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Finding a Finance Job Through Twitter: Twittering or Frittering?

By Judith Ritter



Jennifer Baty (@jenbaty), a portfolio analyst with fifteen years of experience, has been unemployed for eight months, but that doesn't mean she hasn't been busy. Since leaving Chicago-based Moore Financial, she's been [taking more finance courses](#), [doing freelance consulting](#), and pulling out all the stops looking for a job. That means using not only the usual methods -- personal contacts, job boards and LinkedIn -- but also the [latest and reputedly hottest route to a job](#), Twitter.

Baty has landed interviews at eight companies through traditional means, but so far none from Twitter. Because of compliance issues, she isn't sure Twitter is the best venue for people in finance, but she has found it useful in expanding her network. She recommends a [job hunt chat that takes place on Twitter every Monday](#). "The jobs aren't

necessarily in my field, but the upside is that the interaction really keeps me engaged."

While Twitter is burning up the job hunt track in a lot of other professions -- media, public relations, sales, marketing, communications -- experts aren't yet convinced of its effectiveness in finance. When used wisely and carefully, however, they say it can be an outstanding tool for networking.

Use with Discretion

According to Susan Whitcomb (@SusanWhitcomb), one of the authors of Twitter Job Search Guide, Twitter is definitely "better for some jobs than others." Right now, Twitter is less popular in finance job searches because of confidentiality and compliance issues. "Using Twitter could actually hurt you," she says, "if you don't act with perfect discretion."

Discretion means, says, Whitcomb, avoiding blatantly stupid tweets like @FakeCompany Sorry to hear about your legal troubles with #SOX compliance. We had similar issue to deal with at my last employer (Fake Company 2). Only slightly more subtle is this: I've got an interview w/ John Smith at Fake Company tomorrow. I've heard mixed reviews. Please DM me if you know of the good, bad, and/or ugly. Tweets are public, and Tweets like these suggest a lack of discretion.



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Executives: Use with Extreme Discretion

Roy Cohen, a New York City career coach whose book *Wall Street Professional's Survival Guide: Success Secrets of a Career Coach* will be released in June, goes one step further. He warns that, even with discretion, you could run into problems: "Wall Street recruiters gravitate toward more traditional products. Twitter is still untested." He does see a potential upside for some job seekers -- like analysts in the early stages of their careers -- but definitely not for mid- to senior-level executives.

Other experts agree. Stephanie Lloyd (@StephanieALloyd), an executive search consultant at Atlanta-based Calibre Search Group, a finance and accounting-focused recruiting firm, says she doesn't use Twitter to find candidates. "There simply isn't enough information. It probably will evolve, but so far I don't see it as a hotbed full of people who know certain tax codes."

Build Your Reputation

Confidentiality, conservativeness, and compliance notwithstanding, Twitter can be valuable for raising your visibility to recruiters and making networking contacts.

Building a reputation is what Ben Keeling (@BenKeeling), an unemployed corporate finance professional, is using Twitter for. He hasn't seen a lot of jobs posted at his level on Twitter, but two or three times a week he tweets about an interesting article he's read or an insight in his field. While he has experienced no "eureka" moments so far through his interactions with the site, he says a few people have actually been intrigued enough to search out his online résumé. "Twitter," he says, "is hit or miss and just one of the tools in my arsenal."

For Senior Finance Executives: Sharing, Not Selling

"Large companies are not going to change their confidential searches. The most coveted candidates are passive candidates," says Cindy Kraft, a career and personal brand strategist at CFOcoach.com, who works exclusively with CFO's in transition. She advises senior executives with a significant knowledge base to use Twitter as Keeling does -- to build themselves a reputation as experts. "Social media is about sharing, not selling." She tells the senior executives she works with to create a Twitter profile that never solicits work but rather points to their presence on the Internet, their "home base." That can be a website, blog, or LinkedIn account. She also suggests they tweet regularly about their interests and area of expertise. Those tweets may well catch the attention of industry decision makers.

For Mid- and Entry-Level: Be a Follower

You can find finance jobs posted on Twitter. For example, [Scotttrade \(@workatscotttrade\)](http://workatscotttrade), [Citigroup \(@citijobs\)](http://citigroup), and [CIBC \(@cibccareers\)](http://cibccareers) are prominently represented. You can find more by going to Twitter and entering any company name to see if they have accounts.

You may have luck with these job postings on Twitter and on sites like TweetMyJobs, but don't limit yourself to checking the postings. Miriam Salpeter specializes in training people to use Twitter for job searches and she recommends that job seekers who are starting out or not very high on the corporate ladder increase their visibility by networking.

Before you do any tweeting, she says, carefully identify organizations and thought leaders in your field and follow their tweets. Then join the conversation. Like Keeling, ask pertinent questions, share professional tips, and promote interesting articles. Salpeter suggests you start by perusing sites like wefollow.com, listorious.com, twellow.com and tweetdeck.com to find those people and companies that you'd like to follow.

Salpeter says this kind of networking is not possible with the other social media. Twitter's big advantage is that it "has low barriers to entering. Everyone is invited to this 'friendly backyard picnic' and it is possible to engage others, even at the highest levels, in an authentic way."

Be Professional

Create your Twitter profile in the same crisp, professional way you create the profile on your résumé. Use the same judgment in composing your tweets. Cohen says that one of the

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potentially unattractive things about some tweets is blatant self-promotion, something he says companies like [JPMorgan](#) and [Credite Suisse](#) eschew in candidates. "A traditional organization doesn't want you to be the brand. The company is the brand and wants its recruits immersed in the company."

"Tone it down," echoes executive search consultant Lloyd. There is a fine line between having a presence and being too exposed. "This is an industry that still plays its cards close pretty close to the vest."

Guard Your Privacy

With any social media site, it's vital to familiarize yourself with all your privacy options. Your Twitter account name can be discreet, and you are in charge of how much personal information you display. Gary Zukowski ([@GaryZukowski](#)), founder of TweetMyJobs, says his site also offers multiple ways to protect your privacy while still engaging the right people. "Users can sign up for a Job Channel, get text message alerts, and avoid the whole email trail."

There are financial recruiters out there in the twitterverse. Sites like TweetMyJobs has finance-specific channels, but finance is simply not fully "twitterized" yet.

The bottom line, says Baty, the job-hunting portfolio analyst, is, when it comes to finding finance jobs on Twitter, "it's interesting, but none of it is a replacement for being out there."

Write to Judith Ritter [here](#). Make sure to include the title of the article in the subject line of the email.

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