

Tip Sheet: Job Scams

What You Need To Know To Stay Safe

Unfortunately, job posting scams are on the rise, and there are very clever scammers out there. Job seekers require caution and common sense when responding to any job posting.

Scammers are typically trying to get unwary job seekers to send them banking information or money, usually under the guise of pre-employment screening, training or equipment purchase. Or they may ask for detailed personal information that can be used to steal a job seeker's identity.

Even for sophisticated job seekers, it can be hard to tell the difference between a scam and a genuine job posting. To help protect yourself, here is a list of the top 9 job scams out there right now.

1. Too Good to Be True

Like the saying goes, if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Do your due diligence and investigate. If a recruiter is legitimate, they will have no problem providing you the information needed. If they come up with excuses, be careful.

2. Vague Job Requirements and Job Description

Scammers try to make their emails sound believable by listing job requirements. Usually, these requirements are so simple that almost everyone qualifies. As a rule of thumb, if it's a real job, the requirements will be quite specific.

3. Unprofessional Emails

Some emails from scammers are well-written, but many aren't. Real companies hire professionals who can write well. If the email contains spelling, capitalization, punctuation or grammatical mistakes, be on your guard.

4. Online Interviews via Messaging Services

Many attempted scams say the interview will take place online using an instant messaging service. The scammers often include instructions for setting up and contacting the hiring manager and may ask for confidential information.

If you're applying for an online job and you're told the interview will take place online via instant message, research the company and its representatives before you agree to an interview. And if you agree to be interviewed, ask detailed questions about the job during the interview. Don't give out confidential information such as your bank account, credit card or Social Insurance Number (SIN).

4. Emails Don't Include Contact Information

If the email doesn't include the company's address and phone, it's a good bet it's a scam. And it's a good bet it's a scam if the interviewer makes an excuse for using a personal email address by saying the company's servers are down, or the company is experiencing too many problems with spam, or the company hasn't yet set up its email system.

5. Search Results Don't Add Up

Before agreeing to an interview, do your research. If it's a real company, you should be able to find information about them by doing an online search. Finding information does not guarantee the company is legitimate, but if you can't find anything, it's likely a scam.

6. You're Asked to Provide Confidential Information

Some scammers ask for your bank account information to set up direct deposit or transfer money to your account, or ask you to open a new bank account and provide the information to them.

Other scammers will tell you to go to a website and fill out a credit report form or provide confidential information so they can "put you on the company insurance." Identity theft scams try to get you to provide your SIN, birth date and other personal information.

7. Sending Money or Using a Personal Bank Account

Some scammers ask to use your personal bank account to transfer money from one account to another account. It is called money laundering, and it's against the law. Other scams ask you to receive and forward packages from your home. These packages might contain stolen goods or illegal substances. If you're asked to deposit a cheque or transfer money for them, it's likely a scam).

8. They Want You to Pay for Something

Legitimate companies don't ask for money. If you're told you need to purchase software or pay for services such as a credit report or resume review, beware.

9. Your "Gut" Says It's a Scam

Researching the company is your best defense, but some scammers are very clever. If you start to feel that things aren't right, trust your intuition. Ask questions and pay close attention to the answers.

Slow the process down and don't be pressured into making a commitment or giving out personal information. Do more research. If it turns out to be a scam, report it to the authorities. For more information, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre collects information on fraud and identity theft. This site provides information on past and current scams affecting Canadians and what to do if you're a victim: <https://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm>
