

Do you think that social networking tools can be relevant in the workplace? Why do you think this?

People like having different ways to communicate and interact. If people did not like this they would have stuck with smoke signals and messenger pigeons. Its a form of expression and everyone wants to express themselves. This rolls into the workplace as we spend more awake hours with our coworkers than we do with our own families. At my job we have an internal portal that posts updates from our different regions and offices. Our CEO does a blog and it is nice to see what he has to say about what is going in child welfare in the country and how it relates to our agency. We have an internal messaging system where I can IM a coworker say in the corporate office in Chicago and get a quick and immediate response vs sending an email that she may not get to answer for an hour or more. I tend only to use the IM for answers that I know will be readily available to the receiver. These are all social networking tools that are extremely effective in my work environment.

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I believe that social net working tools are relevant in the workplace because there are different ways in which you can communicate to other employees. For instance, you can communicate formally or informally. If the company is trying to communicate policies pr procedures then the best way is probably not communicating in a social format. However, if you are trying to motivate employees to get engages into the business needs and goals then sometimes communicating informally works best. The people that report to me don't find it unusual if I text them just to say hello or send them a text on a score of a football game of their favorite team. This shows that you acknowledge there interest and create an opportunity for them to open up on a more of a personal manner. To me, this engages employees to reach goals that they feel is important to their manager. At work we have instant message that gives us the chance to send brief messages to one another, again, we wont communicate a new policy but just gives us the opportunity to reach out to one another in a informal way that binds us closer to each other. Its hard to let down someone that becomes close to you but it is easy to not go over the top for someone who you just see as a manager.