current employer and current university being attended. We indicated that few research studies investigate how individuating information conveyed over social media influences human resources decisions. This theory base was discussed in further detail in Chapters 2 and 3, and in Chapter 4, we discussed how individuating information was manipulated in our experimental design in the form of status updates. We tested for "high" and "low" levels of individuating information in Chapter 5, finding that individuating information presented on social media profiles does influence how subjects evaluate hireability of job applicants, with high levels of individuating information leading to increased ratings of hireability in terms of task and organizational citizenship behaviors, a contribution to this growing literature stream. We also found that the relationship is moderated by social media platform.

Conclusion

In sum, this study contributes to MIS research by examining social media from a human resources perspective, focusing on employee screening and also by using social media platform as a moderator for many relationships in our research model. The study contributes to Organizational Behavior, a referrant field, by examining Demographic Similarity Theory in a social media environment, as well as viewing social media platform's (lack of) influence on the relationship between perceived similarity and liking. Finally, we also contributed to the growing literature stream surrounding individuating information, showing that individuating information found in user profiles influences hireability ratings, though this depends upon the platform to an extent, with the fun, hedonic Facebook platform strengthening the relationship.

Implications for Practice

After reviewing practical journals, we also noted that many practical journals, as well as general online and magazine articles, regularly deal with and discuss using social media to make hiring decisions. We identified a large gap not only in MIS research regarding this particular coverage of social media and hiring decisions, but also in between what is deemed important in practical literature and what is actually covered ina academic literature (that is, not very much). Our study has implications for managers and for potential job applicants, as detailed below. **Table 6.2 Implications for Practice** summarizes these implications.

Study Findings	Implications for Managers	Implications for Job Applicants
- The perceived similarity to liking to hireability relationships were supported, regardless of the social media platform.	- Hiring decisions may be biased by managers' perceptions of similarity and liking of job applicants. Organizations need clear, transparent, publicized social media platforms. - All decisions made with social media should be documented.	- Hiring decisions may be biased by managers' perceptions of similarity and liking of job applicants. Be mindful of and use privacy settings in social media, especially involving personal information.
- Individuating information was shown to have an influence on hireability ratings of applicants.	- Policies should focus on individuating information. Criterion should be developed for evaluating applicants uniformly.	- Provide individuating information on social media to "help" managers with decisions.
- Social media platform moderated the individuating information to hireability evaluations.	- Recruiters and managers should use LinkedIn or other utilitarian websites when evaluating applicants.	- Having a LinkedIn presence (and populating Facebook profiles with mainly individuating information) can give applicants an advantage.

Table 6.2 Implications for Practice

Implications for Managers

A new report from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) indicates that 45 percent of managers are concerned that information that was not relevant to an individual's employment would influence their decisions (2014). Our study indicates that some of the concerns managers have may be warranted. Our findings did show that social media platforms, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, do provide job-related and non-job-related information cues to managers, and from those cues provided on user profiles, managers do tend to like job applicants who are perceived as more similar to them; liking the job applicants impacted hireability evaluations as well. Further, whether our subjects used Facebook, a platform that typically has more personal and entertaining information about job applicants, or LinkedIn, a more professionally-oriented platform, did not strengthen this relationship, interestingly.

However, these findings do not necessarily indicate managers should never use social media to research job applicants. After all, using social media to learn more about applicants can save the time and resources used for interviews and may be useful to quickly screen out applicants who are clearly inappropriate for a job. Instead, we suggest taking time to develop, articulate and publicize clear, transparent policies involving using social media to screen applicants or make hiring decisions.

The study does also suggest that individuating information provided on social media directly impacts hireability evaluations as well. This relationship was stronger in the Facebook platform across two of our three political conditions. An implication is that individuating information on social media is looked at and does play a role in making hiring decisions. Managers may take heed then and when creating a social media hiring policy, first we recommend using the appropriate platform, LinkedIn. This website is more utilitarian in nature and tends to have more instances of individuating information, with less "extra" or irrelevant information influencing manager's decisions. Further, finding and evaluating individuating information about job applicants should be the focus of using social media. For example, managers might instruct employees to pay extra attention to qualities of applicants such as education, skills, languages spoken, awards, and so on. To do this, the organization should develop uniform, standardized criterion for evaluating information found about applicants online so all applicants are evaluated consistently. All applicants should be forewarned that their social media profiles may be viewed (perhaps job descriptions, especially descriptions provided online, should include this). An organization's social media hiring policy should be made publically available and all activity should be documented. Our findings may also indicate that it is important

to create a culture of awareness about using social media for human resources decisions, as well properly training employees to use it appropriately. Social media is a useful tool for learning about applicants but managers must use caution to avoid "biasing" their evaluations with their own perceptions of similarity or liking of job applicants.

Implications for Potential Employees

The findings of our study also have important implications for job applicants. Since we found that perceived similarity, liking and individuating information all have a role in making hireability evaluations, this suggests that individuals who are on the job market should become familiar with and use privacy settings available in the different social media platforms. Applicants should research the organization carefully and take them to learn their social media policy(s), if there is one, and should, most importantly, know their rights involving social media. Since our results do indicate a moderating influence of social media platform, with Facebook increasing the relationships, applicants may also use social media platforms, particularly ones that are hedonic in nature, to demonstrate individuating information for employers (for example, applicants might use multiple social media platforms to create a consistent image and to demonstrate KSAs, such as communications or technical skills).

Limitations and Areas for Future Research

Even though our model was initially tested and pilot-tested, as well as tested across three political conditions (legalizing marijuana, gun control laws and the Affordable Healthcare Act), further testing and refinement should be done for many reasons. First, though our study is likely high in internal validity, it may lack ecological validity (real-world semblance, though we made efforts to address this in our pilot test).

We used fictional social media profiles and kept most of the information in them consistent and innocuous. These profiles were viewed on Qualtrics, as opposed to on the actual platforms of choice. Managers might respond differently to these profiles by viewing them, for example, on Facebook itself, especially in the context of additional information and stimulation in the form of pop-ups, notifications and embedded advertisements. A recent research endeavor in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* considers how positively and negatively worded Facebook status updates impacted user emotions (n = 70,000) did use the platform (Kramer et al, 2013); however, this study is now a topic of intense debate, as many critics argue that it violates IRB and human rights and unethically manipulated experimental subjects (Walden et al, 2014). This prompted the editors of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* to write an introduction indicating they did not condone the research practices used by the authors. Though using social media platforms in real-life is preferred for ecological validity, it is important to note that more and more questions are being raised about how to do this ethically. Much of the controversy deals with the delicate subject matter, especially when it comes to influencing negative respondent emotions, leading to potential psychological distress.

Research into less controversial topics, debriefing the subjects after and choosing a research domain that is appropriate for the research subject is a better alternative, such as Mazer and coauthors' 2007 study, where students instructed to search for teacher profiles on Facebook in order to determine how much impact various amounts of sharing information (such as pictures and status updates) influenced student evaluations of a professor's effectiveness (2007). Though our study did not pose any significant harm to

our respondents, we were unable to create profiles in the real platform due to our high number of manipulations and conditions that required manipulating (24 profiles in all were created) and our need to keep profiles consistent to avoid confounding data.

We also took many steps to make the social media profiles appear as authentic as possible, from viewing real Facebook and LinkedIn profiles to get a sense of what information appeared across both platforms and in public access profiles, to pre- and pilot-testing to understand how realistic the profiles appeared. We also used profile pictures of friends and family members as opposed to stock photos, researched Colorado to use real-life locations and popular landmarks, and added in innocuous information to populate our profiles so they appeared more authentic, as detailed in the preceding chapter.

Second, our study relied largely on a student sample. The study consisted of MBA and other graduate business students but we asked students about their interviewing experience. Our demographic information indicated the majority of our sample (65.9 percent of respondents) had interviewing experience and we controlled for it in our experimental model. This was consistent with previous studies that used student samples as well. However, future studies should endeavor to use managers, recruiters or organizational samples when possible.

Also, since we had 191 respondents, a little less than the optimally recommended sample size our experiments required, the likelihood of Type II error was higher than in a larger sample size. We took steps to mitigate this issue. Most importantly, we used reliable and valid measures used in the organizational behavior literature to reduce measurement error in our model and all alpha values exceeded the levels needed

(Nunnally, 1978). Through these precautions, perhaps, most of our relationships were supported, though it should be noted that the unsupported relationships (such as, for example, the moderating relationship of social media platform between similarity and liking) might in fact be present in a larger sample size.

Third, individuating information was measured by two levels ("high" and "low"), though this might not have encapsulated all the levels and types of individuating information that can be used in this context. Though few studies in IS or social media specifically measure individuating information in a social media context, it has been measured in many ways in psychology (McCarthy et al, 2010). We also only focused on accomplishments at work, but it is important to note that individuating information may manifest in a variety of ways, such knowledge, skills, abilities and personality traits (Lee, 1997; Caldwell & Burger, 1998, and discerning personality traits has been studied in social media, such as Kluemper and Rosen's 2009 study, though not to infer individuating information) and behaviors (Locksley et al, 1980).

Finally, our study primarily focused upon how political attitudes expressed on social media influence hireability rankings. We focused on the information provided itself (for example, we focused primarily on expressed political attitudes about particular polarizing issues, as well as instances of individuating information) and provided it in multiple ways, from articles posted to events to "likes." However, we did not account for the impact of different media cues on perceptions of similarity, liking an applicant or hireability evaluations. The richness of information can impact how it is received (Dennis et al, 2006) and future endeavors might evaluate how the "richness" of cues about an individual's personality expressed on social media through images, text, video,

applications, and so on may impact employers' perceptions of employment candidates. Similarly, we focused on the differences between platforms but future endeavors might focus on how employers respond to how job applicants behave across platforms (for example, do employers rate job applicants higher who project an image of consistency across platforms? Does this hold true if the image is inherently negative or do employers prefer candidates who "behave" on networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, and are more explicit on Facebook?). Factors, such as propensity to judge, openmindedness and attention/time spent per profile, as well as number of profiles viewed and even exhaustion and affective state prior to the experiment, may also be studied in the future.

Conclusion

Social media, user-generated Internet content, is becoming increasingly popular with users and up to this point, few research studies investigated how managers use social media to make hiring and screening decisions of job applicants, indicating a deeper understanding of these cognitive processes was needed. We found that expressed political attitudes about polarizing issues on social media influenced hireability evaluations. This study was informed by Demographic Similarity Theory, the Attraction-Similarity Paradigm and notions of individuating information and was unique in that it focused on the importance of individual political attitudes, as opposed to demographic variables, such as gender or ethnicity. We conceptualized a research model that extends prior work in the fields of MIS and Organizational Behavior. Using an experimental design, our study mostly found that the relationships hypothesized were supported; for example, respondents did like applicants they perceived they were similar to and this did influence hireability evaluations of the applicants, based on their social media profiles, regardless

of the social media network they viewed the profile on. We also found that that individuating information played a role, moderated by the social media platform itself; in the legalizing marijuana condition, the perceived similarity → liking → hireability relationship was supported with no support for the importance of individuating information. This study, we believe, has made an important step in highlighting the role of political attitudes in the mechanisms that inform decision-making, as well as the importance of studying social media in a human resources context and decision-making theories in a social media context.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Perceptual Measures

Measure of Perceived Similarity (Tepper, Moss & Duffy, 2011)

Perceived Similarity Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
This subordinate and I…	This job applicant and I…
1. Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	1. Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values
2. Analyze problems in a similar way	2. Analyze problems in a similar way
3. Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem	3. Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem
4. Are alike in a number of areas	4. Are alike in a number of areas
5. See things in much the same way	5. See things in much the same way

Anchors: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= moderately disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5= moderately agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree

Measure of Interpersonal Attraction/Liking (Wayne & Ferris, 1990)

Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the Facebook website using the following items.

How much do you like this job applicant?

Ratings and anchors:
1 = I don't like this job applicant at all
3 = I neither like nor dislike this job applicant
5 = I like this job applicant very much
(no anchors for 2 and 4)

Liking Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
How much do you like this subordinate? Indicate your agreement with the following statements. 1. I would likely get along well with this subordinate. 2. Supervising this subordinate would likely be a pleasure. 3. I think this subordinate would likely make a good friend.	How much do you like this applicant? Indicate your agreement with the following statements. 1. I would likely get along well with this job applicant. 2. Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure. 3. I think this job applicant would likely make a good friend.

Ratings and anchors: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= moderately disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5= moderately agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree

Personal feelings (check one) – reverse-coded

_I feel that I would probably like this person very much.
_I feel that I would probably like this person.
_I feel that I would probably like this person to a slight degree.
_I feel that I would probably neither particularly like nor particularly dislike this person.
_I feel that I would probably dislike this person to a slight degree
_I feel that I would probably dislike this person.
_I feel that I would probably dislike this person very much.

Working together (check one)
_I feel that I would very much dislike working with this person.
_I feel that I would dislike working with this person.
_I feel that I would dislike working with this person to a slight degree.
_I feel that I would neither particularly dislike nor particularly enjoy working with this person.
_I feel that I would enjoy working with this person to a slight degree.
_I feel that I would enjoy working with this person.
_I feel that I would very much enjoy working with this person.

Measure of Hireability

Williams & Anderson, 1991

Results of Factor Analysis of Performance Items – Oblique Rotation (n = 127)

Scale Items	IRB	OCBI	OCBO
1. Adequately completes assigned duties.	.83*	−.09	.20
2. Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.	.88*	.05	−.00
3. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.	.87*	.01	.06
4. Meets formal performance requirements of the job.	.83*	.04	−.09
5. Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation.	.52*	.12	−.11
6. Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform. (R)	.64*	−.04	.22
7. Fails to perform essential duties. (R)	.72*	−.05	.04
8. Helps others who have been absent.	−.11	.75*	.17
9. Helps others who have heavy work loads.	.07	.73*	.14
10. Assists supervisor with his/her work (when not asked).	.21	.42*	.17
11. Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.	−.10	.75*	.01
12. Goes out of way to help new employees.	.08	.82*	−.17
13. Takes a personal interest in other employees.	.00	.77*	.01
14. Passes along information to co-workers.	.24	.57*	.01
15. Attendance at work is above the norm.	.00	.17	.58*
16. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	−.12	−.04	.80*
17. Takes undeserved work breaks. (R)	.20	.02	.57*
18. Great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations. (R)	.18	.01	.36*
19. Complains about insignificant things at work. (R)	.10	.13	.35*
20. Conserves and protects organizational property.	.21	.10	.12*
21. Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.	.18	.20	.36*
Eigenvalue (Unrotated solution)	8.37	2.29	1.57
Percent variance explained	39.9%	10.9%	7.5%
Cumulative percent variance explained	39.9%	50.8%	58.3%

Note. *Indicates the loading that should be the highest for each item. Underlined items were included in IRB, OCBI, and OCBO scales.

(Cable & Judge, 1997)

Please give your overall evaluation of this candidate (ranging from *very negative* [1] to *very positive* [5]).
Based upon what you have seen, tell us what kind of employee you think the job applicant will be using the following items. The job applicant can be expected to:

Hireability Scale	
Original Items	**Amended Items**
1. Adequatelys complete assigned duties .	1. Adequately complete assigned duties .
2. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her.	2. Perform tasks that are expected of him/her.
3. Meets formal performance requirements of a job.	3. Meet formal performance requirements of a job.
4. Helps others who have heavy workloads.	4. Help others who have heavy workloads.
5. Goes out of way to help new employees.	5. Go out of his/her way to help new employees.
6. Takes a personal interest in other employees.	6. Take a personal interest in other employees.
7. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.	7. Give advance notice when unable to come to work.

Ratings and anchors: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= moderately disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5= moderately agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree

Measure of Cognitive Absorption (Agarwal & Karahanna, 2000)

Please indicate how you feel about Facebook/LinkedIn below:

Cognitive Absorption Scale
1. Time flies when I am using Facebook/LinkedIn.
2. Most times when I get on Facebook/LinkedIn, I end up spending more time than I planned.
3. Sometimes I lose track of time when I use Facebook/LinkedIn.
4. When using Facebook/LinkedIn, I am able to block out most distractions.
5. While using Facebook/LinkedIn, I am absorbed in what I am doing.
6. While using Facebook/LinkedIn, I am immersed in the task I am performing.
7. I often spend more time on Facebook/LinkedIn than I intended.
8. I have fun using Facebook/LinkedIn.
9. Using Facebook/LinkedIn bores me.
10. I enjoy using Facebook/LinkedIn.

Italicized = reverse-coded items

Ratings and anchors: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= moderately disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5= moderately agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree

Measure of Social Desirability (Reynolds, 1982)

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements.

Social Desirability Scale
1. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.
2. I have never intensely disliked anyone.
3. When I don't know something, I don't at all mind admitting it.
4. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
5. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.
6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
7. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
8. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
9. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
10. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.

Italicized = reverse-coded items

Ratings and anchors: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= moderately disagree; 4 = neither agree nor disagree; 5= moderately agree; 6= agree; 7= strongly agree

APPENDIX B:

Questionnaire and IRB Information

Phil Roth, Jason Thatcher and Julie Wade are inviting you to take part in a research study. Phil and Jason are professors at Clemson University and Julie is a PhD student there. The purpose of this research is to examine the role of social media information in hiring decisions. We ask you to look at these social media pages and tell us some of your reactions to them. The study will take 20 to 25 minutes.

We think you will find the study interesting and do not see any risks or discomfort from viewing social media information. You might find it interesting to consider the use of social media pages in the hiring process and we hope to learn how people react to them.

We are not interested in any one particular person's reaction to the social media pages. Instead, we will only report data aggregated across all participants. As such, we will do everything we can to protect your privacy and confidentiality. We will not tell anybody outside of the research team that you were in this study or what information we collected about you in particular.

You do not have to be in this study. You may choose not to take part and you may choose to stop taking part at any time. You will not be punished in any way if you decide not to be in the study or to stop taking part in the study. If you decide not to take part or to stop taking part in this study, it will not affect your grade in any way.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Phil Roth at Clemson University at 864-656-1039 (rothp@clemson.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights in this research study, please contact the Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at 864-656-6460 or irb@clemson.edu. If you are outside of the Upstate South Carolina area, please use the ORC's toll-free number, 866-297-3071.

You must consent before you can complete this experiment.

❍ I consent.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in our social media study. We are interested in how recruiters, managers, and human resource management professionals think about social media profiles when making hiring assessments.

When prompted, please take some time to look at the social media profile. Take as much time as you like to examine the website and share your reactions by responding to several sets of items. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to this survey. As you review the website, remember that they are intended to represent college students who are applying for an entry level management job in your organization.

Again, thanks for helping us in our study.

Phil Roth, Jason Thatcher, and Julie Wade(Clemson University)

Please view the following LinkedIn profile very carefully. Remember that this profile is intended to represent a college student who is applying for an entry-level management job in your organization.

You are in the role of a hiring manager who is trying to hire the best people for your organization. Based on the social media profile, please answer the following set of questions about this applicant.

[Image of social media profile goes here]

1. Please tell us how similar you view yourself to the job applicant on the LinkedIn website using the following items. This job applicant and I:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Are similar in terms of our outlook, perspective, and values	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Analyze problems in a similar way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Think alike in terms of coming up with a similar solution for a problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Are alike in a number of areas	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
See things in much the same way	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

2. Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the LinkedIn website using the following items.

