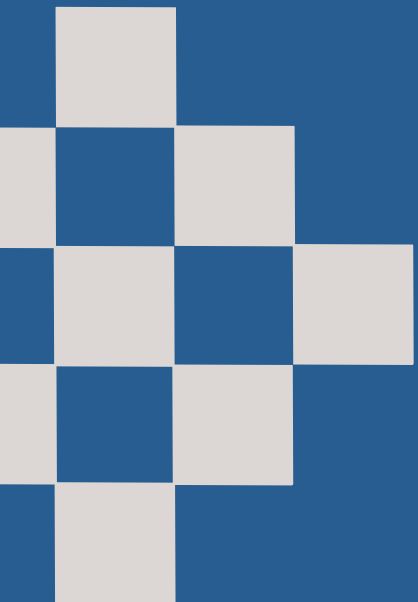
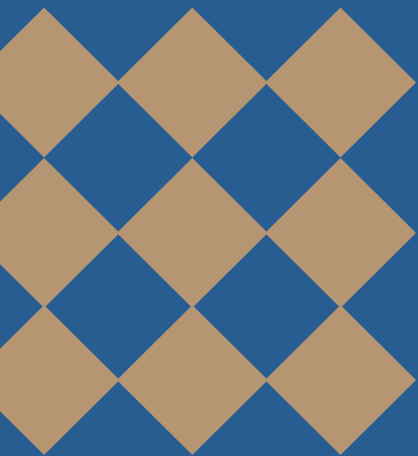


Copyright © 2023 Career Experts Group. All rights reserved.



Safeguard Your Career: Recognizing and Reporting Job Scams



Career Experts Group
www.careerexpertsgroup.com
info@careerexpertsgroup.com

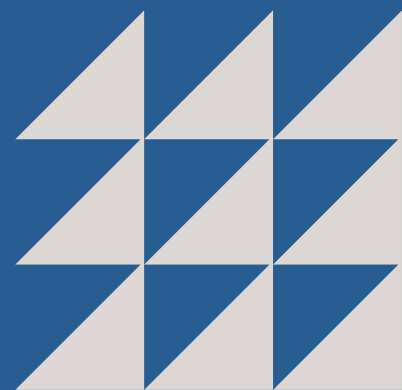


Table of Contents

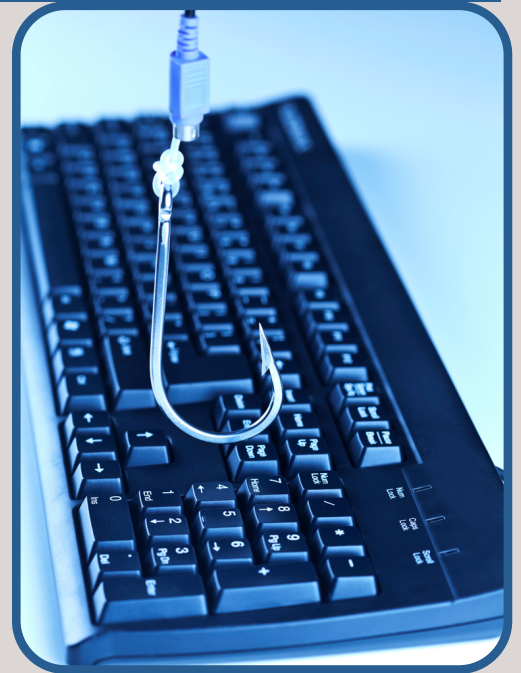
Introduction	<u>3</u>
Recognition of Job Search Scams	<u>4</u>
Proactive Measures to Avoid Job Scams	<u>7</u>
Handling Scams Post-Victimization	<u>9</u>
Addendum - Resources	<u>11</u>
Learn About the Career Experts Group	<u>14</u>



Introduction

Explanation of Job Search Scams

Job search scams often look like legitimate employment opportunities – on the surface. Instead, they are fraudulent schemes targeting job seekers by using false job listings, fabricated companies, or illegitimate recruiters. They mislead job seekers into paying upfront fees, divulging sensitive personal information, or working for no pay under false pretenses. Scammers capitalize on the eagerness and vulnerability of individuals desperate for employment, executing schemes through various channels such as email, fake job boards, bogus companies, social media, and even reputable job search platforms.



