

Online recruitment leaves no room to hide for CV liars

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Inaccurate CVs are a perennial problem for recruiters, but savvy HR practitioners and recruitment consultants are increasingly turning to social media for a solution.

The problem has always been with us, but it's getting worse. Every position attracts a flood of no-hope applications from desperate people who're trying everything regardless of what they're qualified for. And even the applicants who do appear to be qualified are quite likely to be lying - a recent survey found that almost one-third of people had lied or exaggerated their CVs.

This not only makes it difficult to sort the wheat from the chaff, it also discourages employers from advertising positions in the first place.

Getting too many responses to your ad is just as bad as getting too few responses. It takes hours to sort through a pile of applications and if most of them are irrelevant that's completely wasted time. Now that sending in a CV is as easy as pressing "Send" on an email and applicants don't even have to pay fax charges, the pile could easily contain thousands of documents.

This is one of the reasons why Job Mail has recently tightened the process by which job seekers can apply for jobs via the site. Every job seeker has to register on the site first, before they can apply for any position, and they must complete a standard CV template. That makes it much easier for recruiters to weed out candidates who don't have suitable qualifications.

Easier to check CVs

It also eases the job of checking CV claims. This is the age of the Google CV. There can't be many recruiters who don't now automatically check out applicants' Facebook profiles, and do a Google search on them. Even something as basic as finding the phone number of an educational institution is now simple - and it all adds up to making it possible to verify the authenticity of CVs with more accuracy than ever before.

I advise job seekers to make sure that their online profiles present the right picture to the world. That three- or four-page CV you carefully craft to make you look good is useless if there are pictures of you drunk and mooning the camera all over the Internet. Facebook is a wonderful way to stay in touch with your friends, but you have to manage it very carefully. Take the time to learn how the privacy settings work and be aware that they change often. Un-tag your name in pictures you wouldn't be happy for your granny or a future boss to see.

Above all, remember that the Internet is fundamentally a public space. If you use your real name on social networks - and sometimes even if you don't - whatever you say in those spaces will be part of your public image. If you wouldn't say it directly to the person you're asking for a job, don't say it on the Internet either.

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