

My Boss Snoops My Instagram and It Needs to Stop



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: StephenSays@bellow.press

Questions selected to be answered, will appear in this column. Please use the Subject: Stephen Says for all emails. Stephen Viscusi is a bestselling author, television personality, and CEO of The Viscusi Group, global executive recruiters located in New York. Follow Stephen on Twitter @stephenviscusi, Like Stephen on Facebook; and follow him on LinkedIn.

Dear Stephen:

Lately I have dreaded going into work on Mondays because as soon as I sit down at my desk my boss starts asking me, "So, how was the beach?" or saying "Cute dog!" or quizzing me about "How was the date with that body builder?" I don't tell him any of this, and he certainly plays no role in my social life. He boldly tells me that he is peeking on my Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We are not even Facebook friends! He seems to think this is somehow

normal, but I call it what it is: cyberstalking.

Other co-workers do it, too. It is kind of freaky, and I am wondering if this is common or if my workplace culture is unique. It would never occur to me to cyberstalk my co-workers or even my boss. When I leave the office, I try to focus on my own life, I couldn't care less about theirs!

This feels like a huge invasion of privacy. If I wanted my boss to know what I was up to I would add him on my accounts or simply try to know him socially. I have my job and my life. I don't see why these two things can't be separated.

Please help,

Indefinitely Invaded

Common sense should tell any smart person to make all their social media accounts private.

Dear Invaded,

Don't be so surprised. Nothing is odd about this in today's social media and snoop culture society. I must admit it is annoying, but I think that calling it "cyberstalking" is bit too far and maybe out of touch.

Common sense should tell any smart person to make all their social media accounts private. It is an option in the settings of all the social media sites.

The simple fact is anything on the internet is fair game for employers. This may not be right, but it is the truth. In my experience as a headhunter, HR people often tell me they will look up a person on Facebook, Instagram

and Twitter even before they check the LinkedIn.

If you think about it, you can't really blame them. A company wants as much information as possible before making a hire or when evaluating a current employee. If the information about their personal life is right there, why shouldn't they take a look? You are the one doing the posting to a public website, after all.

Moreover, it is becoming more and more common that people's work life becomes their social life. It is not unheard of for a working team to go out and get drinks or include one another in their social lives. Maybe your co-workers and boss

are simply trying to engage you on a more social and less professional level?

Our society has changed. It used to be we had celebrities and regular people. The celebrities made the conscious choice to live in the public eye while the rest of us were able to live our lives unaccommodated. This has changed. We now live in a culture where everybody is public, and everybody is interested. Unfortunately, there is not much you can do about your boss' prerogative to snoop your accounts.

The simple answer: Make it all private.

Best,

Stephen