	1 = I don't like this job applicant at all	2	3 = I neither like nor dislike this job applicant	4	5 = I like this job applicant very much
How much do you like the job applicant?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

3. Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the LinkedIn website using the following items.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would likely get along well with this job applicant.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Supervising this job applicant would likely be a pleasure.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think this job applicant would make a good friend.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

4. Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the LinkedIn website (please check one answer).

❍ I feel that I would probably like this person very much.
❍ I feel that I would probably like this person.
❍ I feel that I would probably like this person to a slight degree.
❍ I feel that I would probably neither particularly like nor particularly dislike this person.
❍ I feel that I would probably dislike this person to a slight degree
❍ I feel that I would probably dislike this person.
❍ I feel that I would probably dislike this person very much.

5. Based on what you have seen, please tell us how much you liked the job applicant on the LinkedIn website (please check one answer).

❍ I feel that I would very much dislike working with this person.
❍ I feel that I would dislike working with this person.
❍ I feel that I would dislike working with this person to a slight degree.
❍ I feel that I would neither particularly dislike nor particularly enjoy working with this person.
❍ I feel that I would enjoy working with this person to a slight degree.
❍ I feel that I would enjoy working with this person.
❍ I feel that I would very much enjoy working with this person.

6. Based upon what you have seen, use the following items to tell us what kind of employee you think the job applicant will be. The job applicant can be expected to:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Adequately complete assigned duties.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Perform tasks that are expected of him/her.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Meet formal performance requirements of a job.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Help others who have heavy workloads.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Go out of his/her way to help new employees.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Take a personal interest in other employees.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Give advance notice when unable to come to work.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

7. Please indicate your overall evaluation of this candidate.

	Very Negative	Negative	Neither Positive nor Negative	Positive	Very Positive
Based on what you have seen, please give your overall evaluation of this candidate:	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Manipulations for Experiment #1: Legalizing Marijuana

8. Does this applicant support legalizing marijuana?

❍ Yes
❍ No
❍ I did not notice

9. Do you support legalizing marijuana?

❍ Yes
❍ Maybe
❍ No
❍ Decline to specify

10. Please indicate how strongly you support legalizing marijuana.

	Strongly Do Not Support	Do Not Support	Somewhat Do Not Support	Neither Support nor Do Dot support	Somewhat Support	Support	Strongly Support
How strongly do you support legalizing marijuana?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Manipulations for Experiment #2: Gun Control Laws

8. Does this applicant like the National Rifle Association?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ I did not notice

9. Do you support passing stricter gun control laws?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ Maybe
- ❍ No
- ❍ Decline to specify

10. Please indicate how strongly you support passing stricter gun control laws.

	Strongly Do Not Support	Do Not Support	Somewhat Do Not Support	Neither Support nor Do Not Support	Somewhat Support	Support	Strongly Support
How strongly do you support passing stricter gun control laws?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Manipulations for Experiment #3: The Affordable Healthcare Act (“Obamacare”)

8. Does this applicant support the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No
- ❍ I did not notice

9. Do you support the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ Maybe
- ❍ No
- ❍ Decline to specify

10. Please indicate how strongly you support the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare").

	Strongly Do Not Support	Do Not Support	Somewhat Do Not Support	Neither Support nor Do Not Support	Somewhat Support	Support	Strongly Support
How strongly do you support the Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Now, please tell us a little about yourself. We are interested in your background, as well as your use of social media, experiences with hiring, etc.

11. Have you ever interviewed anyone before?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

12. Have you served in a human resources management position before?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

13. Have you been trained in how to evaluate social media?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

14. Please indicate how you feel about Facebook below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Time flies when I am using Facebook.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most times when I get on Facebook, I end up spending more time than I planned.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Sometimes I lose track of time when I use Facebook.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
When using Facebook, I am able to block out most distractions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While using Facebook, I am absorbed in what I am doing.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While using Facebook, I am immersed in the task I am performing.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

spend more time on Facebook than I intended.							
I have fun using Facebook.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Using Facebook bores me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I enjoy using Facebook.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

15. Please indicate how you feel about LinkedIn below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Time flies when I am using LinkedIn.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most times when I get on LinkedIn, I end up spending more time than I planned.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Sometimes I lose track of time when I use LinkedIn.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
When using LinkedIn, I am able to block out most distractions.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While using LinkedIn, I am absorbed in what I am doing.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
While using LinkedIn, I am immersed in the task I am performing.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often spend more	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

time on LinkedIn than I intended.							
I have fun using LinkedIn.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Using LinkedIn bores me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I enjoy using LinkedIn.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

16. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have never intensely disliked anyone.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
When I don't know something, I don't at all mind admitting it.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

authority even though I knew they were right.							
I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

17. What is your gender?

❍ Male
❍ Female
❍ Decline to specify

18. How old are you?

❍ Under 20
❍ 21-25
❍ 26-30
❍ 31-35
❍ 36-40
❍ 41-45
❍ 46-50
❍ 51-55
❍ 56 or older

19. What is your sexual orientation?

- ❍ Heterosexual
- ❍ Homosexual
- ❍ Bisexual
- ❍ Other
- ❍ Decline to answer

20. What is your ethnicity?

- ❍ Asian
- ❍ Black
- ❍ Hispanic
- ❍ White
- ❍ Other
- ❍ Decline to specify

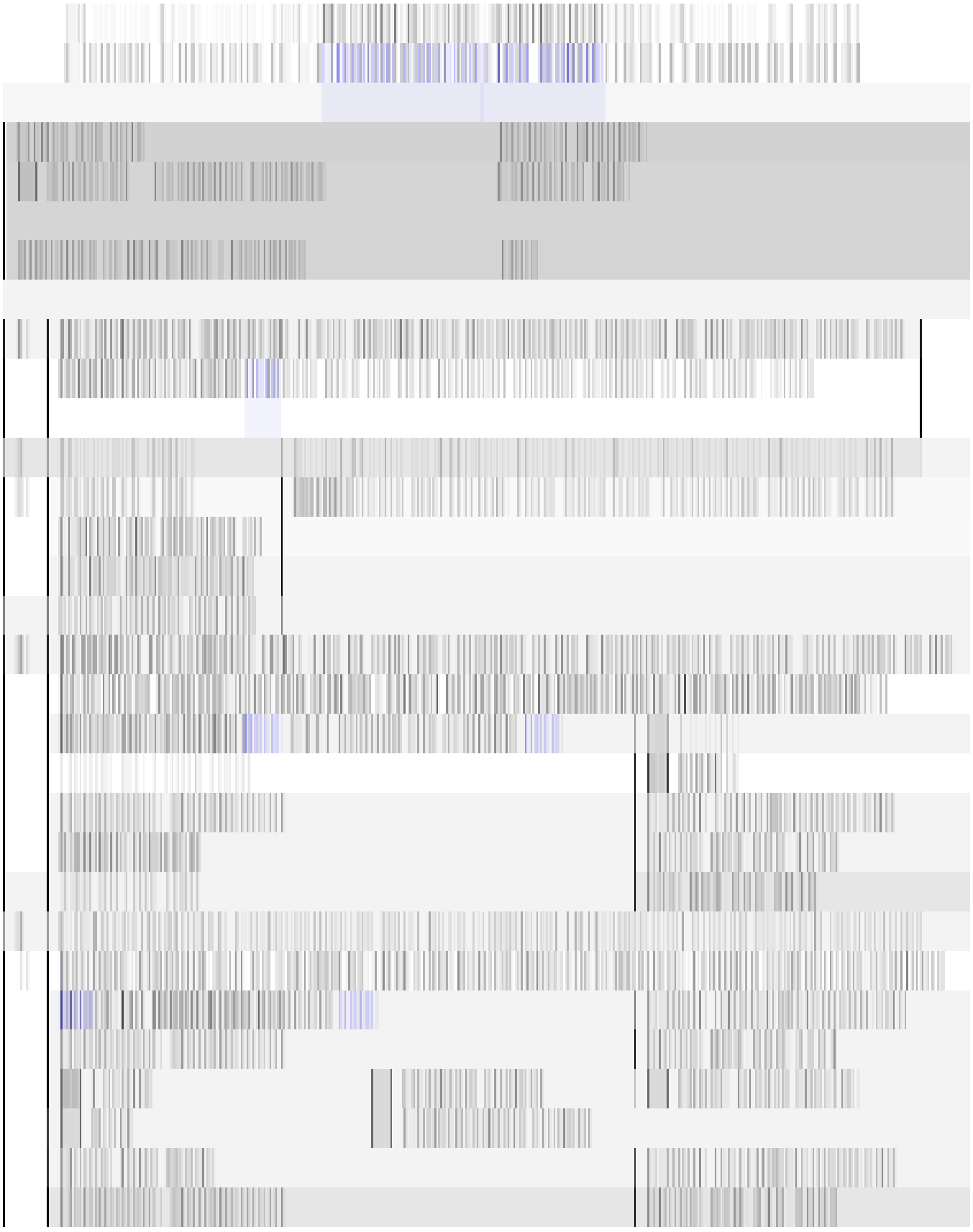
21. What degree are you seeking at Clemson?

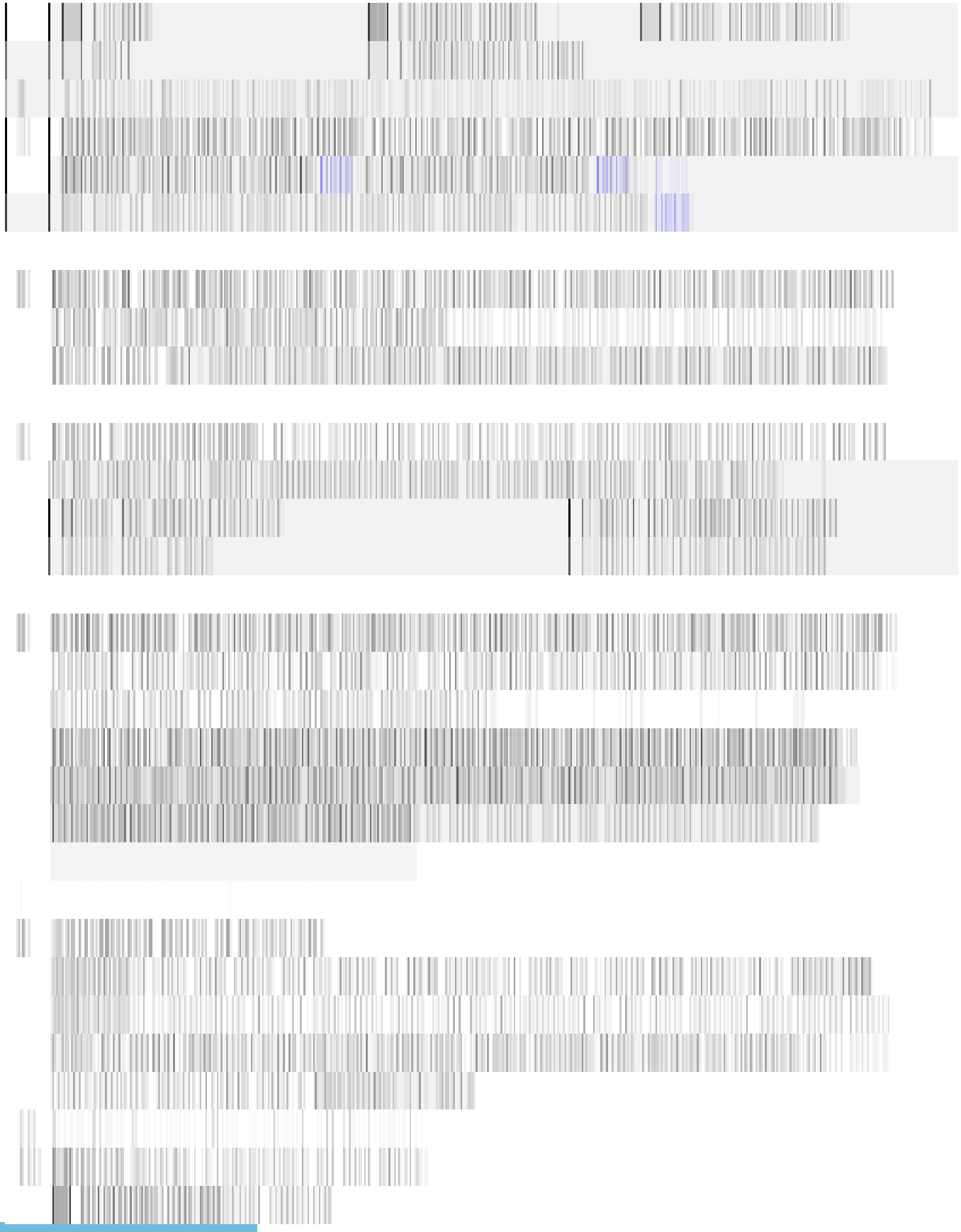
- ❍ Master's – Accounting (MPA)
- ❍ Master's – Business Administration (MBA)
- ❍ Master's – Economics (MS)
- ❍ Master's – Marketing (MS)
- ❍ PhD – Economics (PhD)
- ❍ PhD – Psychology (PhD)
- ❍ Other, please specify: _____

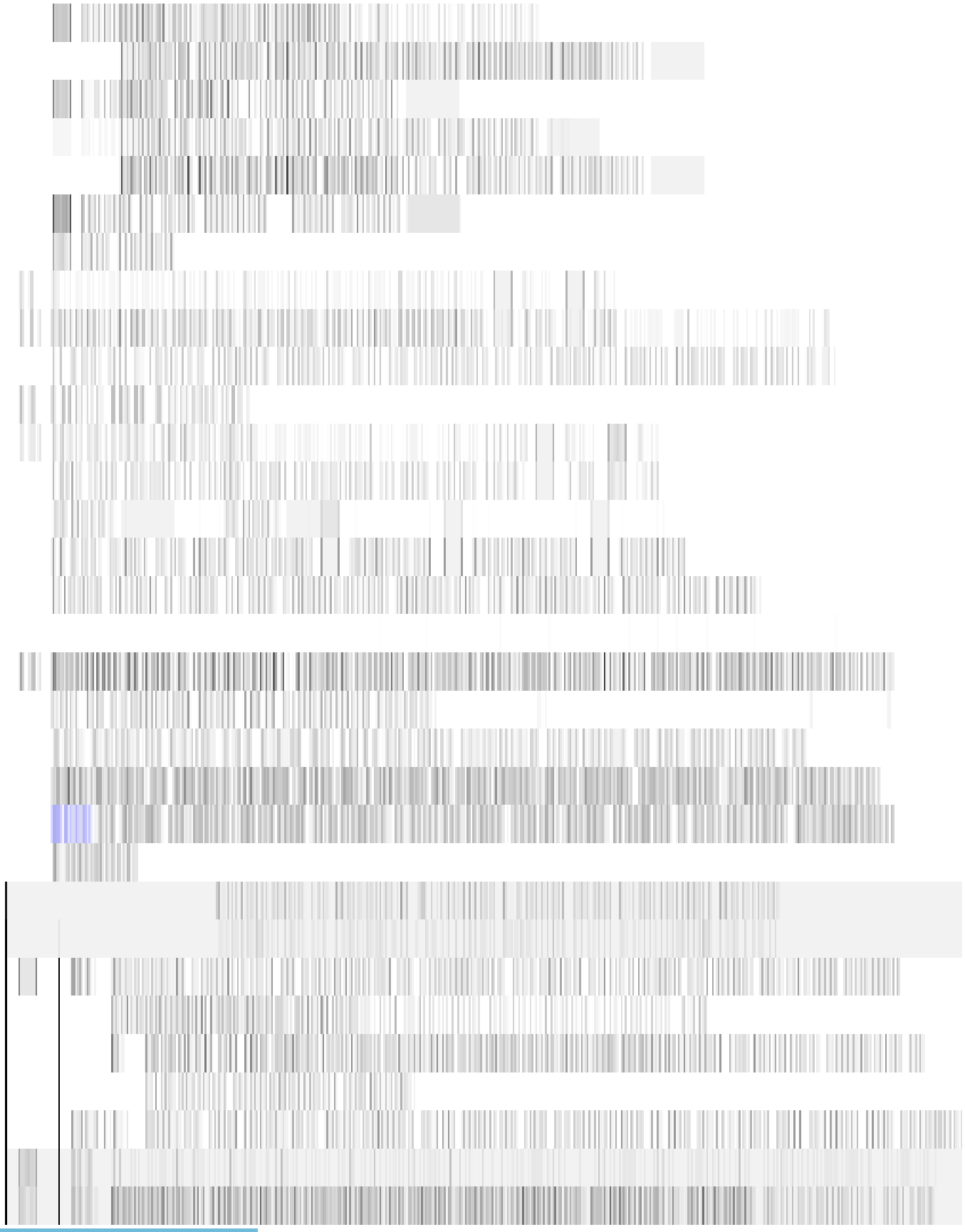
22.Please share any of your additional comments here.

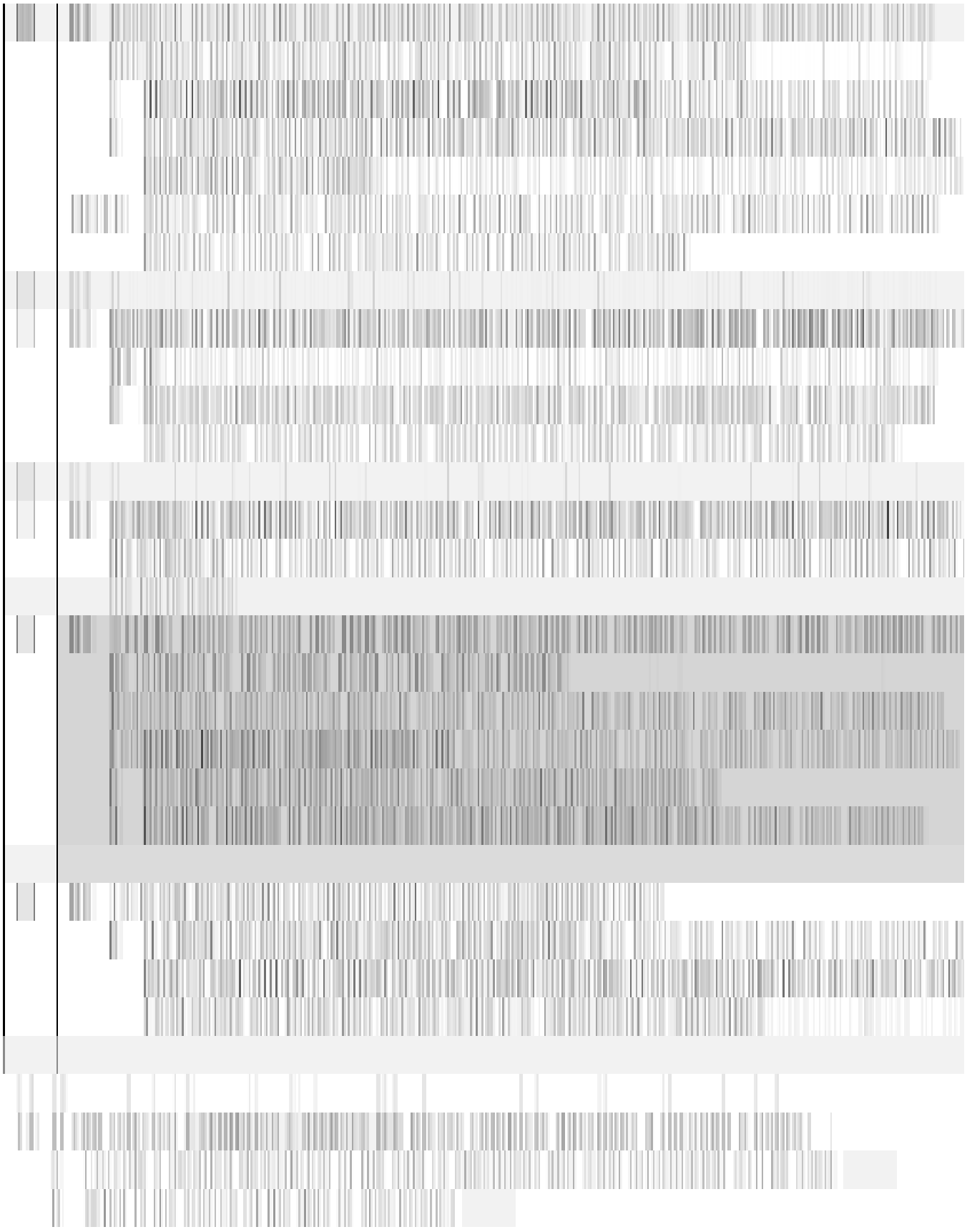
Thank you for agreeing to help us with our social media study. We sincerely appreciate the time you took.

