

# FIVE THINGS THAT COULD PREVENT YOU FROM GETTING A JOB

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**H**ave you ever said to yourself, “I wish I would have known then, what I know now?” Many young professionals tell themselves that when they realize that a mistake in the past has cost them their dream job. Here are five of them:

**Driving while intoxicated** — Not just driving while intoxicated, but driving under the influence, underage drinking charges, etc.

Many companies provide employees with a company vehicle. Employees who have a poor driving record with these types of charges can be a tremendous risk to the company, not to mention a liability on their insurance policies. Most employers have a zero tolerance for these types of offenses.

Candidates who otherwise fit the job description perfectly and have successfully made it through all other screening factors, are quickly rejected during the driving background check.

According to the *2009 AgCareers.com Agribusiness HR Review*, nearly half of agribusiness employers are conducting background checks and most employers are also checking motor vehicle records specifically based upon the responsibilities of the job.

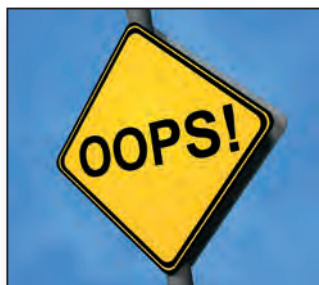
Some professions require graduates to pass tests for licensure or certificates that are needed in addition to your degree. The boards who oversee those tests often will not grant them to individuals who do not represent good moral character or fail to pass background checks.

**Bad Credit** — Credit cards can be easily obtained by many college students and can easily damage your chances of getting a job if misused. Depending on the position, some companies offer corporate credit cards.

Companies don't want employees who can't manage their personal finances, having the ability

to damage the company finances. Additionally, if you're not able to manage your own debt, employers may find you more likely to take office or company supplies to make some extra cash to compensate for things you can't buy yourself.

One other example that can hurt your credit is not paying your bills on time. There are a lot of ways that students can exceed their cell phone plans and end up with excess



charges they can't pay. **Sanyika Calloway Boyce**, a financial fitness coach reminds students, “Anything that asks for your social security number is fair game for running and impacting your credit score.”

**Poor Social Networking Practices** — Most students are jumping onboard with monitoring their **Facebook** and **MySpace** profiles but it can't be said enough that employers are looking! Keep your profiles clean and stop others from identifying you in pictures on their accounts that could cause an employer to view you in a not-so-positive light.

**Twitter** is another culprit that has recently cost young candidates job offers. I recently heard about a student who tweeted about a job interview and how great she felt it went and thought she'd be a shoe-in for the position. The employer had been monitoring her online behaviors and after reading the submission thought she was too sure of herself and wouldn't be a good fit.

Everything on the internet can be

archived which means it is also searchable. Your online profiles might be just for friends now, but later on it could cost you the job of your dreams.

**The Academic Honor Code** —

Colleges and universities have these policies in place for a reason and the consequences can be harsh. The two most common ways of committing academic dishonesty are by cheating and plagiarism. The internet has made these two offenses much easier to commit. Thus schools are developing new technologies to help them catch the offenders.

While not all honor code violations are criminal offenses, they are placed on your academic records, and a failing grade or expulsion from school can impact your grade point average which is evaluated for employment.

**Misusing Your Network** — Many times young professionals don't realize who's in the room. A common mistake they make in conversation, whether face-to-face or electronically, can be bad mouthing previous employers. This mistake can also be made in the interview.

We've all had or know someone who's had a weak supervisor or someone with whom they didn't work well. These are sometimes more common with students because they've worked in part-time situations where their supervisor was young and new to management.

Regardless of the situation, students should think twice before sharing their opinions. What you say will reflect more on yourself than the person or company you're talking about.

Finding a job can be difficult enough without worrying about those one-time mistakes that can haunt you for a lifetime. While this is a short list, each item can have long-term consequences.