
10 WARNING SIGNS OF JOB SCAMS

Job scams appear to be opportunities for employment, but they are fraudulent offers targeting people seeking new employment. Scammers advertise fraudulent jobs the same way as legitimate employers – ads, job sites, email, phone, social media, tv, and radio. They present what appears to be a realistic job, but it's a trick to acquire money and/or personal information. It's important to know how to identify job scams when you are searching for jobs.

1. REQUESTS PERSONAL INFORMATION

If a recruiter requests that you submit personal information upfront, such as a copy of your driver's license, social security number, or banking information, then it is most likely a scam. Most employers won't need this information until onboarding, after you've been interviewed and formally accepted the offer.

2. PAYING FOR SUPPLIES

It should raise a red flag if you are expected to pay upfront for any equipment, software, or materials needed to do the job. Scammers often ask candidates to send money in exchange for "essential resources." Most reputable organizations don't ask job candidates for upfront payments in exchange for employment.

3. TEXT BASED COMMUNICATION

It's very likely you're dealing with an imposter if the employer insists that they only communicate with you on messaging apps or via email. No real company would ever conduct an interview via text messages or online chats. If you can't speak to the recruiter or hiring manager either over the phone, through a video interview, or in person, then don't engage. No real organization will hire a candidate without seeing them.

4. LACKS ONLINE CREDIBILITY

Conduct your own background check on the company and their employees. Do a Google search, check the company's and their employee's LinkedIn profiles, also look through their information and reviews on Glassdoor, look for their business page on other social media sites. Doing a combination of these things can help confirm the validity of a company. It is a major red flag if there is no verifiable address or physical office location.

In today's world, real companies have an online presence and some social media engagement. If the company has poor reviews from past employees, appears to lack a decent online following, doesn't have a Glassdoor profile, and/or employee profiles are private or look fishy, then it's best to stay away.

5. FAKE URLS

Job scammers often create fake websites to add a sense of legitimacy to their companies. They will try to recreate a legitimate company's website by making minor changes to the web address. They make it hard to notice so that if you're not looking closely, you won't realize that you're on a scam website. Sometimes they even create a new whole name and web address, that doesn't play off of an already existing organization. If you can't verify a phone number, location, web address, or employees, you're definitely looking at a scam.

6. YOU NEVER APPLIED

A warning sign of a job scam is that the employer makes contact with you first by stating they found your resume online. However, this alone doesn't mean the job opportunity is illegitimate. If it's coupled with a vague or generic job description, an immediate offer, unusual requests, or additional red flags from this list, then you should consider walking away.

It's not uncommon to get unsolicited calls if your resume is posted on an online job board. If a recruiter cold-calls you for a job opportunity, don't give up personal information, listen to what they have to say, write down the company's name, the recruiter's name, number, and email address. Pay close attention to the type of job they're recruiting for and how eager they are to hire you – it may be a sign of high turnover or a scam. After you end the call you can do online research to verify the company and recruiter's identity.

7. UNPROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

When the recruiter communicates with you in writing, be sure to look for inconsistencies. Messages that have grammatical errors or obvious typos should be taken as a warning sign. We all make mistakes, so a few typos are understandable. However, some errors are obvious warning signs: typos in the company's name, punctuation errors, lack of proper capitalization, or incomplete sentences.

Also consider their contact information. Is there a professional email signature including the company's website, phone number, and social media? Did the email come from an official email address? For example, jsmith@amazon.com would be expected whereas jsmith@outlook.com would be unusual. Be wary if you notice any of these signs.

8. 100% COMMISSION-BASED

It's safe to dismiss job opportunities that don't offer a base salary that you can depend on. Your full compensation should not be reliant on commissions; instead, commission should be considered an added bonus to your base salary. If you take a role that is 100% commission based, then you won't earn any money until you make a sale, no matter how many hours you work.

9. TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Flexible and remote roles are increasingly more common, but don't let that get you roped into a scam. It's likely a scam if the job description promises, "FLEXIBLE HOURS !!" or "WORK AT HOME, EARN \$\$\$\$." Descriptions like this lure unsuspecting candidates into working for companies that may try to take advantage of their employees. If the job seems just a little too flexible, then it could be a warning sign, especially if the salary is unusually high.

If the salary seems too good to be true, chances are it is. Be careful if the job posting is enticing you with the salary alone. Legitimate job posting may mention a salary, however, they are unlikely to make that the prime focus of the job ad.

10. GUT FEELING

You usually feel it in your gut if something is off about a job opportunity. If you're still feeling uncertain after completing thorough research, then trust yourself. Continue to move forward with your job search and dedicate your efforts to actively searching for positions with legitimate organizations that you believe will be a good fit.

When it comes to seeking employment, use all the resources available to you. Be sure to involve your CSC throughout the process. The Career Success team is experienced and very knowledgeable on this topic and can typically point out a scam rather quickly.