# Deep Hanging Out...Digitally: Social Media Strategies for the Contemporary Job Market

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Ingrid Ramón Parra & Adam Gamwell

Webinar Questions & Answers

**P** = Presenter

**O** = Organizer

**S** = Staff

**A** = Attendee

# **Q1:**  Where can I find the previous webinar chat information?

Do any of the other participants have the chat from last week's webinar saved? I forgot to save before exiting and need some of that info.

**O1:** We have finished the answers from last week’s Chat A&A; I’m sure they will be posted very soon! It should be posted here (just scroll down): <https://www.americananthro.org/AttendEvents/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2143&navItemNumber=637>

**A1**: Yes, I have it. Please email me at info@Anthropology4U.com and I’ll email it to you!

# **Q2:**  How does ResearchGate versus academia.edu compare for networking in academic jobs?

Along the same idea, how does LinkedIn versus other more academic sites compare?

**P1:** Similar to what O1 says, I only would use Academia.edu for connecting with scholars based around researcher interests or publications. I don’t use it for career networking, but I also don’t work in academia. I use LinkedIn for networking and seeing what others in various fields are working on, job titles and descriptions, and what’s trending.

**P2:** For an academic position, I think Researchgate and Academia.edu are appropriate places to connect. For non-academic positions LinkedIn is more appropriate. Similar to others here, I use LinkedIn for career networking.

**O1:**  Personally, I use LinkedIn to connect with others and broaden my network and learn about what others are up to. I use research gate and academia.edu for connecting with others who have written certain publications; I will then approach them for a copy of a particular publication. Perhaps other people use these two platforms differently???

# Q3: Should I create my own blog website?

Is it better to create our own blog website or to try to sign up for a blog through existing group?

**P1:** Either is fine, but if you’re just getting started Medium is a great platform with readership and visibility, so I’d create a profile and write on Medium. You can also write for existing blogs like Anthrodendum or a publication on Medium as a way to start getting your name out there and then switch to your own blog (on Medium or your personal website) if that appeals to you. The key here in my perspective is to be where your readers are (or where you want to find an audience).

**P2:**  I agree with presenter P1 above. Creating a blog website from scratch is a big lift, whereas publishing an article on Medium.com is a lot more manageable. For example, I don’t have my own personal blog but I do have 3 articles on Medium. However, if you truly want to start your own blog and have consistent content to share, then you can definitely consider starting it. If you’re on the fence, dipping your toe with writing a Medium article or two will help you decide which route you want to go.

# **Q4:**  Are there quicker ways to use social media?

I never seem to make time for social media...it seems like it takes a lot of time. Are there ways to make this a quicker process, rather than scrolling through a lot of content?

**P1:**  I feel that challenge too. One solution is there are aggregation tools like www.rightrelevance.com that pull content when you search by topics. Also, if you can listen to podcasts! I leverage being able to listen to ideas when I don’t feel I have time to scroll through content but want to see what people are talking about.

**P2:** I echo P1’s comment above. Aggregation tools and podcasts are great ways to curate digital content. Yes, social media takes a lot of time but when used wisely it can provide great value. While you’re on the job market, strategically engage with social media, but once you have your desired position you can ease up on it. Learn how to search for particular content and follow accounts that align with your goals to minimize distracting or unhelpful content.

**A1:** On Twitter it can be useful to create lists, core accounts / people that I check first.

# **Q5:** What is Harrell's first name?

 **P1:** Cyd Harrell <https://cydharrell.com/>

# **Q6:**  Examples of reach outs that have worked and not worked for and on you (to the presenters)?

**P1:** I mentioned this during the webinar so I’ll write it here with the caveat that I love talking with people, and if I have the time will happily chat with someone trying to figure their way out. So to me what follows sounds a little stand offish, but I’m also basing these ideas on how I've seen others act. When reaching out to people in the field for informational interviews, advice or help reviewing your resume, **you need to put the burden of work on yourself, not them. What this means is ask them very specific and targeted questions that are based on what you know about them or why you think they specifically can help you. And if possible, note what you can offer them**. If you don’t know them personally, when you reach out, let them know why you know who they are (such as you have been following their work in the field and are inspired by a publication they have or project they are known for - the more specific the better).

