# In the know

# essentials

## Social Media
## Tips & Traps

The increasing use of online-technology and social media in the modern workplace has created many new challenges for employers.  The law continues to evolve in an attempt to keep pace with the online social revolution.  However, at their core, these challenges are not a fundamental departure from basic principles governing the employment relationship.  By setting and communicating expectations and appropriate uses, employers can effectively balance their business interests against the privacy rights of the employee.   Below are some helpful suggestions to avoid some of the most common pitfalls associated with the use of online-technology and social media:

**TIP:** Prior to formulating any policies, consider and strategize opportunities and risks related to social media and technology use in the workplace.

**TRAP:** Avoid implementing policies that don't reflect your workplace expectations, realities or practices.

**TIP:** Ensure that you have adequate policies regarding use of social media and workplace technology.

**TRAP:** Avoid disciplining an employee for excessive social media use during working hours where no harm or loss to the employer can be proven.

**TIP:** Your policy should establish an employer's right to monitor company-issued technology and dispel employees' reasonable expectation of privacy.

**TRAP:** Do not request a prospective candidate's and/or existing employee's Facebook passwords.

**TIP:** Incorporate social media use into employee confidentiality agreements, codes of conduct, conflict of interest, harassment and bullying and progressive discipline policies.

**TRAP:** Avoid invading an employee's right to privacy by attempting to access their private social media pages.

**TIP:** Follow the policy that has been created and implemented and ensure consistent application.

**TRAP:** Avoid banning social media use entirely from the workplace – it's an unrealistic strategy and in most cases, a missed opportunity.