

## LinkedIn poses new risk for employers: lawyers

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EMPLOYMENT lawyers are advising their clients against writing recommendations for current or former employees on social and business networking sites such as LinkedIn.

As job hunters become more tech savvy, social networking sites are serving as online portfolios. People are increasingly asking former employers to post comments on sites such as LinkedIn, for potential employers to see.

But the trend is causing problems for employers who are facing lawsuits around such references.

A partner at Philadelphia's Mitts Milavec, Carolyn Pump, told the National Law Journal that if employers feel they should post anything on the site, it is best to keep it to stating dates, positions with the company and salary, "and staying away from much more because there are so many potential ramifications if they say something".

"If they say something negative, there could be a lawsuit. If they say something positive, there could be a lawsuit," she said.

But comments made on LinkedIn and the like are just a different form of reference and should be treated as such, said Harmers Workplace Lawyers managing partner Joydeep Hor.

"References are always problematic. While bad references might seem highly unlikely, the ever-present risk around defamation claims and the like should serve as a reminder to managers to be careful about what they say," Hor said today.

There is also a flipside to the issue, workplace legal expert Hor said. While negative references are an obvious risk, in "positive or glowing references there is the risk of negligent misstatement".