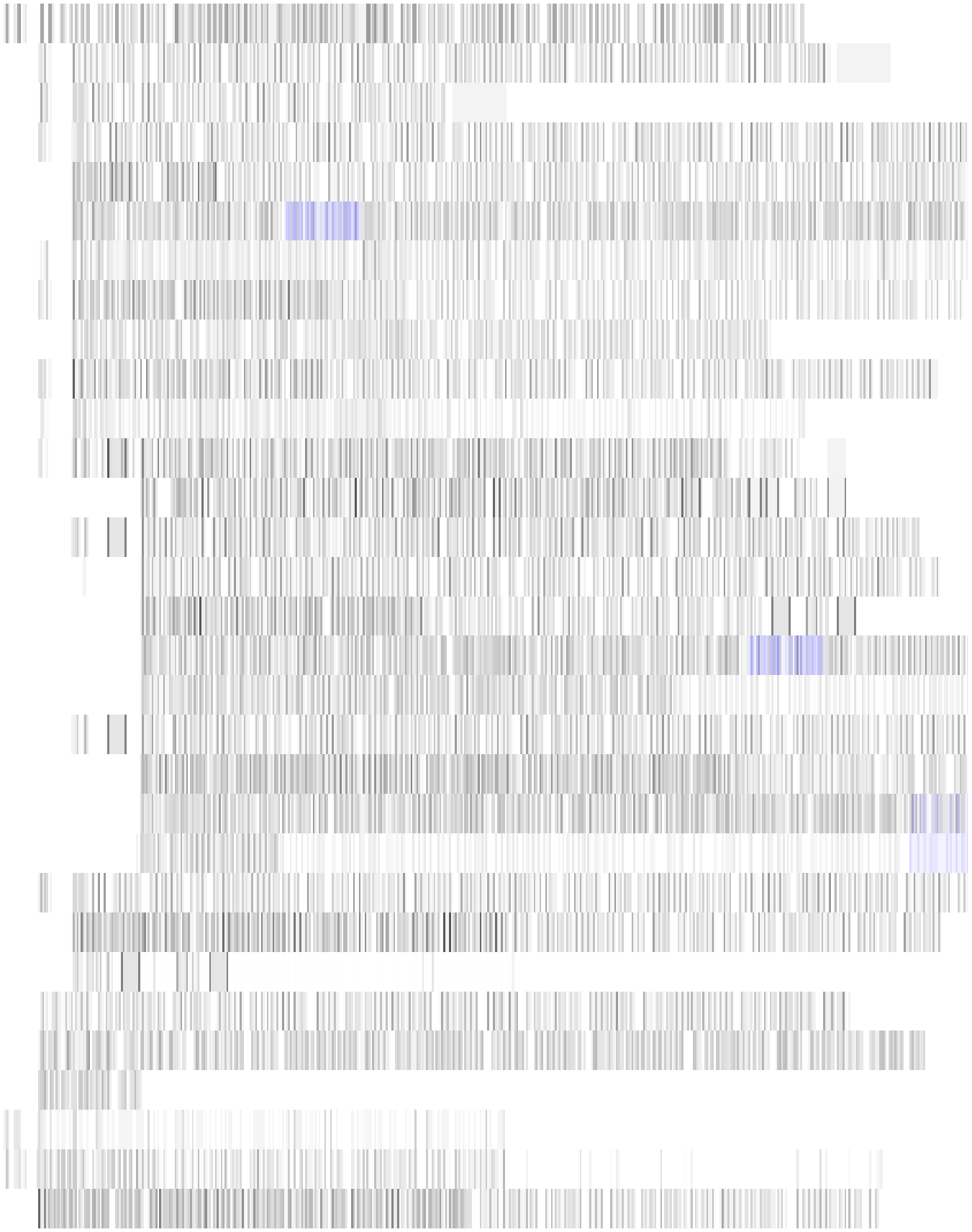
If you would like to include your information in the drawing for one of ten $25 Amazon gift cards and/or would like to receive a summary of the results when this study has ended, please provide your information via the following link: [link]

