

Social Media and New Employee Selection: How does new technology change an old game?

Prof. Jason Thatcher, Clemson College of Business

A variety of sources indicate decision makers use social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to make decisions regarding potential employees. Unfortunately, there is scant academic research on the implications of this practice. To shed light on the relationship between social media and selection, we investigate whether applicants' political attitudes and individuating information (i.e., job-related information) found on social media impact decision makers' evaluations of job candidates' likeability, similarity, and "hireability". To evaluate these relationships, we conducted an experiment, which manipulated presentation of political attitudes and individuating information on two social media platforms. Our results indicated perceived similarity influenced liking and in turn, hireability, for all of our political conditions, regardless of the social media platform information was viewed on. Further, we found such effects in spite of individuating information. The study has many implications for practice, including indicating that political information on social media may influence hiring decisions; suggesting a need for future research on how to craft appropriate hiring policies.

Key words: SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM, HIRING DECISIONS