

# Personality traits can be inferred from social media use

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Photo: U.S. National Institutes of Health

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(HealthDay)—Certain personality traits can be inferred from social media postings, according to a study published in the June issue of *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

J. William Stoughton, from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, and colleagues investigated whether job applicants' personality characteristics are reflected in the content of their social media postings. Participants included 175 job applicants. Traditional [personality assessments](#) were compared with self-reported social media content, relating to photos and text-based references to alcohol and drug use and

criticisms of superiors and peers.

The researchers found that extraverted candidates were likely to post material relating to alcohol and drugs. Online badmouthing behaviors were more likely among candidates low in agreeableness. The evidence was mixed concerning the relationships between conscientiousness and the outcomes of interest.

"For organizational researchers and others, questions have been raised about whether personality can be assessed based on an individual's Facebook page," the authors write. "While this study's regression models demonstrated modest variance explained, results suggest that inferring certain [personality characteristics](#) from social media postings may be a viable area for further scientific study."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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