Here’s two examples: 1. “I love This Anthro Life and share your belief that making anthropology more accessible is essential today. I’m trying to figure out what to do because I’m about to graduate/just graduated and would love to hear more about your career journey. Would you be up for a call?” vs. 2. “I just heard you speaking on a webinar and during it you mentioned the challenge of articulating your value on LinkedIn. That resonated with me for X and Y reasons because I have run into this issue with [specific example]. I’m revamping my resume and feel lost about how to articulate what I did on this project, would you be able to look at [this specific paragraph].

The first ask, while nice, doesn’t indicate to me they’ve actually done any research into podcasting or even how well they know TAL or why my having a non-traditional path is specifically helpful to them. So my assumption here is they heard an episode or two and liked the style and want to do something more public facing than academia. In other words, I don’t actually know what I can do for them so if we have a call it is likely to be very general. And while I’m happy to share stories, it’s more work to come up with concrete ideas of how to help one another.

# Additional examples that have worked and not worked for and on you (to the presenters)?

The second gives me something very specific to look at and offer help on. I don’t have to wrack my brain or take much time.

A final thought here, also mentioned during the webinar, be aware of if you’re asking someone to do something for you they normally charge for, especially if they are independent consultants, freelancers, etc. A lot of us who work for ourselves are quite open to collaboration and helping others in the field who are interested in similar paths, but depend on finding work more than our salaried colleagues. Informational interviews should not cost anything, but for example if you’re in the same city you could (preCOVID) buy someone a coffee or lunch for talking with you. Or if you’re looking for resume help or career direction, and they offer that as a service on their website, don’t expect to get a free consultation.

On the other side, here’s an example I found in my email of reaching out to colleagues who worked at companies with positions I was interested in. Note that I already knew this person, otherwise would not have used an emoticon ;)

“Hey, I just came across the Market Research Analysis position at [your company]. Do you have any info about the position or have any interaction with the hiring team per chance? I’m looking into market research roles as one branch of my job search. As a design anthropologist I’m much more on the qualitative side of things, but would be happy to get stronger at the quantitative too if a job warrants, and they are willing to help out with training. Not sure how long the job application is open for, but I could apply at any point since on LinkedIn it just asks for a resume and suggests I ask you for a referral ;).”

My colleague passed my info on to the hiring manager and got me a call with them.

**P2:** I would say that my “worst” examples of reaching out means that I was simply ignored. No one has ever gotten mean with me or “told me off”, they have simply ignored me. I accept it as part of the hustle. However, I follow what P1 said above: “**you need to put the burden of work on yourself, not them. What this means is ask them very specific and targeted questions that are based on what you know about them or why you think they specifically can help you. And if possible, note what you can offer them**.” I definitely would not send unsolicited resumes or materials. Something to remember is that in the business world, people move careers very quickly. One day a person could be helping you and 2 years down the line you could be referring that same person for an open position in your company. The tides turn quickly, so make sure to cultivate respectful relationships–and also to give back when others ask for your time.

My worst and best examples or reaching out have included the following:
1. Prior to a job interview at a prestigious consulting firm, I messaged a few people that worked in that firm for some interviewing advice through LinkedIn. I received two responses: one person looked over my materials and gave me advice on what to highlight from my experience. The other person gave me interviewing advice. Both people did not know me at all and each gave me 15 minutes of their time. I had very specific questions and they gave me very specific answers. I sent them both a simple thank you card to their office mail.

2. I’ve had **so many** 15 minute conversations with different people that I’ve connected via LinkedIn to get their advice. Usually these are people that also have an academic background, so I tend to lead with that. My most recent one, I was connected to a quantitative researcher with a social sciences PhD by someone I knew, I asked if they could share quantitative challenges that they encountered in their work. In this conversation, I was able to focus on their experiences while also learning about how I could think through improving my own quantitative skills.

3. This isn’t an example of a reach out, but I want to share an example of how social media can work for you even when you’re not trying. I got contacted once by a former colleague because one of his colleagues had come across my LinkedIn profile and saw that my former colleague was a connection. My former colleague pinged me to let me know that my profile had caught the attention of someone looking to fill a specific role. I was not interested in the role, but had I been, I would have had a major advantage because I would have had that common connection and my profile had already piqued interest. Sometimes your profile catches the attention of someone looking for a new team member.