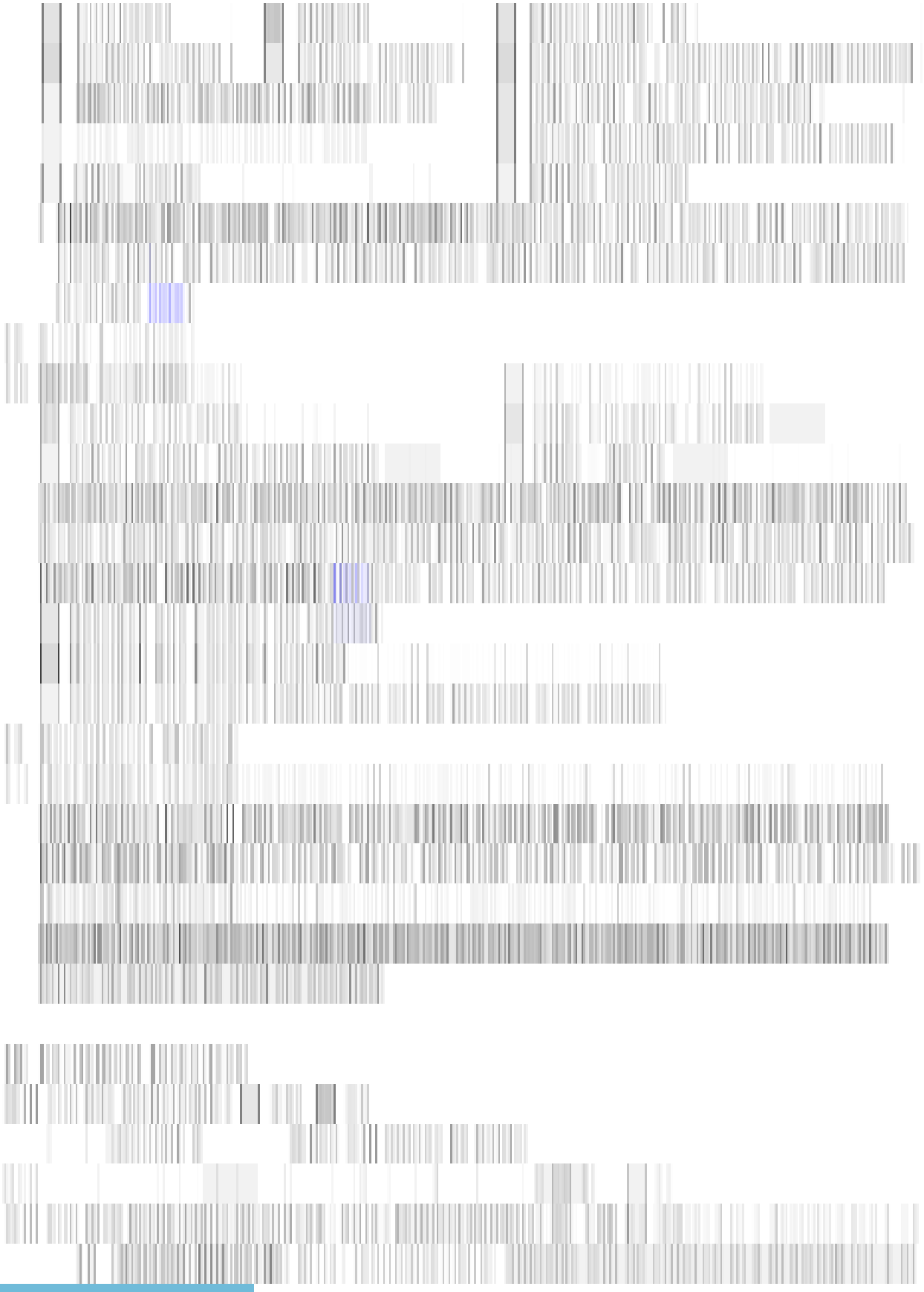


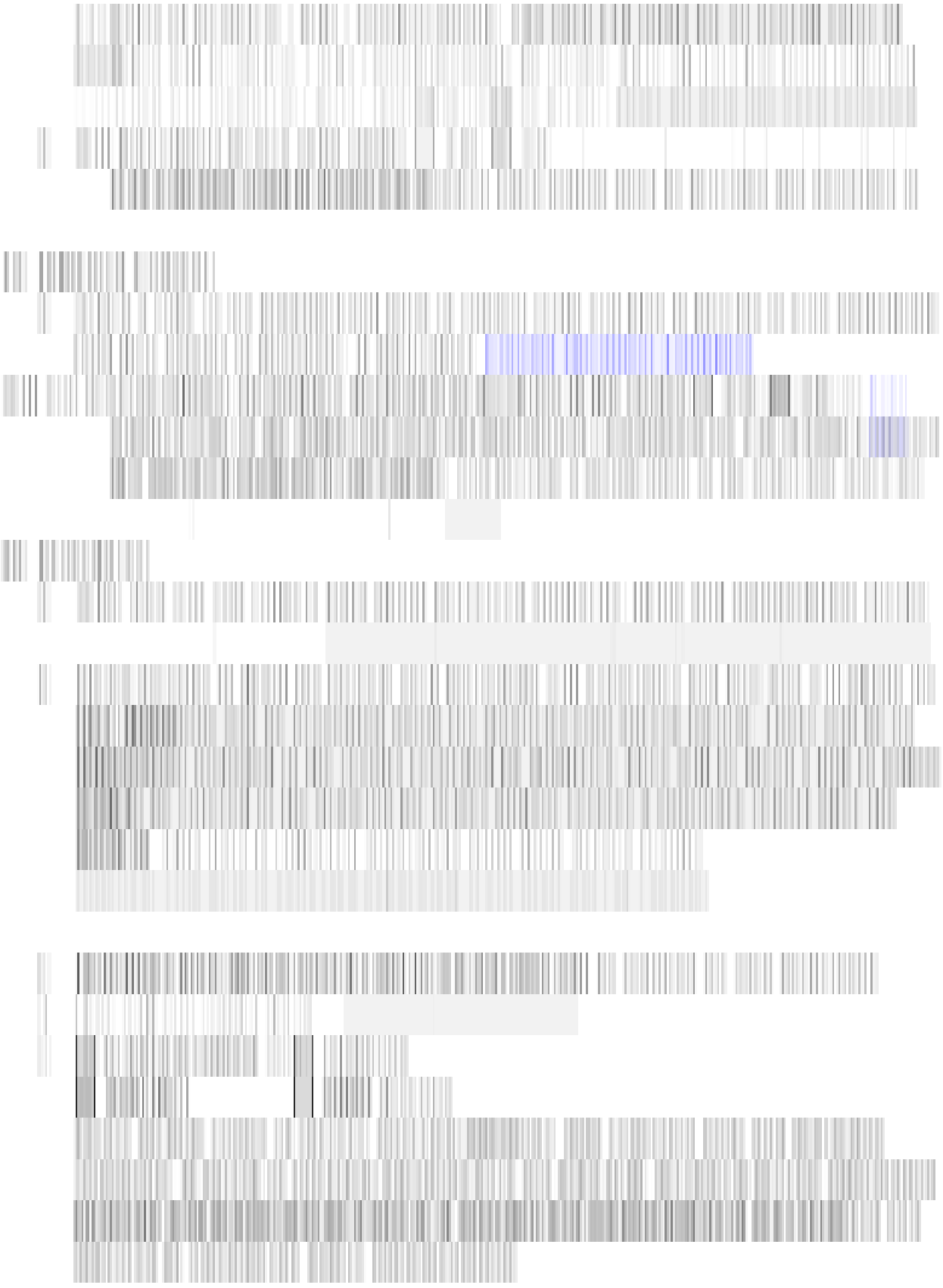


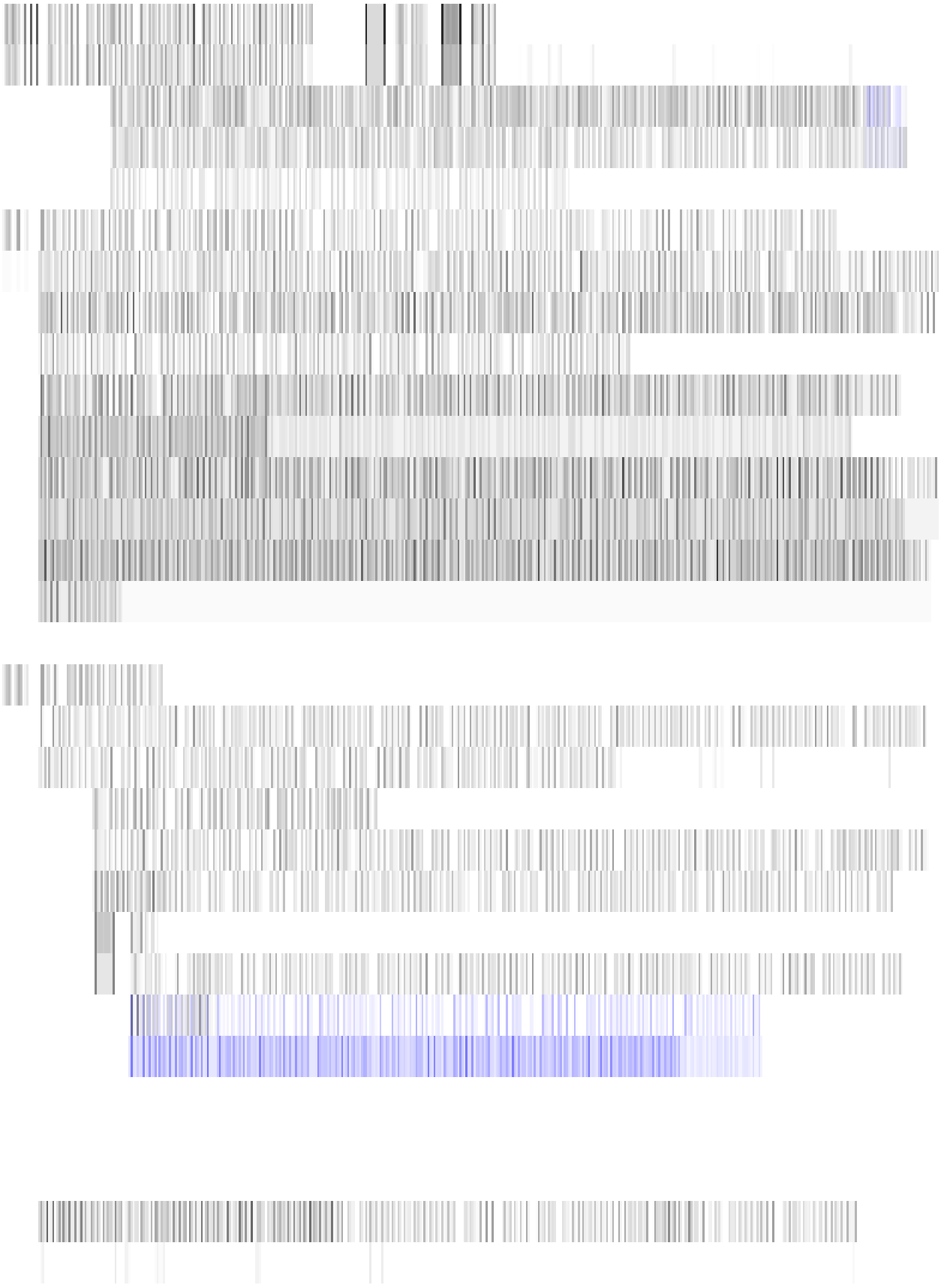


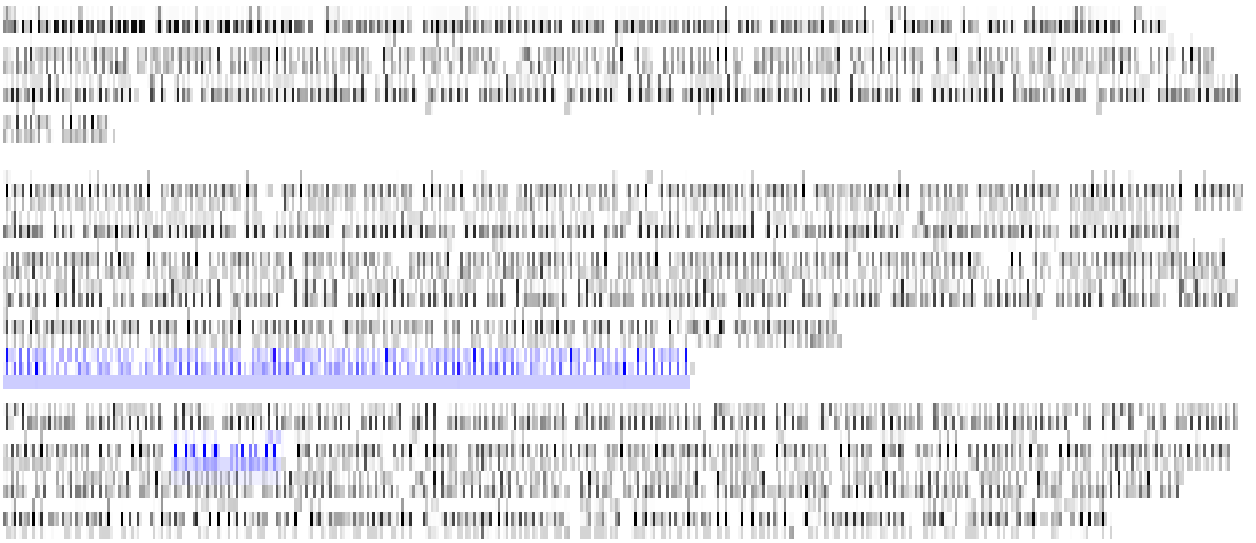


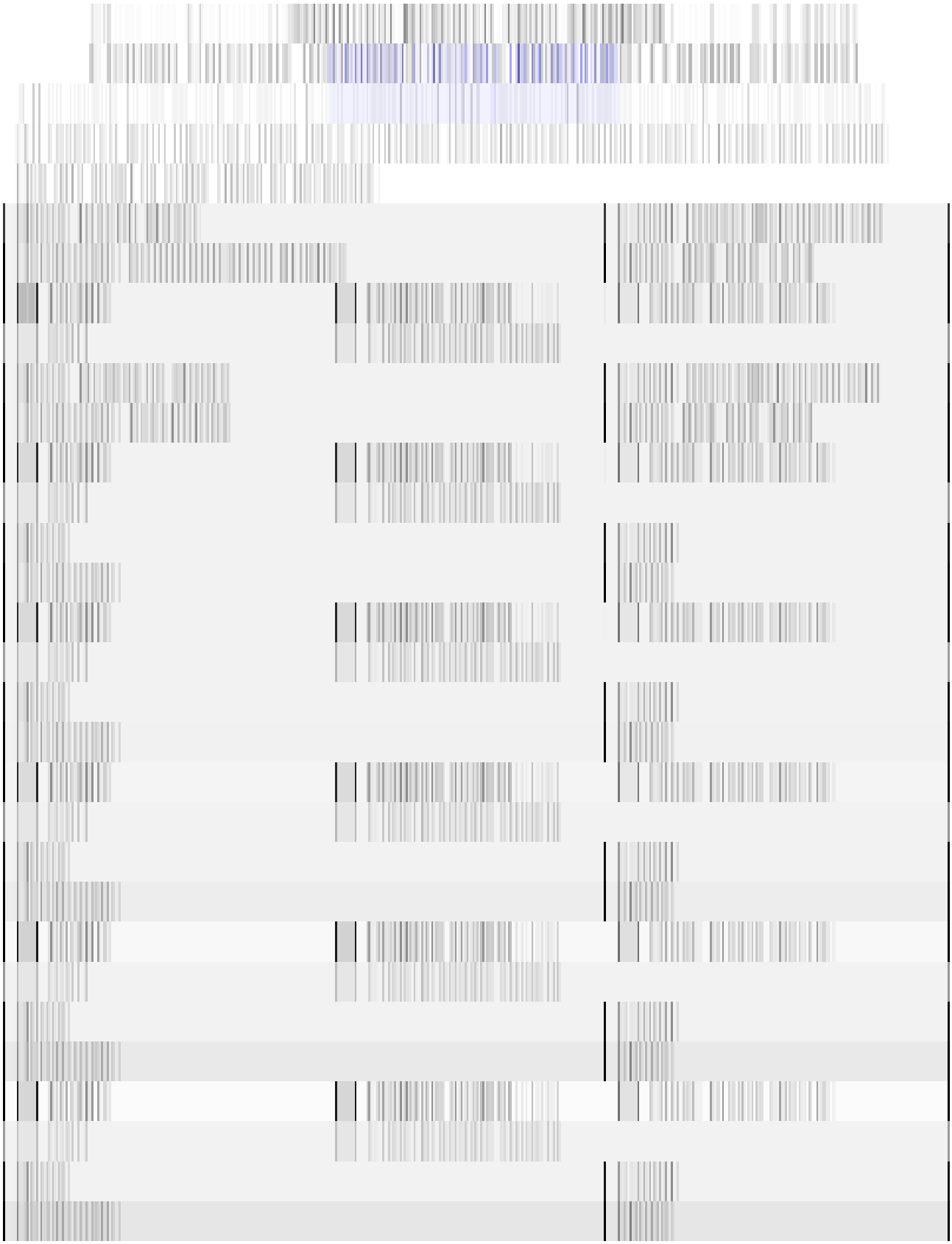










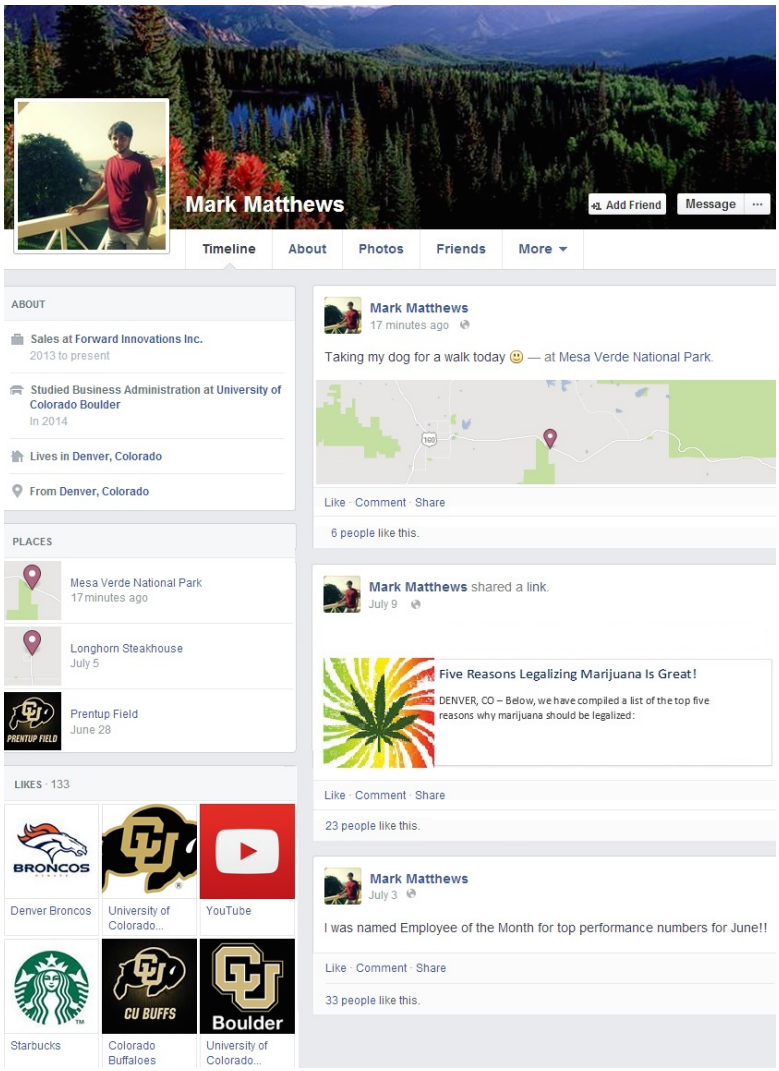


APPENDIX C:

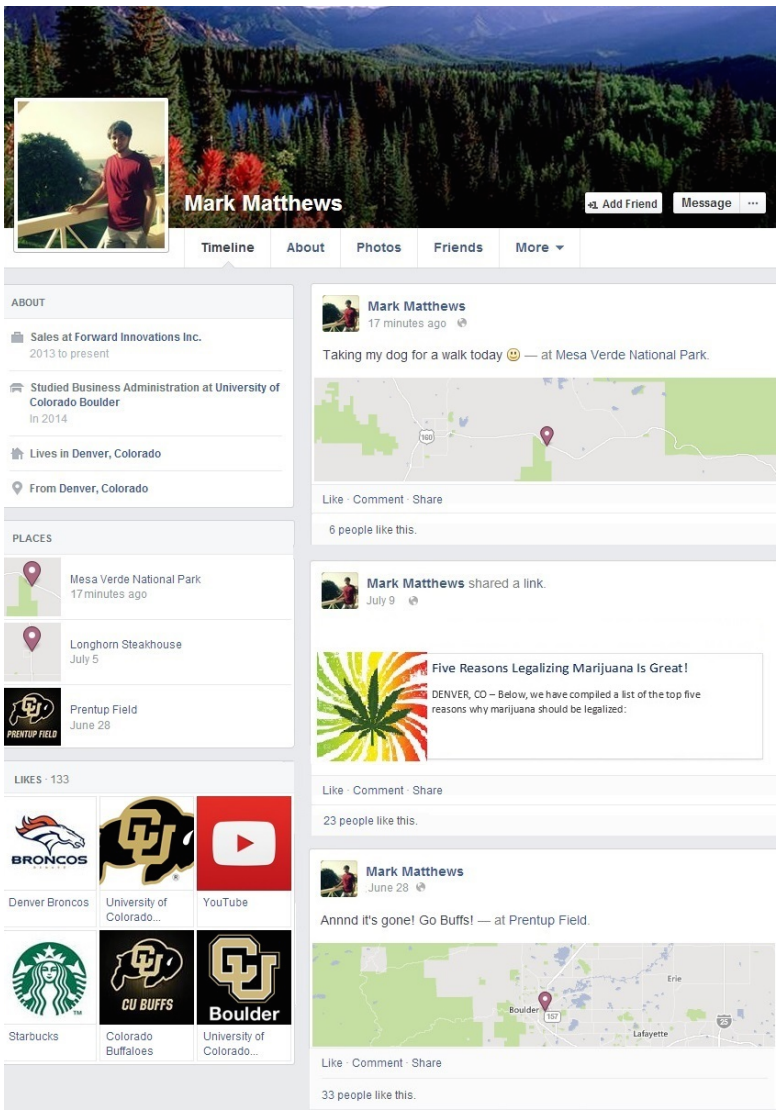
Social Media Profiles

Experiment #1: Legalizing Marijuana

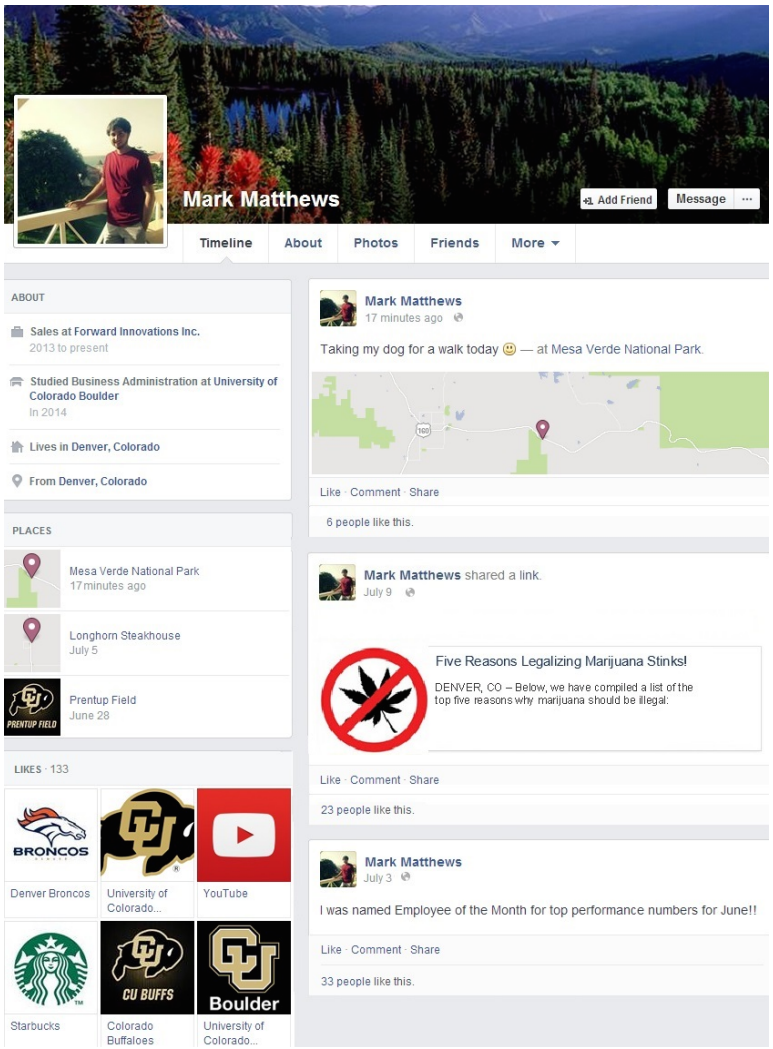
Mark Matthew's Facebook: Supports legalizing marijuana, high individuating information



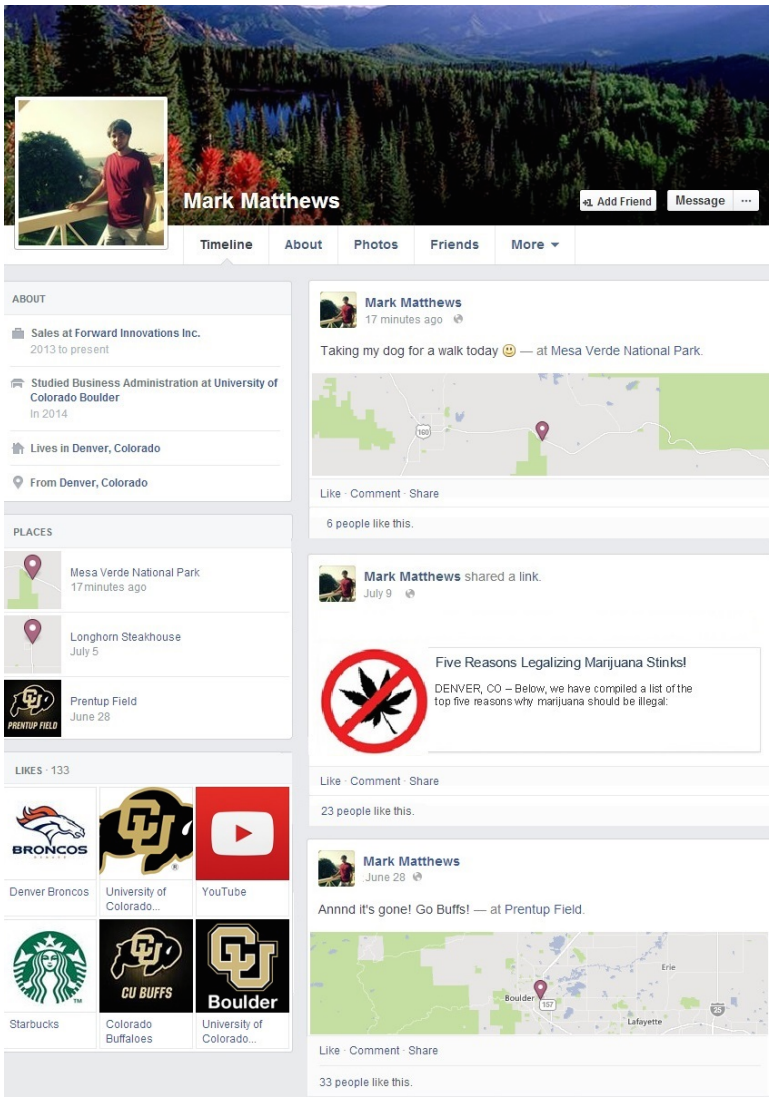
Mark Matthew's Facebook: Supports legalizing marijuana, low individuating information



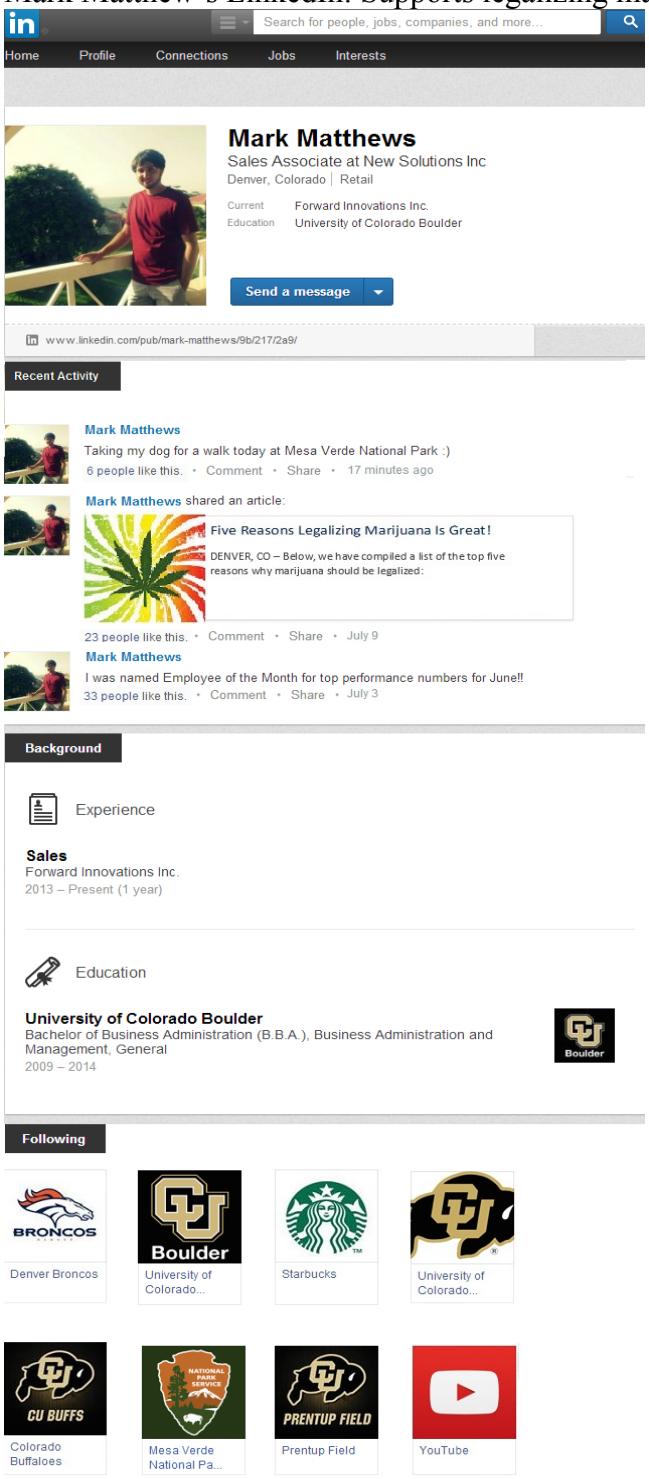
Mark Matthew's Facebook: Does not support legalizing marijuana, high individuating information