Significance of the Issue in Today's Job Market

The introduction of digital platforms has made it easier for scammers to operate with anonymity and reach a broad audience with minimal effort. Unpredictable economic conditions, driven by global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, have led to increased unemployment rates. Job search scams not only undermine the trust in online recruitment processes but also cause significant financial and emotional distress to individuals. Moreover, they pose a serious risk to personal data security, which can have long-term repercussions for the victims.

Recent Incident Statistics

According to the [2021 Job Scams Study](#) by the Better Business Bureau, scams increased during the pandemic as criminals took advantage of people who lost work due to Covid-19. The study predicted a continued surge, most often targeting individuals aged 25 to 34. The same study indicated that an estimated 14 million people are exposed to employment scams every year, with \$2 billion in direct losses. [CNBC](#) reported Americans lost \$68 million to job scams in 2022.

Recognition of Job Search Scams

Recognizing job search scams is crucial for job seekers to avoid fraudulent schemes. Being informed about the common characteristics and red flags associated with scam job listings can help individuals steer clear of potential fraud.

Common Characteristics of Fraudulent Job Offers

- **“Too Good to Be True” Salaries:** Fraudulent job listings often entice applicants with salaries that are significantly higher than the market average for similar roles. This is a tactic used to lure unsuspecting job seekers into the scam.
- **Requests for Upfront Payment:** Scammers may ask for payment for supposed training materials, background checks, or other fictitious reasons. Legitimate employers do not ask for money from job applicants.
- **Lack of a Clear Job Description:** A vague job description that doesn't clearly outline the responsibilities or required qualifications is a red flag. It can indicate that the job doesn't actually exist.
- **Unprofessional Communication and Misspellings:** Emails from scammers may contain poor grammar, typos, and misspellings. Unprofessional communication is a strong indicator of a scam.
- **A job offer from a company,** in spite of never interviewing (or even submitting a resume) for the position.

Red Flags in Job Listings

- **Generic Email Addresses:** Fraudulent listings may use free email services instead of a domain associated with a reputable company. This can be a sign that the listing is not from a legitimate employer.
- **High-pressure Tactics:** Scammers might use high-pressure tactics to rush individuals into making decisions or providing personal information. They might insist on immediate decisions or interviews at odd hours.
- **Absence of Company Information or Verifiable Contact Details:** Legitimate job listings typically include detailed company information and verifiable contact details. The absence of such information is a red flag.

By paying attention to these red flags and using available online resources, job seekers can protect themselves from falling victim to job search scams.



Recognition of Job Search Scams, Continued

Real-life Examples

These examples illustrate the myriad tactics scammers employ to deceive job seekers: from creating fake online identities and websites, to exploiting popular platforms and targeting specific professional groups. Each example includes the link to the full report or article.

- **Generic Online Job Advertisements and Fake Websites:** Scammers take advantage of layoffs, particularly in industries like tech, by posting job ads online or setting up fake websites. They also target individuals on social media in order to steal their money and personal information. ([FTC](#)).
- **Hijacked Job Ads:** Fraudsters are modifying outdated ads from real employers and reposting them on job platforms such as Indeed or LinkedIn. Though they appear to be legitimate job offers from reputable companies, the main goal is to deceive job seekers into sharing their personal information. ([FTC](#))
- **Scams Targeting Business Professionals:** A newer variation of job scams targets business professionals with seemingly attractive job offers from reputable companies. This tactic is an extension of scammers impersonating government agencies, global retailers, and even family members to lure potential victims. ([FTC](#))
- **Impersonation of Well-Known Companies:** On platforms like LinkedIn and Indeed, scammers pose as recruiters from reputable companies. They typically send direct messages or emails inviting targets for virtual interviews, followed by fake job offers. The scammers then push for payment for supposed job-related equipment or request personal information under the guise of completing "employment paperwork." ([FTC](#))



