

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Students will learn:

- Elements of a Digital Footprint and the impact on future educational and career goals
- Various online activity shaping Digital Footprints
- Tips for enhancing online presence

Opening Class Discussion – What is A Digital Footprint?

To gauge students' current knowledge, impressions, and opinions, ask them to define "digital footprint." Prompt discussion on how online presence is significant to future educational, job, and career goals.

Class Discussion – Learn From Other's Mistakes & Successes

Lead students through social media scenarios depicting people who lost and/or gained jobs or scholarship offers due to social media posts. Prompt student input regarding issues inherent in the posts.

Individual Activity – Map Your Digital Footprint

Activity 1: Ask students to spend a few minutes creating a list of the various ways they are present, interactive, and entering information online. Have students share the total number of items and note their comments and reactions. Identify and share common themes and patterns across all student lists.

Activity 2: Using their cell phone or laptop, ask students to quickly review one of their social media accounts. Ask them to write a brief description of recent posts. Follow up by asking students to consider if their posts would make a positive or negative impression on future schools, colleges, or employers.

Alternate Activities: 1) Ask students to anonymously report posts made by others they follow if uncomfortable sharing their own activity; 2) In advance, the facilitator could select or create individual examples of posts to distribute.

Group Activity – Would You Hire Your Peers?

- Separate students into dyads or triads and have each group member share select posts from the previous individual activity. Students should record initial impressions regarding peers' posts.
- Each student should assume the role of hiring manager and share if they would offer or decline extending a job offer to their peers based on the posts. What informed the decision?
- Wrap up this activity with a full class discussion. Ask one member of each group to share any common themes within their small group. Note and discuss key common themes across all groups.

Closing Discussion/Reflection Activity – Next Steps

Students will start developing an action plan to improve or enhance their Digital Footprint. Tips/Strategies:

- Reflect on current practices and new ways to immediately improve communications and interactions online.
- Activate private settings for social media accounts and delete select posts and comments.
- Ask family members or friends to occasionally review and evaluate your social media account.
- Post positive highlights of life experiences and activities.
- Practice kindness, respect and acceptance with all online comments and interactions.
- Consider a student-based LinkedIn page, and follow and interact with educational programs and employers.