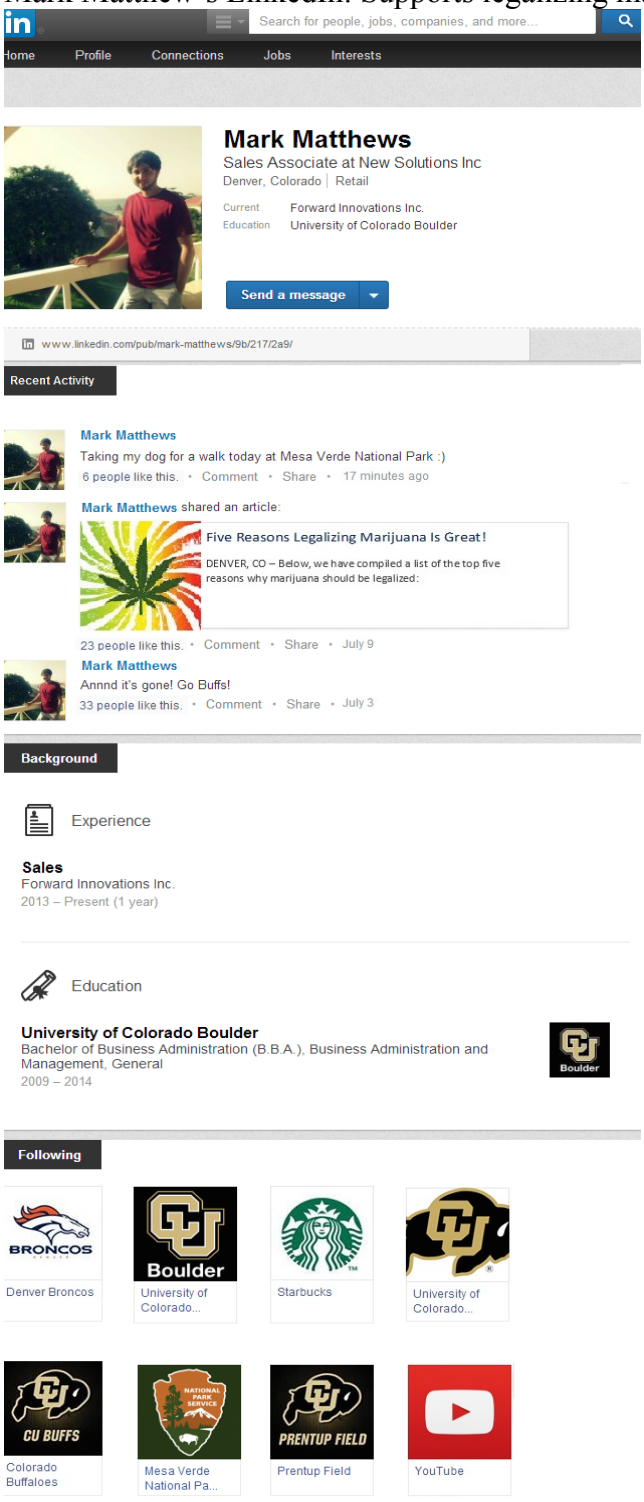
Mark Matthew's Facebook: Does not support legalizing marijuana, low individuating information



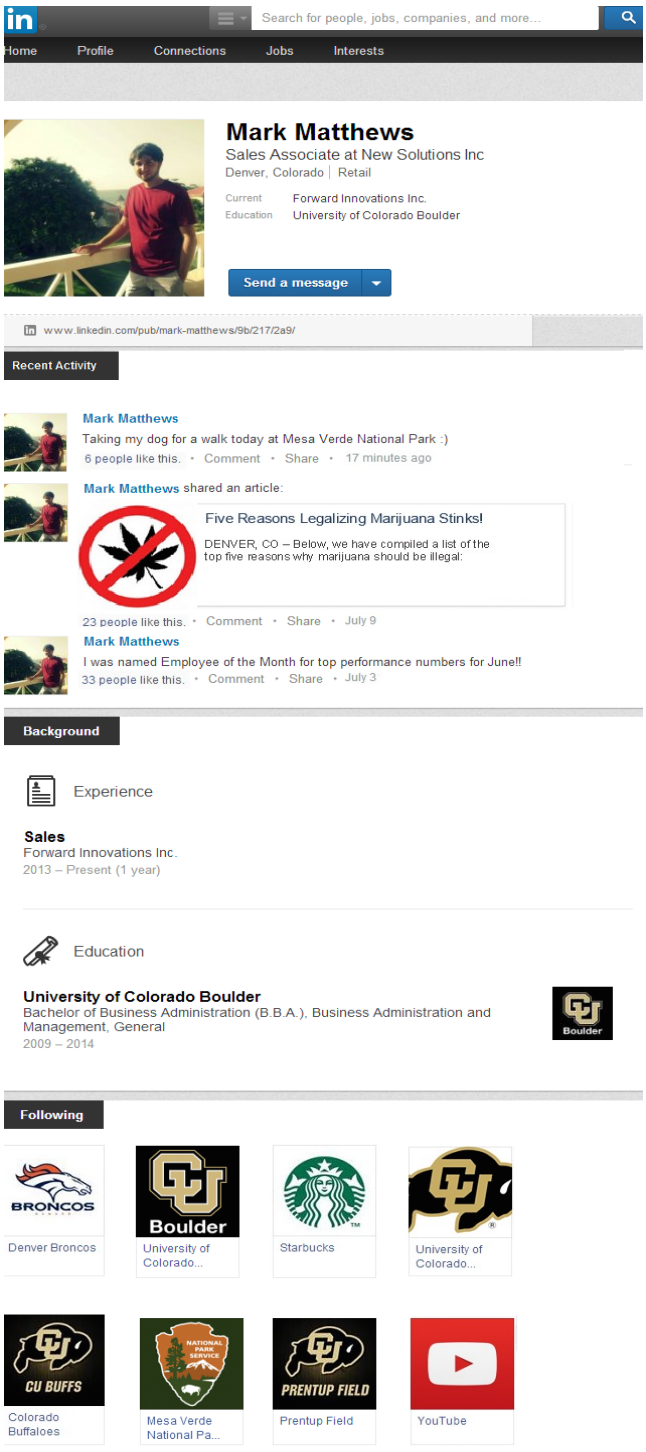
Mark Matthew's LinkedIn: Supports legalizing marijuana, high individuating information



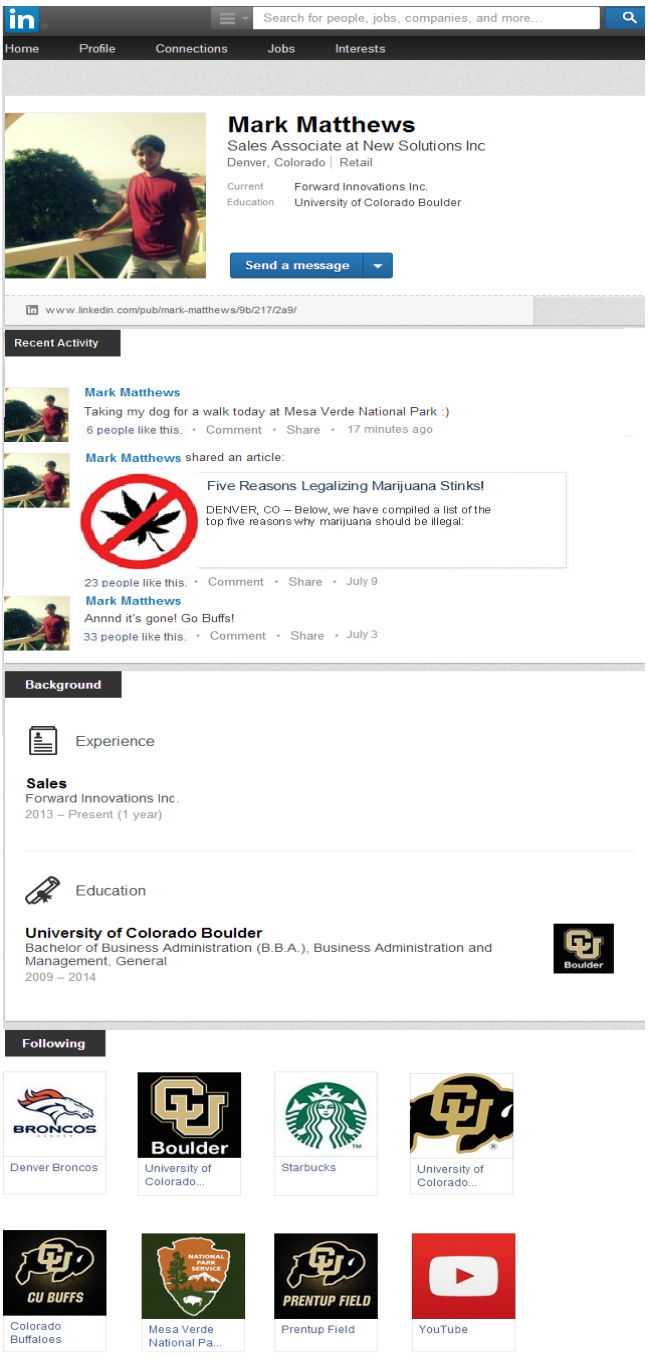
Mark Matthew's LinkedIn: Supports legalizing marijuana, low individuating information



Mark Matthew's LinkedIn: Does not support legalizing marijuana, high individuating information

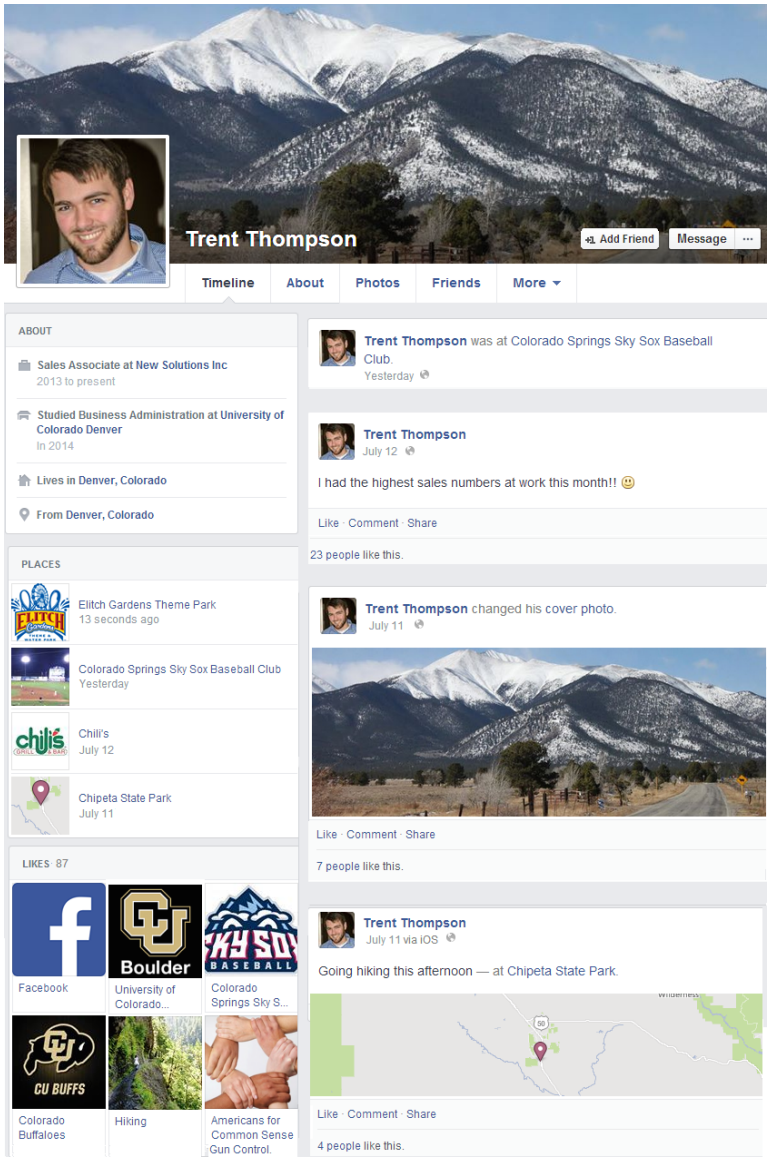


Mark Matthew's LinkedIn: Does not support legalizing marijuana, low individuating information

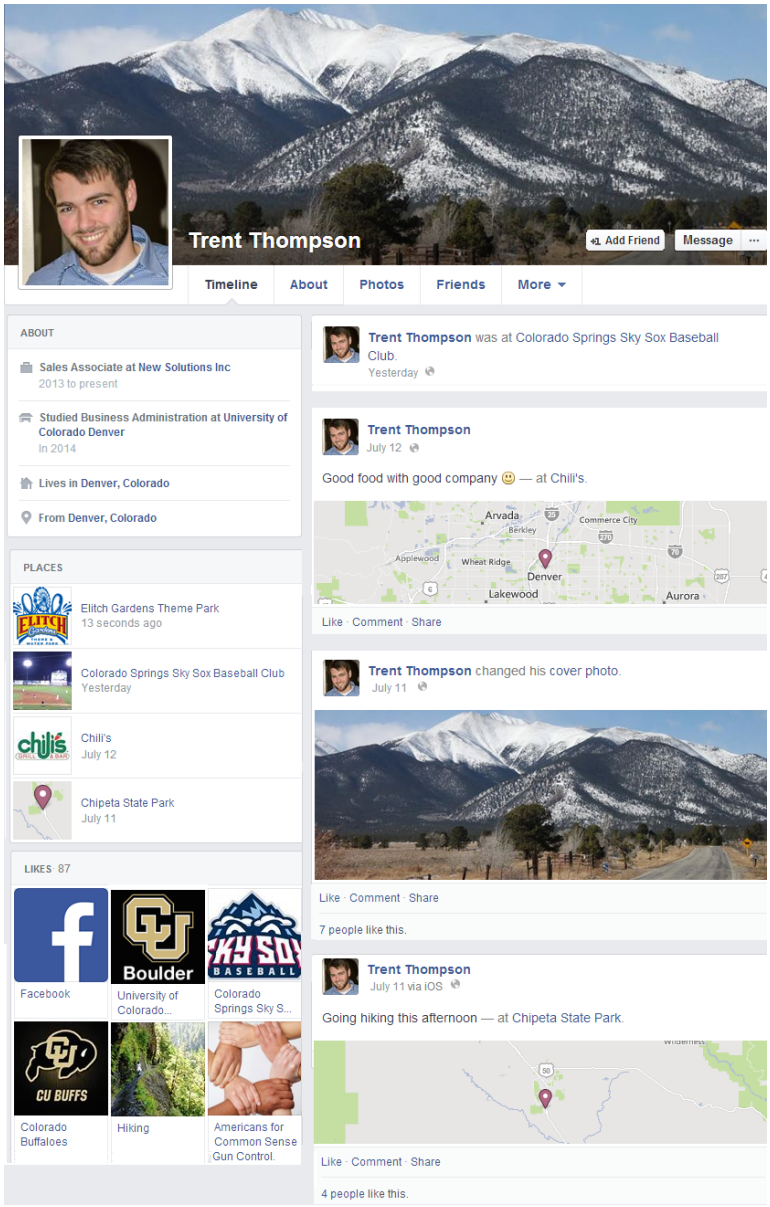


Experiment #2: Gun Control Laws

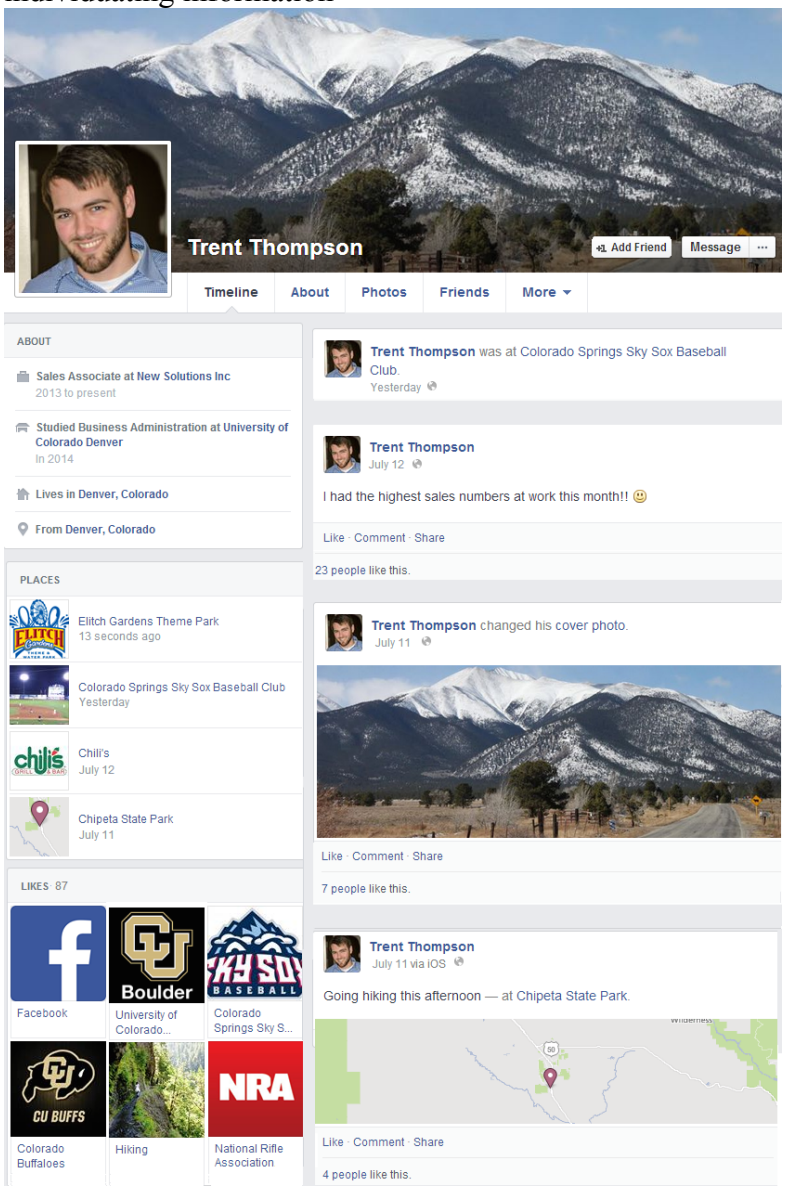
Trent Thompson's Facebook: Supports stricter gun control laws, high individuating information



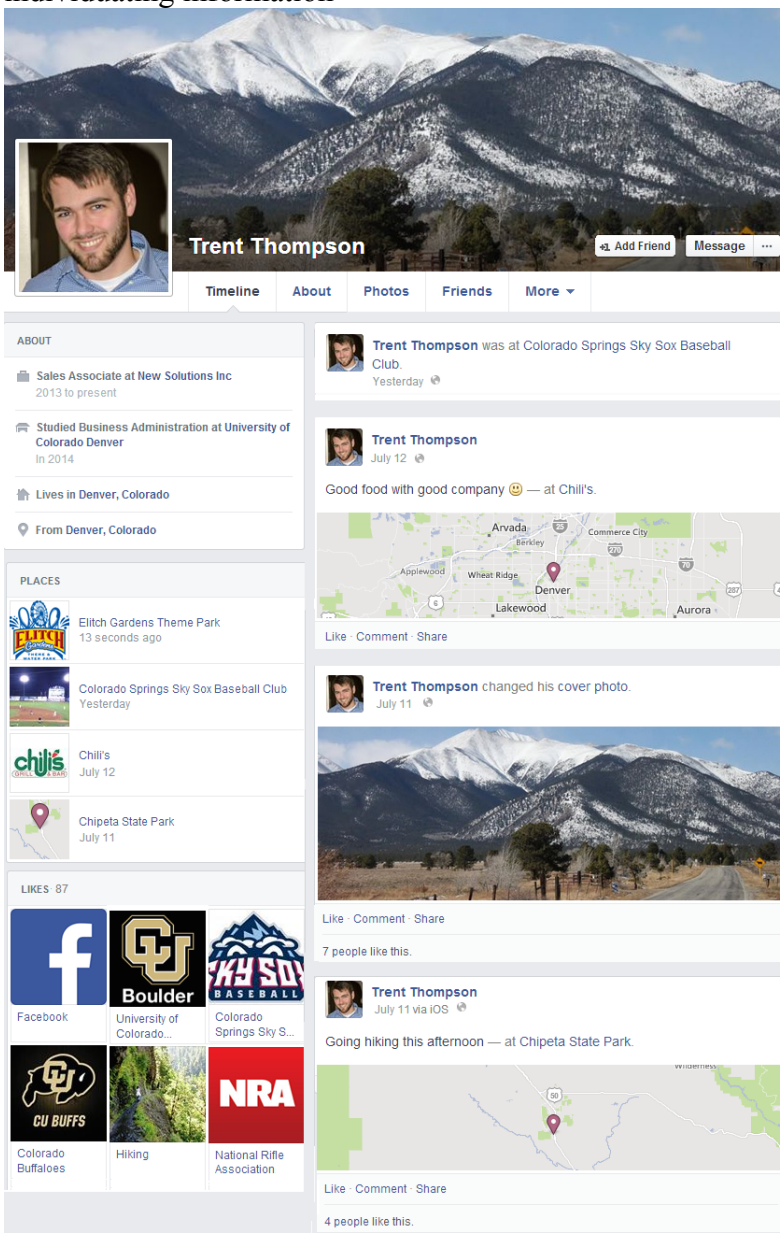
Trent Thompson's Facebook: Supports stricter gun control laws, low individuating information



