

# Your Online Reputation Could Cost You That Job

by Pedro Pereira

Resposted from *TheLadders.com*

July 23, 2010



A couple of years ago, I wrote about the value of a reputation to a business and how it might affect the decisions customers make about the company and its products. I referred to a study in which 93 percent of respondents had termed reputation as "very important" when choosing a vendor or business partner.

Reputation, in fact, plays a major role in just about everything we do. Sales professionals have to protect their reputation by avoiding unethical tactics and looking out for the customers' interests. Ultimately, the customers' interests are the salespersons' own, and so long as you understand this from the start, you are less likely to make decisions that adversely affect your reputation.

When it comes to the job search, reputation plays a critical role. So how you act on the job is important. But the information that exists about you on the Web may prove even more significant. I have warned in previous blogs about the dangers of social networking for job seekers, but the Web is much more than social media. Job seekers must make every effort to know what information is available about them on the Internet. Some of it could cost you your next job.

A study last December commissioned by Microsoft found that **70 percent** of U.S. hiring managers **have rejected candidates** based on information they found about them online.

**Seventy-nine percent** of hiring managers and job recruiters in the United States review online information about applicants.

In most cases, recruiters and hiring managers have no choice but to do an online search. According to the study, **75 percent** of respondents said their companies have formal policies requiring them to do so.

Unfortunately, the risk doesn't just revolve around what you post about yourself **but what others say about you**.

With that in mind, there are obvious limitations to how much you can control the information about you on the Web.

**You can**, however, control some of the reasons for someone to post negative comments about you. Just keep that in mind as you use the Web, and never forget the value of reputation when seeking a job.

**Pedro Pereira** is a freelance writer/editor with more than 20 years of journalism experience. He started out as a daily newspaper reporter, covering a range of beats, including housing, crime, politics and business. For more than half of his career, he has covered technology, business and all the logistics involved in marketing, selling and delivering product to the customer.