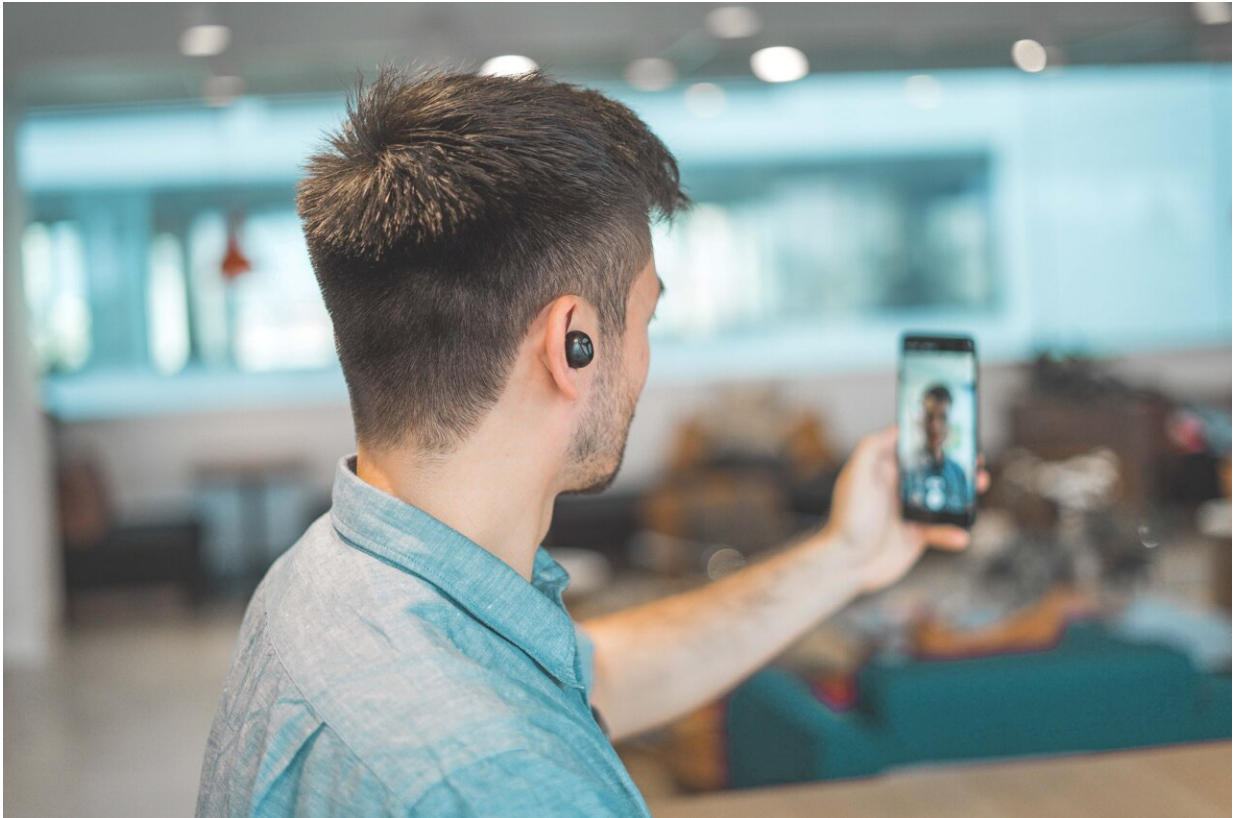


Employer pitfalls of the TikTok resume trend

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Lately, it seems the place to be for job seekers is TikTok, where users are posting video resumes—and racking up impressive page views—as they look to set themselves apart in increasingly competitive candidate pools.

On the popular [video](#) app, a one-minute video can draw hundreds of comments and shares, resulting in multiple job leads—even interview requests.

For [job seekers](#), those kinds of stats are compelling, as is the prospect of being able to tell their stories in a way that goes beyond the humdrum, one-page resume. But, for employers, there are additional points to consider with the TikTok resume trend, recommends Maryland Smith's Cynthia Kay Stevens.

Human resources industry experts have long cautioned companies about peeping at the social [media](#) accounts of job applicants. The drawbacks of using social media in professional contexts are exactly the same even if the platform differs.

Employers who use TikTok, Facebook, Twitter or other social networks to evaluate job candidates run certain risks, including overlooking potentially strong non-video savvy applicants or unwittingly succumbing to bias, Stevens says. Social media profiles and TikTok resumes almost always include user images, which can reveal the candidate's age, race, weight and level of attractiveness—factors that are more easily obscured in a resume.

Plus, many people's social media feeds divulge other details that aren't within the purview of the traditional resume, but that could bias a potential employer: [political leanings](#), religious affiliations, sexual orientation and parental status, for example.

And it's not just what's on social media that can trigger bias, Stevens cautions. It's also what's not there.

"TikTok users skew younger than the U.S. population as a whole, with a third of users between ages 10 and 19 and 50% under age 34," Stevens

says. "Keep in mind that the EEOC prohibits discriminating against prospective employees on the basis of age."

A key consideration is what applicants would be asked to do on the job. The closer that work is to creating visually impactful video or [social media](#) content, the fewer problems employers will face. The farther from such work, the more problematic it becomes to use TikTok resumes.

Yet, given the choice between a job candidate whose video portrays amusing, creative, or stylishly edited content and one who submits a traditional paper resume, a hiring manager may feel justified in favoring the TikTok candidate, Stevens says. They intuitively feel as if they know more about that person and what type of employee they would be.

The trick is to acknowledge what we do and do not know—to recognize that we are assuming qualifications for the TikTokers and missing information about non-TikTok candidates.

"When we have different amounts of information about things we are trying to choose between, we lean toward the thing we have more information about, without even realizing that we're missing the whole picture," Stevens says.

Provided by University of Maryland

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