

Employment Verifications

Verifying Work History

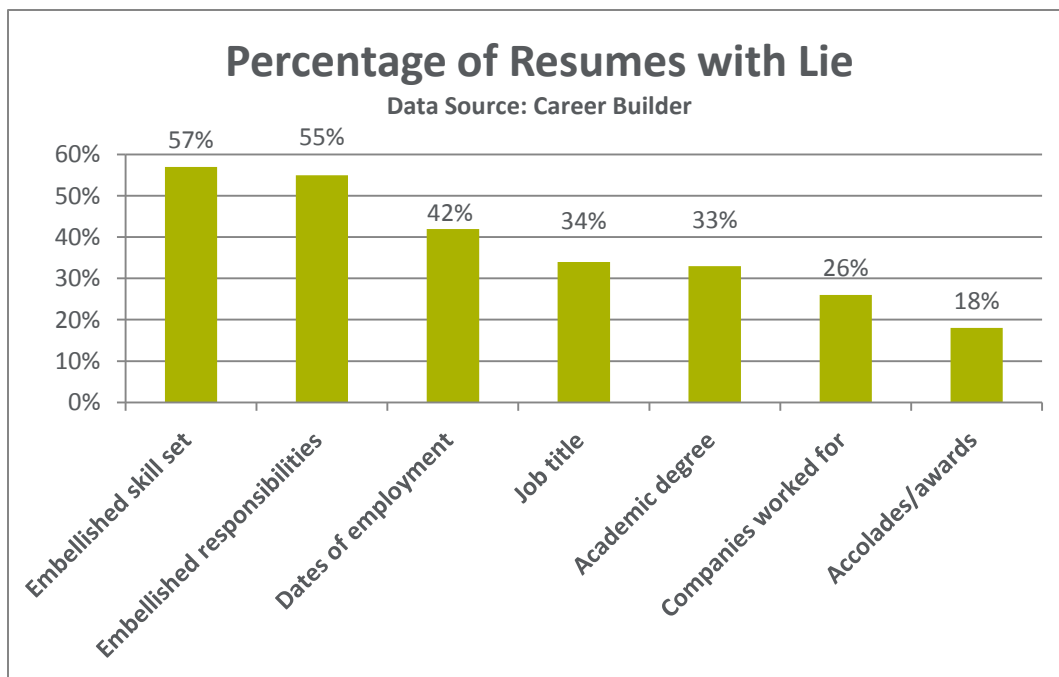


When applicants apply for a job, employment history can be one of the most important factors to human resource professionals. With the current competitive landscape of the job market, it's common for candidates to embellish their accomplishments or outright lie on their resume regarding work or academic history. As a result, many organizations view employment verifications (in addition to education verifications and professional references) as a valuable source for evaluating an applicant's overall history and performance before making a hiring decision.

There are numerous reasons applicants falsify their credentials when seeking employment. Confirming prior employment history helps determine the validity of the resume and if the applicant's qualifications fit the job requirements.

- A study conducted by Career Builder found that 58% of employers found a lie on a resume. In addition, due to increasing pressure to find jobs, one-third of these employers said they have seen an increase in false resumes post-recession.
- Steven D. Levitt, a renowned economics professor at the University of Chicago, has cited research that shows that over 50% of people lie on their resumes.

The chart below indicates the most common employment lies found on a resume (Source: Career Builder study).



This information is not meant to provide legal advice of any kind. Legal advice should be sought from your attorney or corporate counsel.



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A screening program that includes verifying academic and work credentials, along with a criminal background check is vital to protecting an organization and providing a safe work environment.

Key benefits of employment verifications:

- Identify if false or misleading information was provided
- Learn if the applicant has the necessary experience for the job
- A good indicator of honesty and trustworthiness
- Analyze any resume inconsistencies or gaps in employment

Dishonest information on an employment application is often a red flag for employers, and can potentially indicate a hiring risk. Some common resume lies include; not revealing criminal convictions, omitting employment gaps and education falsification. Additionally, false dates of employment can be used to hide time periods of delinquent activity such as jail time, hiding job termination(s), and job hopping. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has also found that applicants with patterns of past deviant behavior are more likely to falsify their resumes.

Industries particularly vulnerable to false employment histories on a resume:

- Financial Services (73%)
- Leisure and Hospitality (71%)
- Information Technology (63%)
- Health Care (63%)
- Retail (59%)

Source: Career Builder

Employment verifications provide a view into an applicant's current and previous work history, including:

- Dates of employment
- Job title(s)
- Responsibilities
- Reasons for leaving
- Eligibility for rehire
- Employee rating
- Pay rate

Many businesses and organizations find it valuable to hire a third-party to conduct employment verifications. As a method of choice, using the services of a professional background screening firm to perform employment, education and professional reference verifications can save an employer time and money. It also assists human resource departments and recruiters in streamlining the hiring process for open positions. Additionally, it helps reduce the time and frustration of scheduling/rescheduling time to conduct reference checks, and multiple phone call attempts to chase down employment or education verifications.

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Generally, a professional background screening firm experienced in verifications can complete the process much more quickly as opposed to an employer conducting them in-house. Also beneficial, the third-party can provide a consistent and thorough summary of the information in an organized report, which can then be added to the employment file.

Employment verifications, conducted along with education verifications and professional references, are an important part of a comprehensive background check. It's vital to an organization's hiring process that qualified, honest and reliable applicants are being selected. Employers have a duty not to hire people whose negative history relates to being unsuitable for a job. Simply reviewing a resume and conducting an interview is not enough; nor can employers trust or rely on just an applicant's words. It's imperative to confirm whether an applicant's employment history is the same that's stated on the resume and/or job application. The key to minimizing exposure to risk is to know an applicant's history prior to extending an offer of employment.

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