# Q7: How are employers evaluating applicants’ social media?

How are companies viewing and evaluating prospective applicants’ social media in the job application process?

**P2:** It is hard to answer this question because some companies have a protocol for this and others don’t. So, it is difficult to give a definitive answer. However, I have yet to meet a hiring manager that has not at least looked at the LinkedIn profile of a final-round applicant. I don’t think employers are scouring all of your social media, but they likely are doing a google search or looking at your LinkedIn. People who have hired me in the past have looked at my LinkedIn, my website, my Medium articles and some have even seen my Instagram (which is why I keep it private).

**O1:**  When I was applying for a job several years ago, the firm did an extensive search of everything available online about me. I found it to be a bit unnerving at the time but have come to understand that they were just doing their “due diligence.”

**A1:** Any company, hiring manager, recruiter, who is going to be that extremely judgmental - ask yourself, is that the kind of culture you want to work in? I've been doing videos on LinkedIn, nervousness happens, but the more you put yourself out there, the easier it will become.

# **Q8:**  Feeling over qualified for a position?

Has anyone ever dealt with finding a position that they are passionate about applying for but being rejected due to being overqualified in degrees and experience? They think it means needing to pay more, etc...I'm someone who would rather have something like the ability to work remote than have more money. I honestly just want to do something that I’m passionate about not just to make money. I've been rejected for being overqualified and was so confused how that was something to reject someone over.

**P1:** I addressed part of this conundrum in the previous AAA webinar on Resumes/Portfolios, link below in Q9. I’ve often had an opposite problem, where I didn’t have enough UX or design experience to get past first or second round interviews. I left my degrees in my back pocket, not hidden because my education section says I have an MA and PhD, but I didn’t lead with that either because it wasn’t relevant. I crafted a skills based resume rather than career experience because I didn’t have a ton of full time experience, even though I’d been working full time as a PhD student, adjunct professor and freelance designer for years. So reconfiguring things on the resume around skills gave me a way to not have to lead with my degrees or even “full time job experience.” Again this is a question of audience, as A2 notes below, if jobs see PhDs as a loss of 3 months of training, then emphasize the skills you have on your resume to try and curtail that feeling of loss and transform it into one of strength.

**P2:** All of these answers are great! I have not had the experience of being told that I am overqualified, but I have been told I was “too academic”. So, I stopped leading with my education and focused on my skills and experience. Whenever I was asked about my academic background and identity, I would reply with something like “I am not like other academics, I always look for practical ways to apply my knowledge, I am a practitioner at heart, etc”. I assured them that my heart was in practice, not academic theory. That usually worked but I had to learn the hard way after getting the feedback that I was “too academic”.

**O1:**  Yes, this is something I have dealt with in a way. I applied to a UX health-focused research job once (I am an applied anthro), but I was told I was too academic (??) and perhaps too qualified (??). It was certainly disheartening to hear the feedback/rejection, but also helped me realize I needed to reframe my portfolio and resume to fit the job.

**A1:**  One relevant and maybe helpful example: When you apply for positions that don’t have the PhD as a requirement, and you get to the question of salary requirements, there might be more room to negotiate than you think, IF you are willing to accept trade-offs like, for example, alternative hours or remote work (when that used to be a rare ‘privilege’) instead of a higher salary. I have a friend who works four days/week in a nonprofit job that was advertised as a full-time job, and they give her Fridays off to write because they couldn’t offer her a higher salary than what was budgeted.

**A2:**  I know I’m not a presenter but the places I work often look for candidates to address it specifically in their cover letter. Usually, saying you’re interested in a “subject matter expert” role and directly saying you don’t want to go into management, etc., or that you’re seeking a specific work environment that isn’t academic will help you at least get to the interview round. My understanding is a lot of people are wary of hiring PhDs because they worry you’ll leave as soon as you get a chance at an academic position...I’m the daughter of two tenured academics and I’ve never wanted to work in academia as a result. At my workplace we’ve actually struggled to find behavioral scientists with PhDs who won’t leave a pretty solid place to work for an adjunct position In Nebraska, for instance. Companies see you as a loss for 3 months of training usually, so they’re hoping you stick around and PhDs tend to not do that so it creates a bad reputation.

