

Ask the Career Coach: Connecting with Your Boss on Facebook?

How do you respond when your boss wants to be friends on Facebook?

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

As appeared in MillburnPatch.com on January 19th, 2010 (www.MillburnPatch.com)

Dear Career Coach Lisa,

What do I do with my boss who wants to friend me on Facebook? I do not want to, as I use Facebook to connect only with my family and personal friends. Do you have any suggestions on how to handle this?

Unsigned

There is so much attention given to connecting on social media that many believe they need to connect with everyone they know regardless of their connection to the other individual. The key to truly connecting in person or on line is developing the relationship. Relationships are based on common interests and connections, and relationships are developed over time.

Have you thought about why your boss wants to connect with you on Facebook? What is your boss looking to gain from connecting electronically when you are connected while at work? Do you work in the same location or do you work remotely? Are you in a position where the power of whom you know and their connections can have an impact on your work results?

Being honest and sincere is the best way to respond. It is better to set a polite and appropriate professional boundary upfront. Some options to consider:

- You may ignore your boss's request. This is not recommended as it will only going to be awkward over time.
- You may friend your boss and restrict what he/she can and can't see.
- You may create a separate work related profile for your professional connections.
- You may suggest connecting on LinkedIn instead. Then explain how you use Facebook to connect with family and personal friends only. Add that you enjoy working with him/her and would like to keep the relationship professional.

As more and more companies are using social media sites to communicate, this is a tricky situation. Some companies are now putting rules in place on the use of social media such as Facebook. For example, a supervisor can't friend a subordinate. Check if your company has any established guidelines.

"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com.

Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.