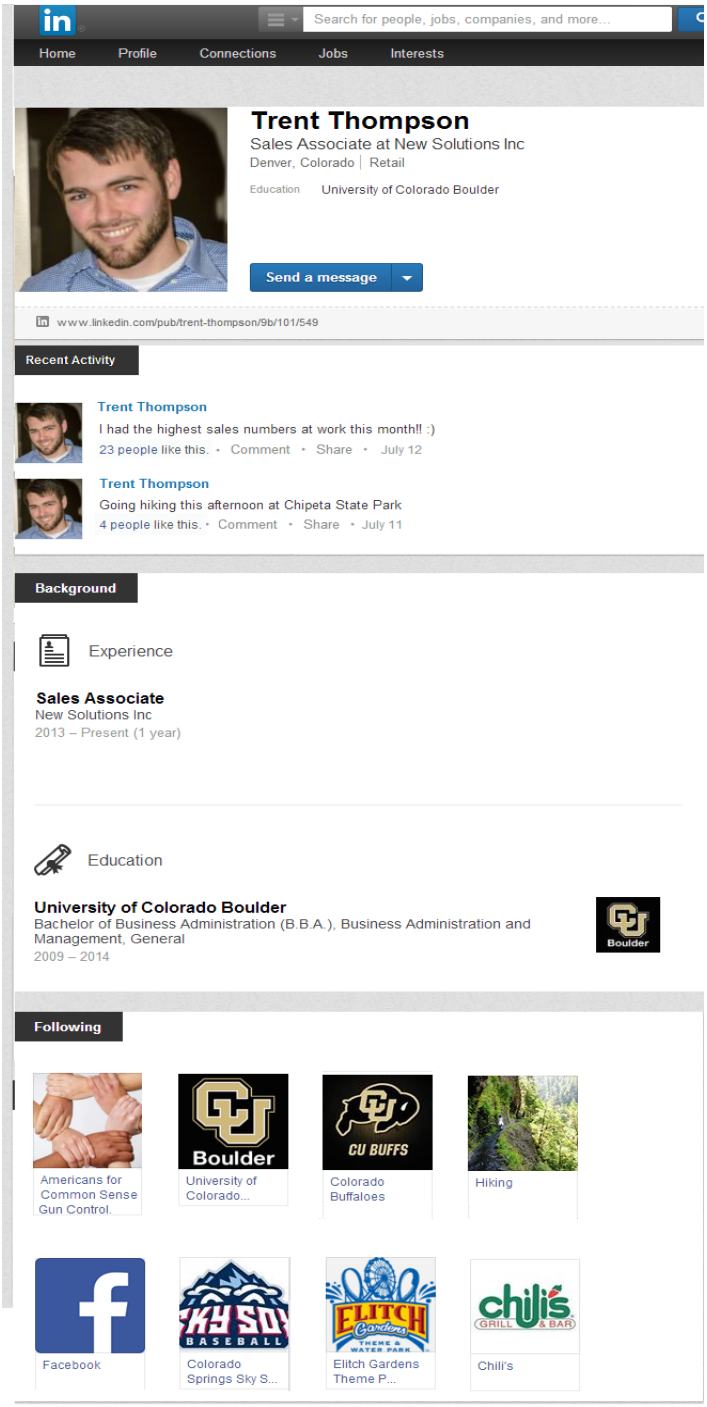
Trent Thompson's Facebook: Does not support stricter gun control laws, high individuating information



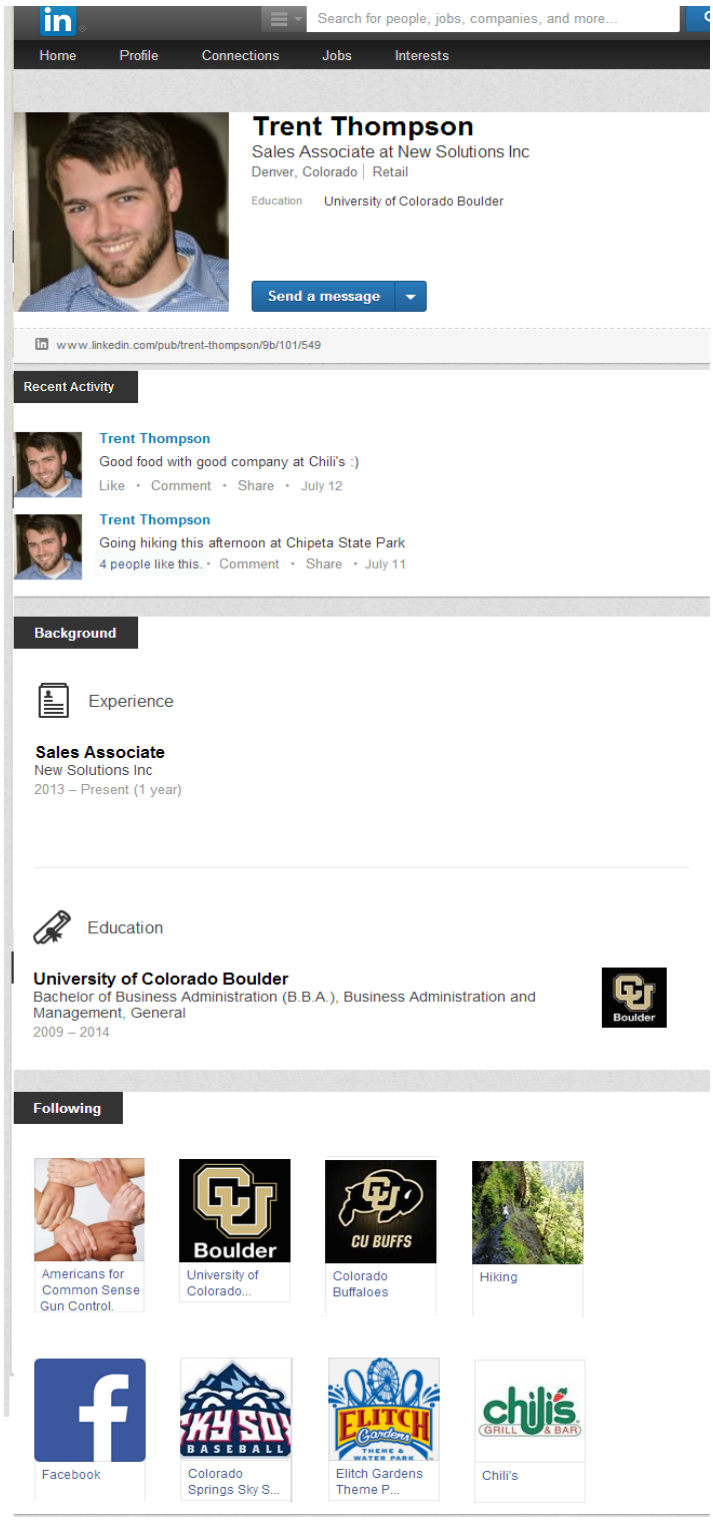
Trent Thompson's Facebook: Does not support stricter gun control laws, low individuating information



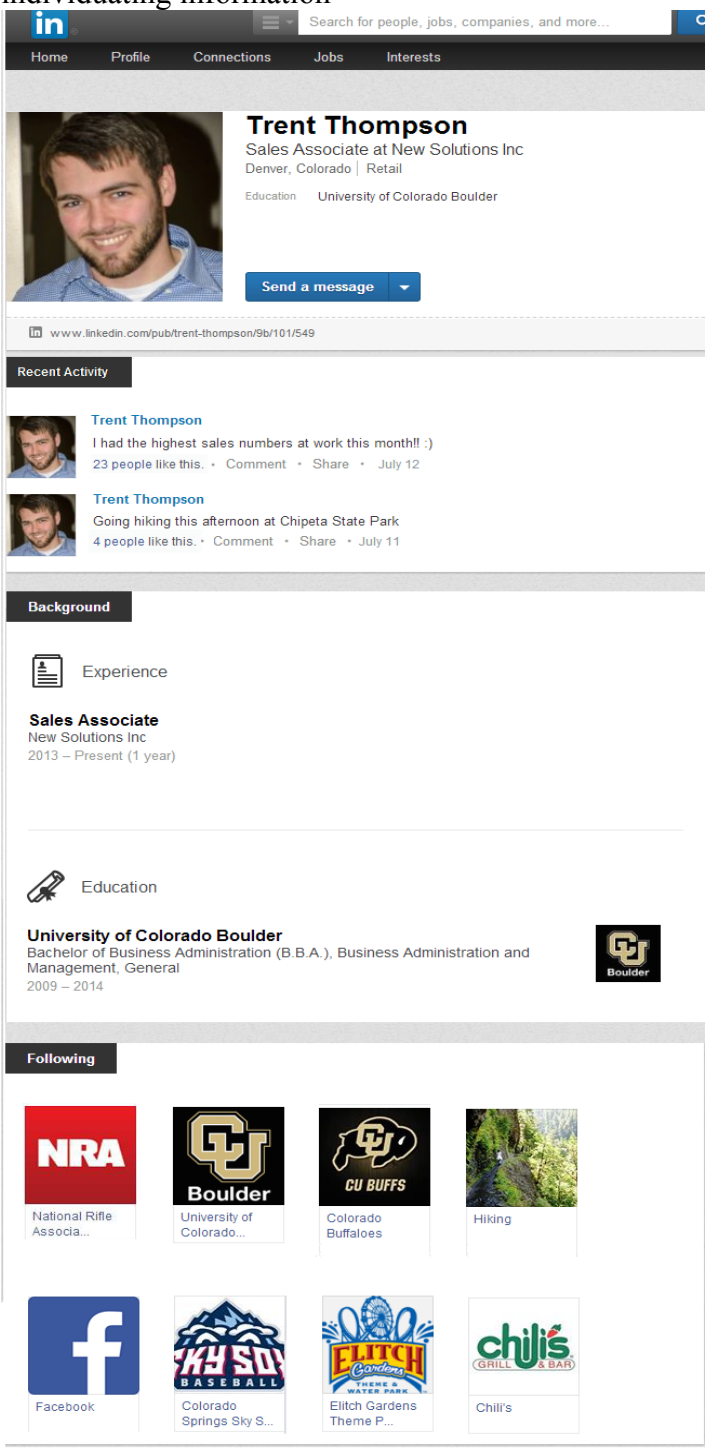
Trent Thompson's LinkedIn: Supports stricter gun control laws, high individuating information



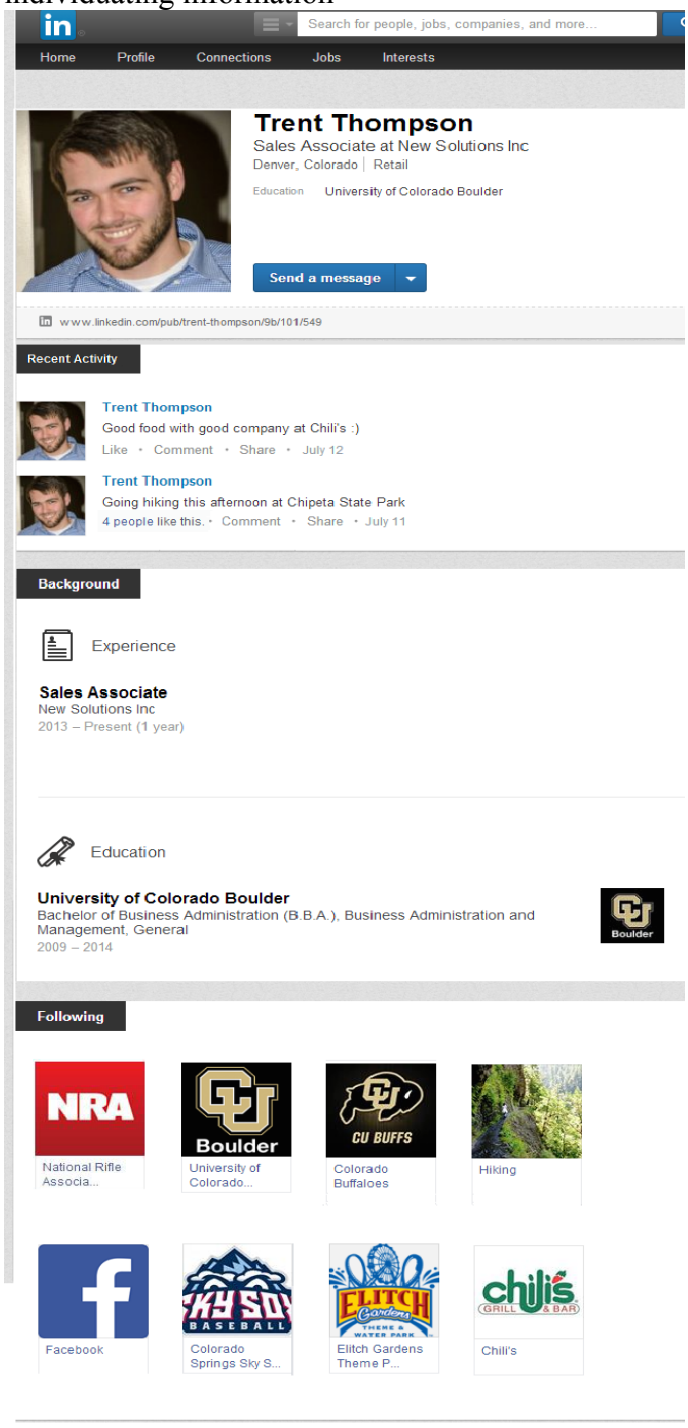
Trent Thompson's LinkedIn: Supports stricter gun control laws, low individuating information



Trent Thompson's LinkedIn: Does not support stricter gun control laws, high individuating information

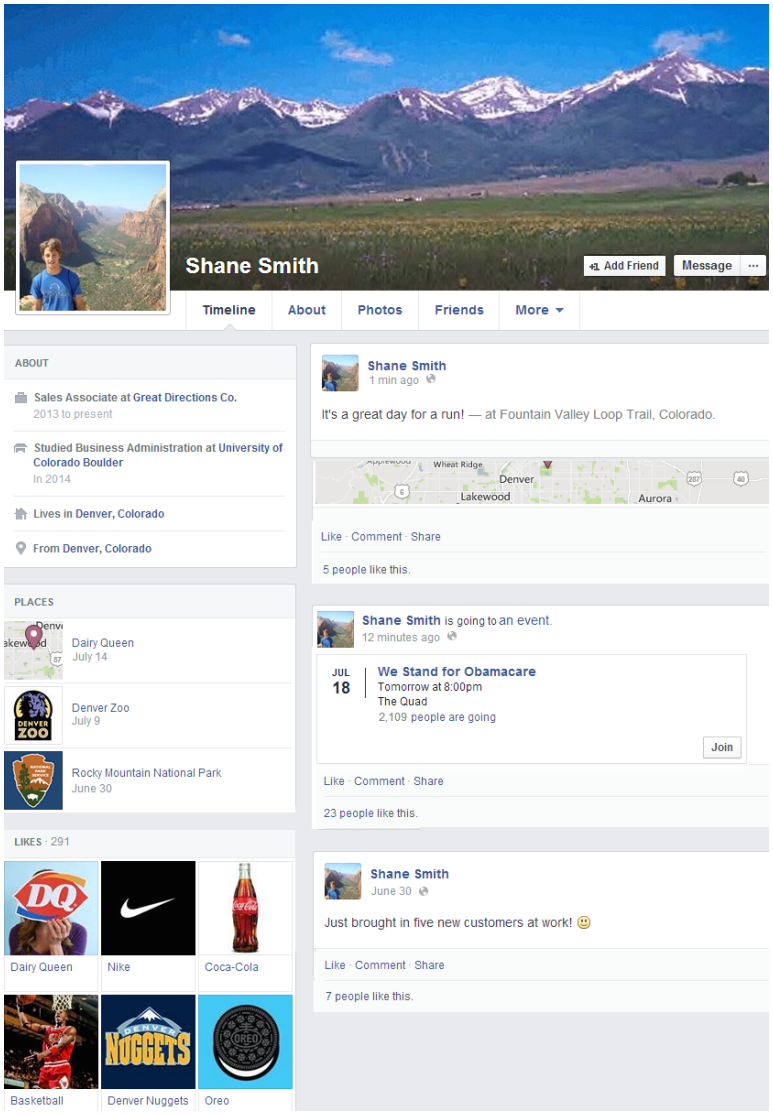


Trent Thompson's LinkedIn: Does not support stricter gun control laws, low individuating information

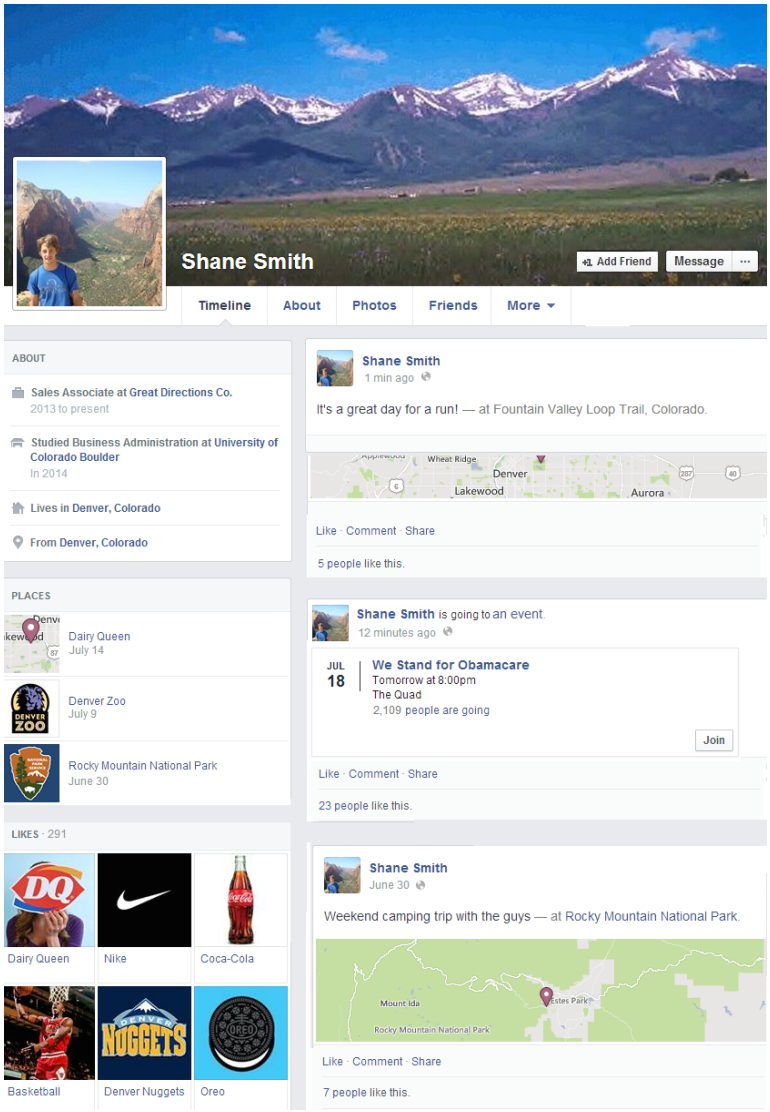


Experiment #3: Affordable Healthcare Act ("Obamacare")