# **Q9:** Is there a link for the portfolio class you mentioned earlier? :) thanks.

**S:** You may find resources, including the webinar recording, from "This is not your parents' resume: New Ways to Tell Your Story" on our Career Resources page. <https://www.americananthro.org/AdvanceYourCareer/Landing.aspx?ItemNumber=25771&RDtoken=20745&userID=>

**Q10:**  For those of us who work in the private sector and can’t publish our work since it’s owned by the company, how do you recommend we engage as professionals beyond supporting our colleagues?

**P1:** Similar to O1’s comments, you can write/blog/podcast at a general level about the kinds of work do and problems you solve. Often times you’ll see portfolios with specific information taken out, like the company and client, etc. If you’re unsure of what you can talk about, see if it makes sense to talk to someone else in your company about blogging and what best practices are in that regard.

**P2:** You can share more general ideas or point of views in your writing that doesn’t violate NDA or puts your job at jeopardy. This could include descriptions of how to apply a certain method, a problem solving process that others can try, or even your opinion about a hot topic circulating your field. For example, I’ve written one article about the materials that I use as a field researcher and another one about what it’s like to be a woman researcher. Very broad, but they position me as someone that has some field research experience. Look at the content that other people are putting out and identify how they are talking about their work without giving proprietary details away–and experiment with producing similar publications.

**O1:** Just because proprietary issues may prevent you from publishing what you work on at work does not mean you can’t learn to blog, learn to write Op-Eds, learn to podcast, join the AAA and one or more of its sections to help provide the services those sections offer, etc. etc. For example, NAPA has a Mentor Program: <https://www.practicinganthropology.org/mentoring-career/> If you were a NAPA member, you could sign up to be a mentor.

# Q11: Recommendations for smaller organizations to engage more anthropologists on social media?

I’m a member of the Washington Association of Professional Anthropologists and the Practicing Anthropologists Network, what recommendations do you have for smaller organizations to engage more anthropologists on social media?

**P2:** I wish I had some great recommendations but I can’t think of anything at the moment. My only comment would be to connect with other organizations that engage with anthropologists and become a part of that network, learn about the types of public outreach they do, and see what outreach is appropriate for the goals of your organizations.

**O1:** The Anthropology section of the New York Academy of Sciences just gave a wonderful webinar last week on Sept. 21, 2020: “Making your Research Make a Difference: Designing a Strategy to Engage the Public with Social Media.” The presenters were all from COOL Anthropology: [https://www.coolanthropology.com](https://www.coolanthropology.com/). This type of program is one way that anthropology groups can both get the word out about the value of anthropology, and find satisfaction in doing a piece of work that is useful.

# **Q12:**  Could a specific example be given of how networking can lead to a job?

**P1:** Find people in your network - meaning start following and interacting with people on LinkedIn or start contacting people you know - who are working at companies or in industries you want to work in. Set up informational interviews with them or ask them if they know of open positions based on what you’re looking for.

The above example I gave in Q6 is one way I did this. I sent similar messages along with my resume to colleagues if I saw a position open in their company I wanted to apply for, bypassing the shot in the dark application process. This helped me get interviews.

**P2:** I have applied to so many positions that I am qualified for and have been the most successful when I have a network connection, an employee referral, or have spoken to someone that works at the organization. Some positions receive 100s of applicants, and oftentimes hiring managers don’t have time to look at even 50 resumes. Therefore, they rely on human factors to help them decide which applicants they should reach out to. Having a person vouch for you goes a very long way to getting your application noticed. Otherwise, you are just one anonymous applicant among many anonymous applicants. In one successful example, I got an employee referral for a position from someone I met in real life but added on LinkedIn, and I was one of the early applicants called in for an interview. Later, the hiring manager became my boss and she told me that she had received 150 applications for my position. I am certain that the referral helped me stand out.

**O1:** I saw that a consulting firm had job openings. I told a friend/colleague of mine who ended up applying. I then approached the person I know who works in that consulting firm. I told him about my friend and he flagged my friend’s application as an “employee referral.” Result: my friend got an interview.