Recognition of Job Search Scams, Continued

Real-life Examples (Continued)

- **Exploiting Interest in Remote Jobs:** Scammers prey on individuals looking for remote jobs that align with their values or the causes they care about. An [FTC](#) article mentions one scam in which a job description targets LGBTQ+ individuals and allies by offering an opportunity “to help LGBTQ+ individuals from the comfort of your own home.”
- **WhatsApp Job Offer Scam:** A global scam was reported that targeted WhatsApp users with job offers. Although the details are not elaborated in the snippet, it's a clear indication of scammers utilizing popular messaging platforms to execute job scams. ([Euronews](#))
- **LinkedIn Job Offer Scam:** A recent scam on LinkedIn involved offering jobs to unsuspecting individuals as a part of a dual scam and malware attack targeting job seekers. ([Android Headlines](#))
- **Fake URLs, Photos, and Company Names:** Scammers may create fake online job listings purportedly from well-known companies, even going as far as recreating the legitimate company's website by slightly altering the web address. ([Flexjobs](#))
- **Work-from-Home Reshipping Scams:** Job seekers might come across online ads for positions like quality control managers or virtual personal assistants, which are actually reshipping scams. In such scams, individuals are typically asked to reship packages, often containing stolen goods, on behalf of the scammers. ([FTC](#))

These scams demonstrate a range of deceptive practices aimed at exploiting job seekers for financial gain or identity theft. It's crucial to be cautious and conduct thorough research before sharing personal information.



Proactive Measures to Avoid Job Scams

Navigating the job market requires a blend of vigilance and savvy to ensure that you avoid falling prey to job scams, which can be financially and emotionally draining. Here are some proactive steps that can be taken to avoid such scams:

Conduct Thorough Company Research:

- **Verify Legitimacy:** Before applying for a position, check official websites, look up reviews, and research company history and executives.
- **Check Accreditation:** Look for any accreditations or certifications the company holds from reputable industry bodies.
- **Cross-reference Contact Information:** Compare the contact information provided on job listings with that found on the official company website to ensure consistency.

Utilize Reputable Job Search Platforms:

- **Use Vetted Listings:** Use job search platforms that vet their listings and employers to a higher degree, reducing the chance of encountering a scam.
- **Review Platform Policies:** Understand the policies and protections the platform has in place for job seekers.
- **Avoid Too-Good-to-Be-True Listings:** Steer clear of listings that offer exceptionally high pay for minimal work or require no experience or qualifications.

Network and Seek Referrals:

- **Connect with Professional Networks:** Leverage professional networks like LinkedIn to connect with individuals in your desired field and to discover job opportunities through trusted sources.
- **Take Advantage of Referral Programs:** Utilize referral programs within your current or past workplaces to find new opportunities.
- **Join Industry Associations:** Join industry associations to network with professionals and gain access to vetted job listings.

Proactive Measures to Avoid Job Scams, Continued

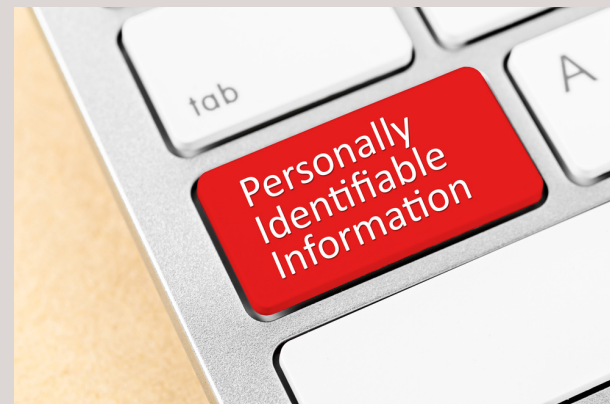
Enhance Digital Literacy and Scam Awareness:

- **Leverage Educational Resources:** Utilize available resources to educate yourself on common job scam tactics and red flags.
- **Attend Workshops:** Participate in workshops or online courses that enhance digital literacy and increase understanding of online scam mechanisms.
- **Stay Updated:** Keep up to date on the latest scam tactics and educate yourself on how to report and avoid them.