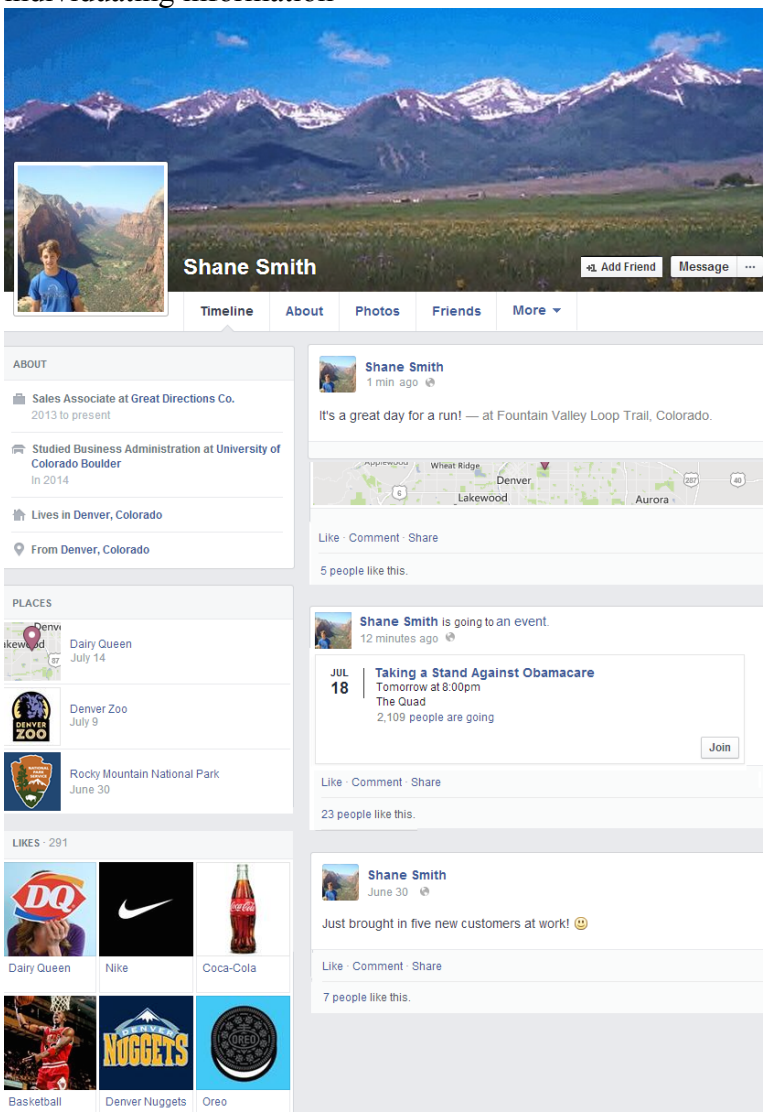
Shane Smith's Facebook: Supports Affordable Healthcare Act, high individuating information



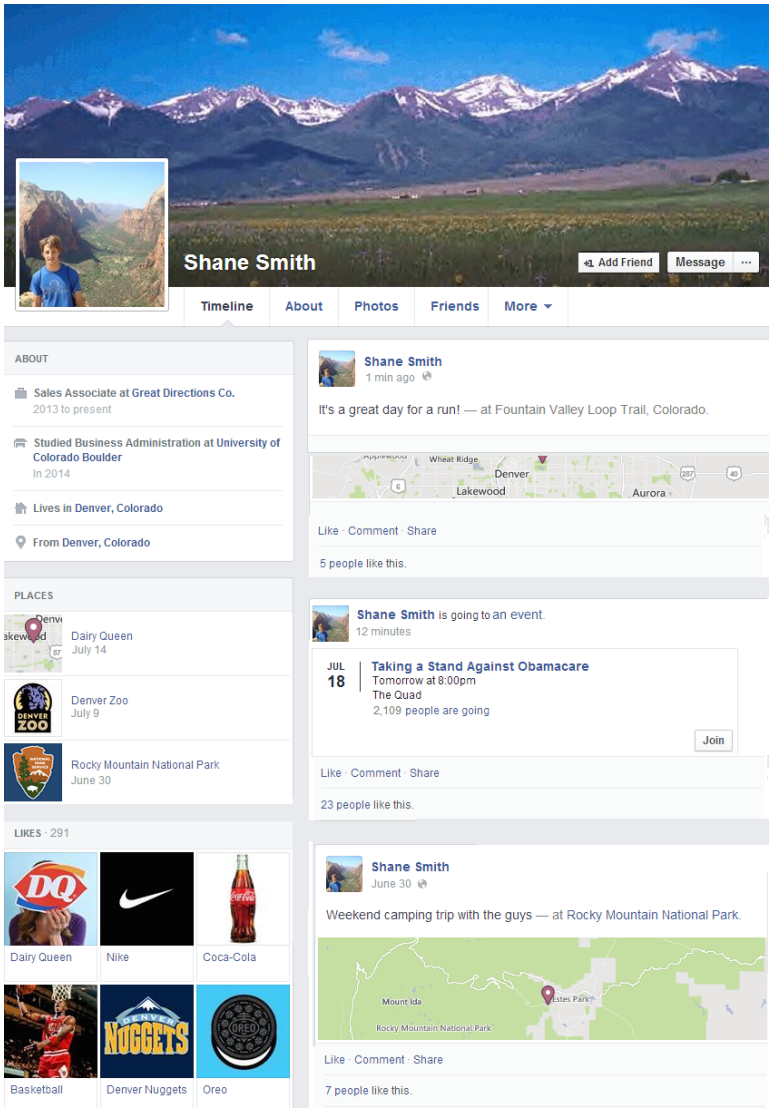
Shane Smith's Facebook: Supports Affordable Healthcare Act, low individuating information



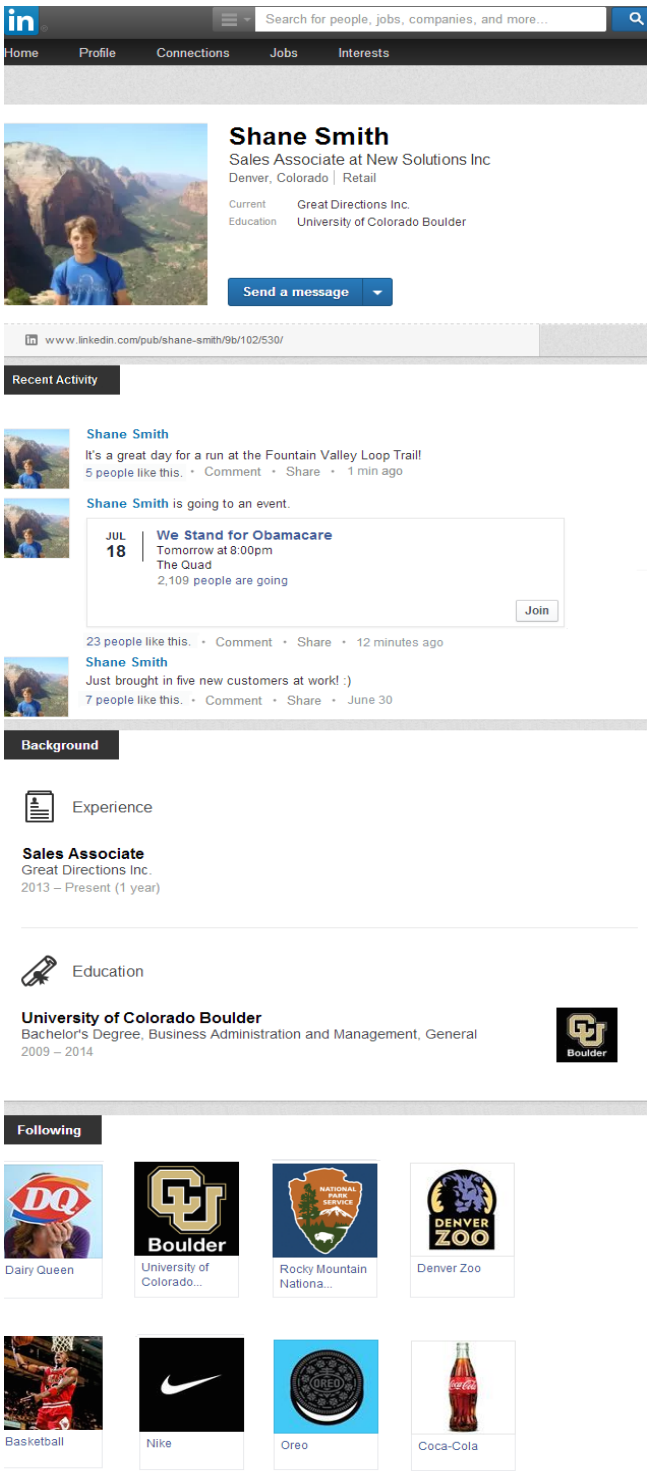
Shane Smith's Facebook: Does not support Affordable Healthcare Act, high individuating information



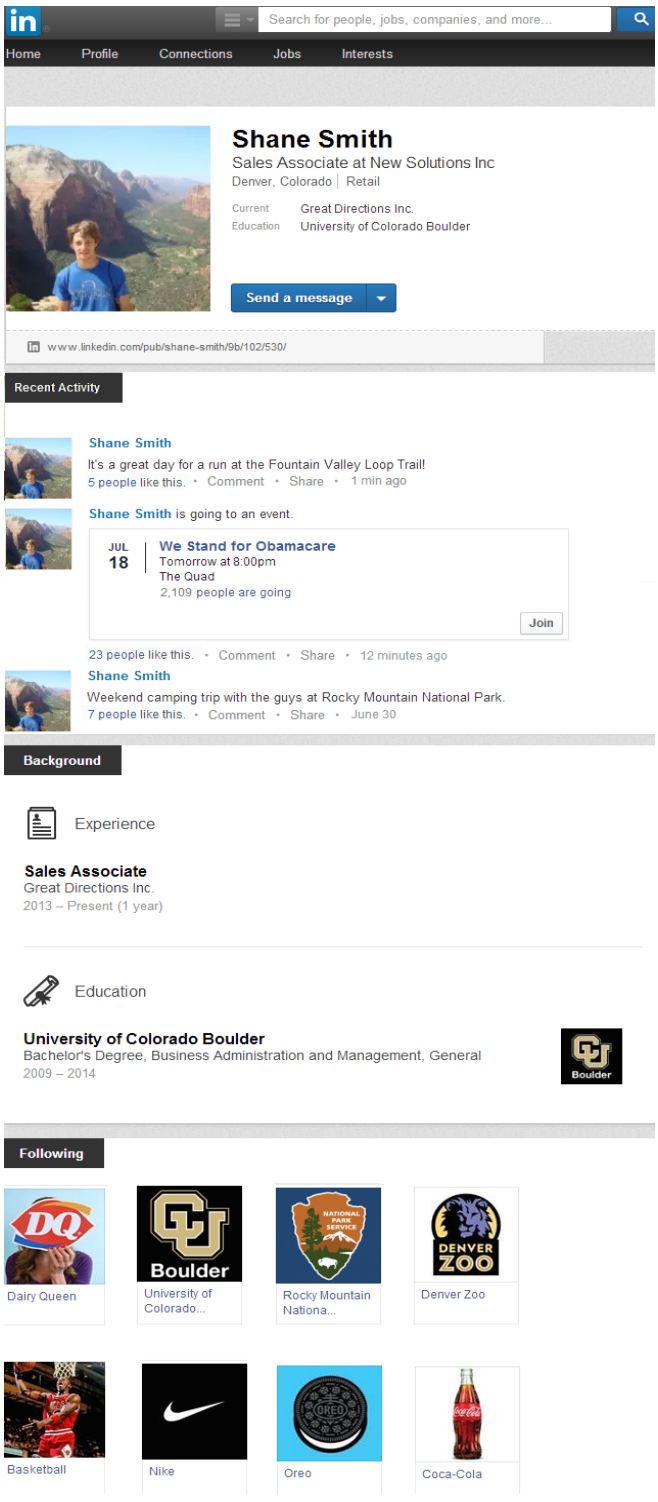
Shane Smith's Facebook: Does not support Affordable Healthcare Act, low individuating information



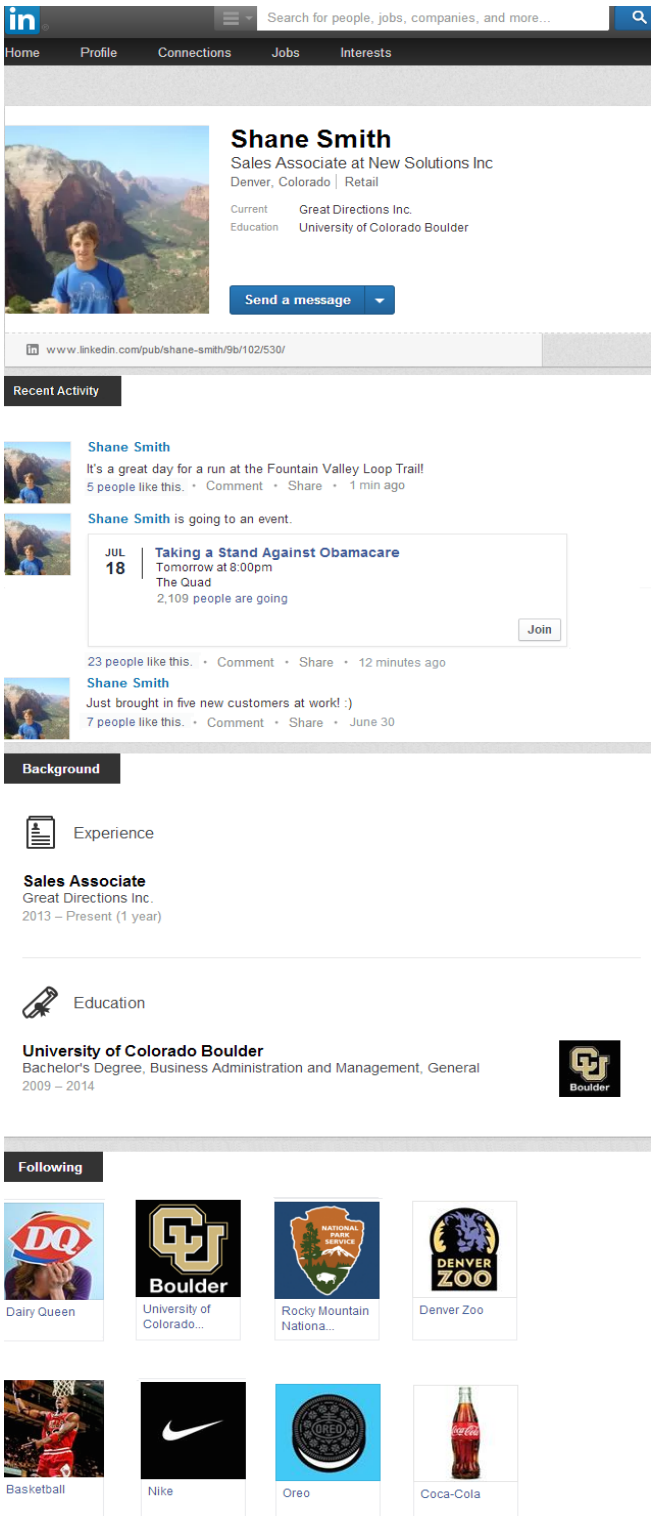
Shane Smith's LinkedIn: Supports Affordable Healthcare Act, high individuating information



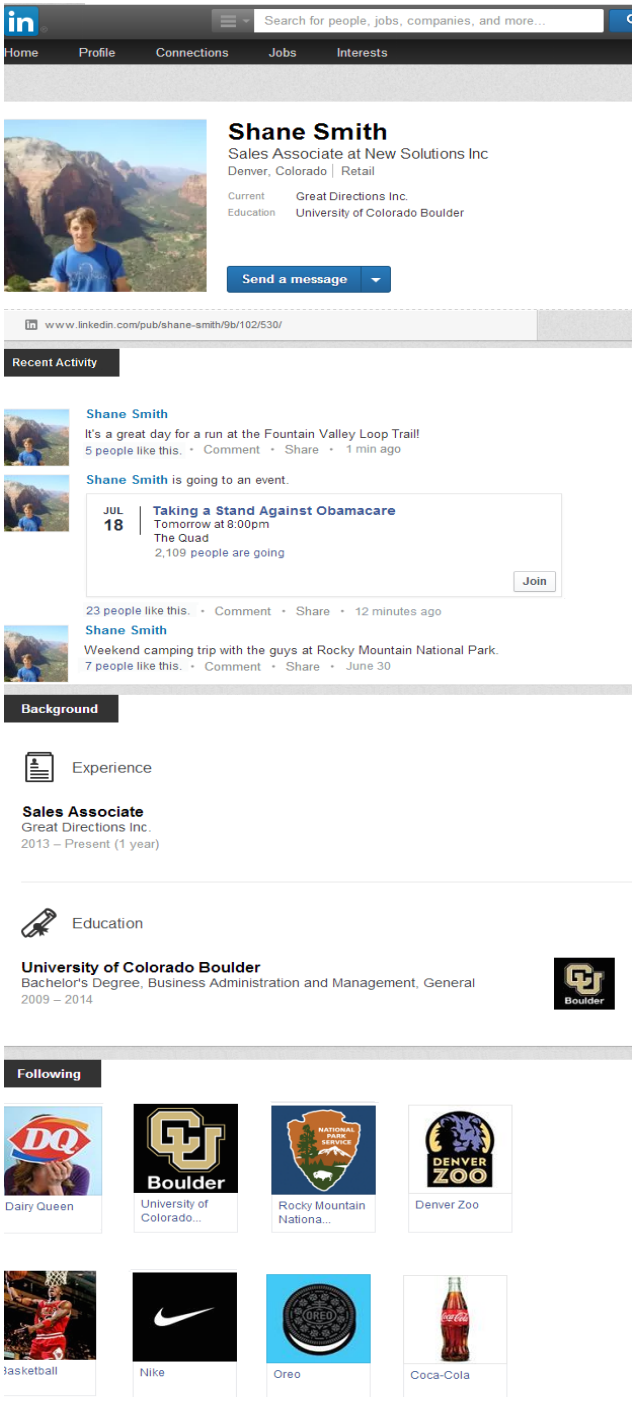
Shane Smith's LinkedIn: Supports Affordable Healthcare Act, low individuating information



Shane Smith's LinkedIn: Does not support Affordable Healthcare Act, high individuating information



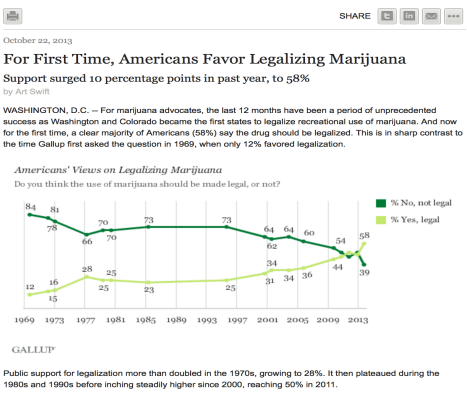
Shane Smith's LinkedIn: Does not support Affordable Healthcare Act, low individuating information



APPENDIX D:

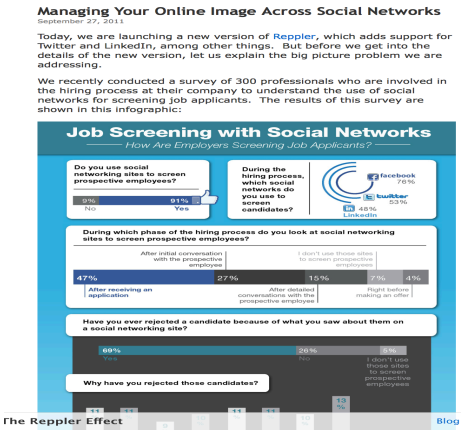
Online Sources

"Employer Access to Social Media User Names and Passwords," 2014. *National Conference of State Legislatures* (2014:5/14/2014), 4/10/2014, pp. 1, ncsl.org.