Avoid Sharing Sensitive Information Prematurely:

- **Verify First:** Verify the legitimacy of the job offer and the company before sharing sensitive information like Social Security numbers or bank account details. ***Legitimate companies won't ask for this information until you are in the job offer phase.***
- **Use Secure Channels:** When it comes time to share sensitive information, ensure it's done through secure and official channels.
- **Consult a Professional:** When in doubt, consult with a career counselor or legal professional to ensure you're not putting your personal information at risk.



These proactive measures can act as a robust framework for individuals in the job market, aiding them in navigating through potential job scams and securing legitimate employment opportunities.

Handling Scams Post-Victimization

If you have been the victim of a scam, reporting your experience will ensure that the individuals or groups responsible are held accountable and minimize the chances of others falling for similar scams. Steps include:

1. Report the Scam to:

- **The Job Board:** If the scam originated from a job listing on a job board, it's important to report it to the platform administrators. This can help take down fraudulent listings, preventing others from becoming victims. Provide all necessary details about the scam and the scammer, including any contact information and correspondence you had with them.
- **Local Authorities:** Reporting the scam to local authorities can initiate a criminal investigation if the scam originates from within your jurisdiction. Provide a detailed account of the scam, including how you were approached, the methods used by the scammer, and any financial losses you incurred.
- **The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or equivalent:** In the United States, the FTC is the body responsible for handling complaints about fraudulent activities. Reporting the scam to the FTC can contribute to their database and might help in larger investigations. Outside the US, reporting to the equivalent body, such as the [Competition Bureau](#) in Canada or [Action Fraud](#) in the UK, is recommended. Like the FTC, these agencies collect data on scams and work to prevent them.

See Addendum for instructions for reporting these scams.

2. Document All Communications:

- Keep a thorough record of all communications you had with the scammer. This includes emails, text messages, and phone call logs.
- Document any transactions that took place, including bank statements or receipts.
- Present this documentation as evidence if a legal case arises or if it's needed for reporting purposes.

Handling Scams Post-Victimization, Continued

3. Consult with Legal Advisors:

- Consult with a legal advisor to understand your rights and the legal avenues available to you.
- They can guide you on how to proceed, whether it's recovering lost funds or taking legal action against the scammers.

4. Warn Others:

- Sharing your experience on social media platforms, forums, and scam awareness websites can help warn others and prevent them from falling victim to similar scams.
- Warnings might prompt action from relevant authorities or platforms.

By following these steps, individuals can play a part in reducing the prevalence of job scams and support the broader community in being more vigilant against fraudulent activities.



Addendum - Resources

RESOURCES FOR REPORTING SCAMS

If you have been a victim of a job search scam, it is important to report it to the relevant authorities. Here is a list of resources for reporting job search scams:

Federal Trade Commission (FTC): The FTC has resources to help you spot job scams and report them. You can report scams to the FTC by visiting their website or calling their hotline at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline: To report scams, click on the link or call 877-908-3360. It's a free resource, with trained fraud experts available to help you.

Better Business Bureau (BBB): The BBB can be a great resource to find and report online job scams. Use the BBB's scam tracker to review and report job scams. Its "Job Scams" article provides information on common job scams and how to avoid them.

FBI'S Cyber Crimes Division: Report the scam attempt immediately to the FBI's Cyber Crimes Division, the U.S. Attorney General, and local Law Enforcement.

Individual job search sites: If you spot a scam on a job search site, report it to the site it was initially posted on (Indeed, ZipRecruiter, LinkedIn, etc.).

WEBSITES TO RESEARCH COMPANIES

Better Business Bureau (BBB): Provides information about companies, including complaints and reviews. It's a good resource for verifying the legitimacy of a company.

WHOIS Domain Lookup: Provides information about who owns a domain. If a job listing is associated with a newly registered or anonymous domain, it might be a scam.

TOP-RATED JOB BOARDS

"Best Job Boards for 2023" by Betterteam

"33 Best Job Search Websites to Use In 2023" by Career Sherpa

"25 Job Search Sites, Starting with Ours" by Robert Half: Includes specialized job websites

Addendum - Resources

LIST OF JOB BOARDS AND VETTING WEBSITES:

There are many job boards and vetting websites available to job seekers. Arthur Hughes, executive client partner at Heller DeLand Group, recommends that if you see a position on a job board like Indeed or LinkedIn, search for that position on the company's website and apply through its portal. Company-hosted application systems are safer. If the job posting features a confidential search (the company name is not mentioned), you can cut and paste the job description – not the job title – into your search engine. Check out both our interviews with Arthur:

- [Everything You Wanted to Know About Applicant Tracking Systems \(ATS\) Part 1](#)
- [Everything You Wanted to Know About Applicant Tracking Systems \(ATS\) Part 2](#)

Here is a list of job boards and vetting websites based on search results:

Indeed: One of the most popular job search sites and has been recognized as the top job search board for several years.

Google for Jobs: An embedded feature of the normal Google search engine. It aggregates job postings from across the web to help job seekers easily find their next job directly in Search.

CareerBuilder: One of the internet's biggest and longest-lived job boards.

Glassdoor: A job search site that also provides company reviews, salary information, and interview questions.

LinkedIn: A professional networking site that also offers job postings.

ZipRecruiter: A job search site that allows employers to post jobs and job seekers to search for jobs. It offers a range of features, including resume screening and applicant tracking.

Ladders: A job posting site with access to \$100K+ Careers through direct contact between highly experienced, qualified professionals and hiring teams.

Addendum - Resources

WORKSHOPS, ARTICLES, AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Loyola University and Baruch College both offer free workshops on avoiding job scams.

FlexJobs offers a free webinar that explains how to identify fake job postings, how to avoid phishing scams, and how to protect your personal information. It also published the article "16 Common Job Search Scams and How to Protect Yourself".

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) offers a library of job scam resources. It includes the article: "Scammers Impersonate Well-Known Companies, Recruit For Fake Jobs On LinkedIn And Other Job Platforms."

"How Fake Employment Scams Target Your Online Job Search" by AARP

"Fake Job Scams Are Skyrocketing Online — And They're Getting Harder to Detect", by the LA Times

"Americans Lost \$68 Million To Job Scams This Year—Here's What to Look Out For" by CNBC

"Job Scams Are on The Rise. Watch Out for These Red Flags" by CNN Business

"Laid-Off Workers Are Flooded with Fake Job Offers" by Wall Street Journal

"Ask HR: How Can Job Seekers Avoid Recruitment Scams?" by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

BOOKS

"Scam Me If You Can: Simple Strategies to Outsmart Today's Rip-off Artists" by Frank Abagnale provides tips and strategies for avoiding scams, including job search scams.

"The Truth About Avoiding Scams" by Steve Weisman provides practical advice for avoiding scams, including job search scams.

This informative document is presented by The Career Experts Group which is a select group of Master Career Practitioners and Personal Branding Strategists. We share one mission: to guide and support individuals at all stages of their career journeys, from new college graduates to C-Suite executives.

Our clients include neurodiverse workers, professionals of color, older workers, early-career professionals, career changers, and those returning to the workforce. Our own professional backgrounds are just as diverse: high-tech, education, counseling, marketing, human resources, recruiting, and entrepreneurship, to name a few.

Each member of the Career Experts Group is passionate about helping you get to work on your career. We've got you covered, no matter where you are in your career journey.

For a wealth of career-focused information, insights, and inspiration, visit the Career Experts Group website.

Check out our monthly "Your Career>Your Future" newsletter. Subscribe to get the latest information on hot career topics and trends in your email every month.

Do you have questions about career industry news and trends, job-finding strategies, career exploration, building your brand, or any other career-related areas? Just Ask the Experts!

CAREER EXPERTS GROUP



LET'S GET TO WORK ON YOUR CAREER!