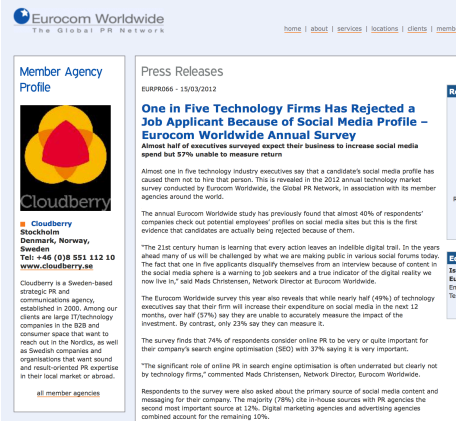


"For the First Time, Americans Favor Legalizing Marijuana," 2013. *Gallup* (2014:6/10/2013), 10/22/2013, gallup.com.

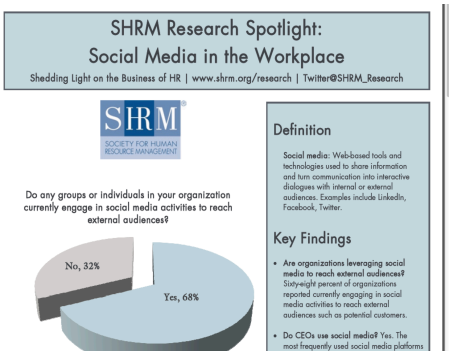
"Gun Control: Key Data Points from Pew Research," 2013. *Pew Research Center* (2014:6/8/2014), 5/5/2013, pewresearch.org.



"Managing Your Online Image Across Social Networks," 2011. *The Reppler Effect* (2014:5/14/2013), 9/27/2011, blog.reppler.com.



"One in Five Technology Firms has Rejected a Job Applicant because of Social Media Profile - Eurocom Worldwide Annual Survey," 2012, *Eurocom Worldwide*3/15/2012, eurocompr.com.



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PewResearch Internet Project

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PUBLICATIONS | TOPICS | PRESENTATIONS | INTERACTIVES | KEY INDICATORS

FACT SHEETS

Social Networking Fact Sheet

Highlights of the Pew Internet Project's research related to social networking.

(Note: This page will be updated whenever new data is available.)

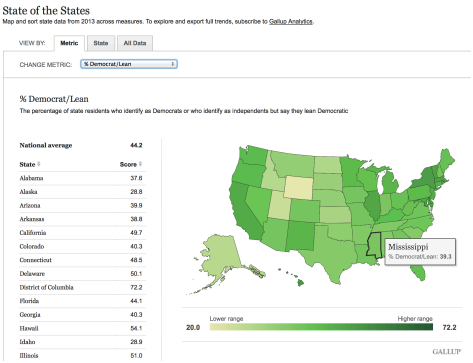
As of September 2013, 73% of online adults use social networking sites.

Who uses social networking sites

% of internet users within each group who use social networking sites

		% who use social networking sites
All internet users 18+ (n=5,112)		**73%**
a	**Men** (n=2,368)	69
b	**Women** (n=2,744)	78[c]
Race/ethnicity		
a	**White, Non-Hispanic** (n=3,617)	72
b	**Black, Non-Hispanic** (n=532)	73
c	**Hispanic** (n=571)	79[ab]
Age		
a	**18-29** (n=929)	90[bcd]
b	**30-49** (n=1,507)	78[cd]

"Social Networking Fact Sheet," 2013. *Pew Research Internet Project* (2014:5/1/2014), September, 2013, pewresearch.org.



State of the States

Map and sort state data from 2013 across measures. To explore and export full trends, subscribe to Gallup Analytics.

VIEW BY: Metric | State | All Data

CHANGE METRIC: % Democrat/Lean

% Democrat/Lean

The percentage of state residents who identify as Democrats or who identify as independents but say they lean Democratic

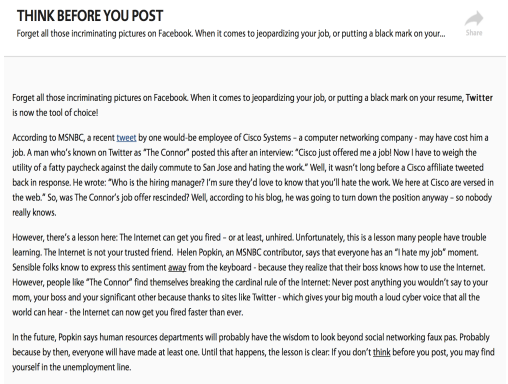
State	Score
National average	44.2
Alabama	37.6
Alaska	28.8
Arizona	39.9
Arkansas	38.8
California	49.7
Colorado	40.3
Connecticut	48.5
Delaware	50.1
District of Columbia	72.2
Florida	44.1
Georgia	40.3
Hawaii	54.1
Idaho	28.9
Illinois	51.0

Mississippi
% Democrat/Lean: 39.3

Lower range — Higher range
20.0 — 72.2

GALLUP

"State of the States," 2014. *Gallup* (2014:6/12/2014), 6/12/2014, gallup.com.



THINK BEFORE YOU POST

Forget all those incriminating pictures on Facebook. When it comes to jeopardizing your job, or putting a black mark on your...

Share

Forget all those incriminating pictures on Facebook. When it comes to jeopardizing your job, or putting a black mark on your resume, **Twitter** is now the tool of choice!

According to MSNBC, a recent tweet by one would-be employee of Cisco Systems – a computer networking company - may have cost him a job. A man who's known on Twitter as "The Connor" posted this after an interview: "Cisco just offered me a job! Now I have to weigh the utility of a fatty paycheck against the daily commute to San Jose and hating the work." Well, it wasn't long before a Cisco affiliate tweeted back in response. He wrote: "Who is the hiring manager? I'm sure they'd love to know that you'll hate the work. We here at Cisco are versed in the web." So, was The Connor's job offer rescinded? Well, according to his blog, he was going to turn down the position anyway – so nobody really knows.

However, there's a lesson here: The Internet can get you fired – or at least, unhired. Unfortunately, this is a lesson many people have trouble learning. The Internet is not your trusted friend. Helen Popkin, an MSNBC contributor, says that everyone has an "I hate my job" moment. Sensible folks know to express this sentiment away from the keyboard - because they realize that their boss knows how to use the Internet. However, people like "The Connor" find themselves breaking the cardinal rule of the Internet: Never post anything you wouldn't say to your mom, your boss and your significant other because thanks to sites like Twitter - which gives your big mouth a loud cyber voice that all the world can hear - the Internet can now get you fired faster than ever.

In the future, Popkin says human resources departments will probably have the wisdom to look beyond social networking faux pas. Probably because by then, everyone will have made at least one. Until that happens, the lesson is clear: If you don't think before you post, you may find yourself in the unemployment line.

"Think before You Post," 2014. *Intelligence for Your Life* (2014:5/14/2013), 5/14/2014, pp. 1, teshreport.com.

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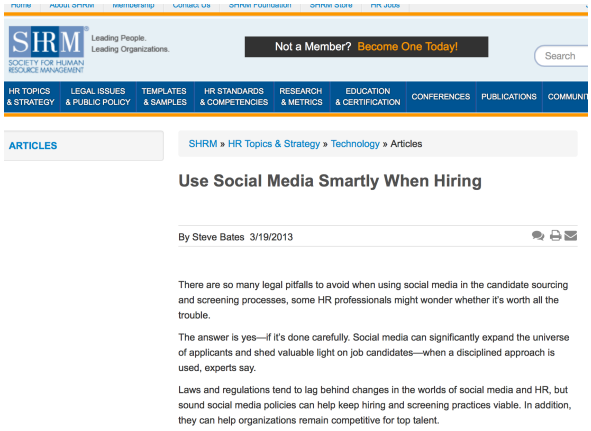

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RECRUITING AND STAFFING

Social Media Screening: Here's How to Use it in Your Hiring Decisions

by Don Charlton on Dec 5, 2012, 8:10 AM | 4 Comments

Share 45 Like 40 Tweet

You've probably had friends whom you wished would stop using Facebook or Twitter for just five minutes.

After all, who needs to see 12 new pictures of someone's dog every hour, or hear about how so and so's love life is still on the rocks? A hiring and staffing manager who's trying to make hiring decisions, that's who.

People use social networks to share snippets of their personal lives with friends and family, but hiring and staffing departments also view the material. According to CareerBuilder, 37 percent of companies use social networks to research job candidates, and 12 percent of businesses use the websites to look for reasons not to hire someone.

Charlton, D. 2012. "Social Media Screening: Here's how to use it in Your Hiring Decisions," *The Business of HR* (2014:5/1/2014), 12/5/2012, tlnt.com.

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2012 | THE SOCIAL MEDIA ISSUE

COVER STORY

Social Media Networking for Lawyers: A Practical Guide to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Blogging

By Simon Chester and Daniel Del Gobbo

Lawyers are beginning to realize the potential of social media to market their ser vices, build connections with other lawyers and potential clients, and gather and share information about their practice and the law.

FEATURES

How Should Law Firms Approach Social Media

By Simon Chester and Daniel Del Gobbo

MOBILE EDITION

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Chester, S., and D. D. Gobbo. 2012. "Social Media Networking for Lawyers: A Practical Guide to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Blogging," *American Bar Association* (2014:5/1/2014), 2/1/2012, americanbar.org.

Randall Craig

Author and CEO of 108 ideaspace

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How Many Social Media Sites Will Survive?

Posted: 03/21/2013 5:22 pm

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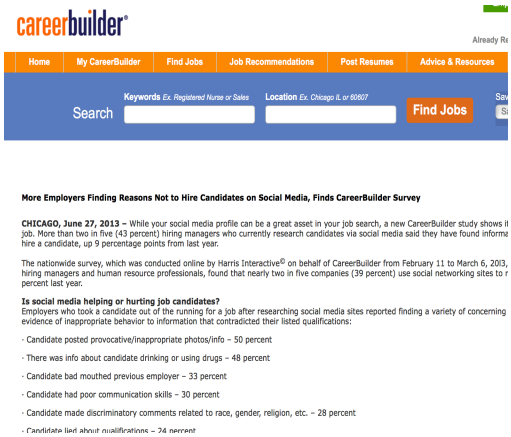
Before social media really took off, the number of tools for engaging stakeholders online was very, very small. You could create a bulletin board on your site. An interactive calculator. A "guestbook" (remember those?) Or get people to sign up to a ListServ and participate in a discussion via email. These all had one thing in common: the ownership of the venue was yours -- and people had to come to your website in order to participate.

With the advent of YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and the many other public social networks, the centre of gravity shifted dramatically, from the corporate site to an interconnected public cloud. Except it wasn't a shift to a "public" cloud -- it was to a venue owned by someone else.

First individuals flocked, lured by connection with others, entertainment, and perhaps a bit of narcissism. Then companies (and causes, and governments) came, lured by the critical mass of prospects -- and the stunningly low cost of entry. As we all know, the social web is here to stay, primarily because this equation hasn't changed

Craig, R. 2013. "How Many Social Media Sites Will Survive?" *Huffington Post* (2014:6/1/2014), 3/21/2013, huffingtonpost.com.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More Employers Finding Reasons Not to Hire Candidates on Social Media, Finds CareerBuilder Survey

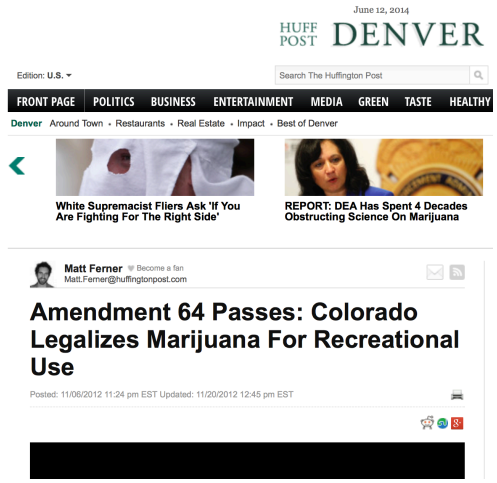
CHICAGO, June 27, 2013 – While your social media profile can be a great asset in your job search, a new CareerBuilder study shows it job. More than two in five (43 percent) hiring managers who currently research candidates via social media said they have found informa hire a candidate, up 9 percentage points from last year.

The nationwide survey, which was conducted online by Harris Interactive© on behalf of CareerBuilder from February 11 to March 6, 2013, hiring managers and human resource professionals, found that nearly two in five companies (39 percent) use social networking sites to r percent last year.

Is social media helping or hurting job candidates?
Employers who took a candidate out of the running for a job after researching social media sites reported finding a variety of concerning evidence of inappropriate behavior to information that contradicted their listed qualifications:

- Candidate posted provocative/inappropriate photos/info – 50 percent
- There was info about candidate drinking or using drugs – 48 percent
- Candidate bad mouthed previous employer – 33 percent
- Candidate had poor communication skills – 30 percent
- Candidate made discriminatory comments related to race, gender, religion, etc. – 28 percent
- Candidate lied about qualifications – 24 percent

Erwin, M. 2013. "More Employers Finding Reasons Not to Hire Candidates on Social Media, Finds CareerBuilder Survey," *Careerbuilder* (2014:5/1/2014), 6/27/2013, careerbuilder.com.


June 12, 2014

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REPORT: DEA Has Spent 4 Decades Obstructing Science On Marijuana

Matt Ferner | Become a fan
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Amendment 64 Passes: Colorado Legalizes Marijuana For Recreational Use

Posted: 11/06/2012 11:24 pm EST Updated: 11/20/2012 12:45 pm EST

Ferner, M. 2012. "Amendment 64 Passes: Colorado Legalizes Marijuana for Recreational use," *Huffington Post* (2014:6/8/2014), 11/6/2012, huffingtonpost.com.


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Posted at 01:15 PM ET, 05/03/2012

Maryland becomes first state to prohibit employers from asking for Facebook logins

By Catherine Ho

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley has signed legislation banning employers in the state from requiring workers and prospective employees to disclose their user names and passwords to Facebook, Twitter and other personal social media accounts.

State legislators approved the bill, SB 433 (HB 964), last month, and O'Malley signed it into law Wednesday. It takes effect Oct. 1.

Maryland is the first state to pass such a law explicitly banning employers from collecting login information for employees' password-protected accounts, and similar measures are pending inCalifornia, Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota.

Employment law experts say the move sets important limits on

Ho, C. 2012. "Maryland Becomes First State to Prohibit Employers from Asking for Facebook Logins," *Washington Post* (2014:5/14/2014), 5/3/2012, huffingtonpost.com.

White House: Obama Looking to Act 'Administratively, Unilaterally' on Guns

Jun. 10, 2014 4:53pm | Fred Lucas

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White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Tuesday that President Barack Obama is "always" looking for opportunities to act "unilaterally" again on guns, though he would prefer to work with Congress.

"The president's goal is to look for opportunities to act administratively, unilaterally using his executive authority to try to make our communities safer," Earnest said, responding to a question the day that a gunman opened fire at an Oregon high school, killing one student and injuring a teacher. "We're always looking for those opportunities. But none of those opportunities when they present themselves is going to be an acceptable substitute for robust legislative action."

Police said the shooter at Reynolds High School in Troutdale, Oregon, was later found dead

White House principal deputy press secretary Josh Earnest speaks to the media during the daily news briefing at the White House, June 10, 2014. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

Lucas, F. 2014. "White House: Obama Looking to Act 'Administratively, Unilaterally' on Guns," *The Blaze* (2014:6/10/2014), 6/10/2014, theblaze.com.

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Oregon high school shooting likely t debate over gun control in state

Mapes, J. 2014. "Oregon High School Shooting Likely to Heighten Debate Over Gun Control in State," *Oregon Live* (2014:6/10/2014), 6/10/2014, oregonlive.com.

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Social Recruiting Guide

jobvite.com

The Essential Guide To Developing A Social Recruiting Strateg

Job seekers getting asked for Facebook passwords

By Shannon Mcfarland, Associated Press Updated 3/21/2012 10:56 AM

Comment 124 Recommend 249 Tweet 561 +1 34

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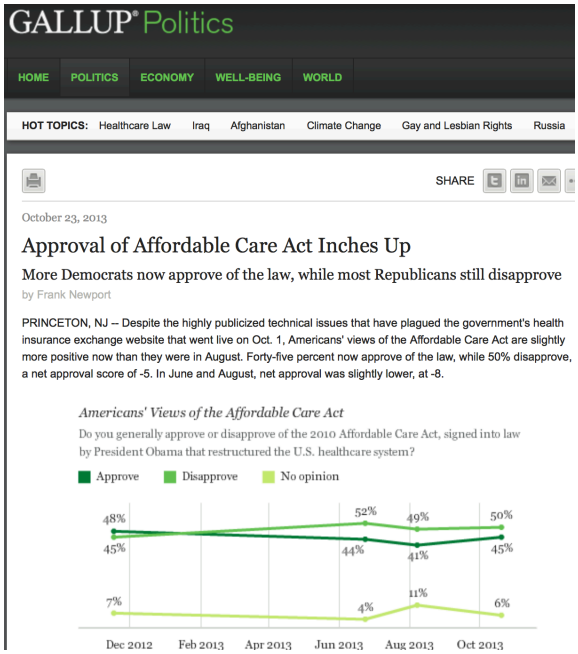

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