Tips to Evaluating Job Postings and How to Avoid Job Scams

The Office of Career Planning and Development acts only as an intermediary between employers posting opportunities and candidates searching for opportunities. LionJobs serves as a centralized applicant tracking system for on-campus and off-campus positions. Please be aware that Career Planning list on campus and off campus employment opportunities on LionJobs only. We verify the authenticity or legitimacy of the positions that are posted to the best of our ability. However, due to the volume of jobs received, we are unable to thoroughly research the integrity of every position listed. The ultimate responsibility for researching a potential employer and opportunity lies with the applicant. UNA has no control over and Career Planning takes no responsibility for (a) the truthfulness, accuracy, quality, safety, morality, desirability or legality of employer information and position listings, (b) the ability of employers to offer job opportunities, or (c) the hiring, recruiting or other practices of any employer. We make no recommendations or guarantees about the positions and employers listed through our office. We encourage you to use common sense and caution when applying for positions, especially when applying for positions off-campus.

RED FLAGS

Wondering if a job posting is a scam or not? If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. It is very important for you to educate yourself about potential scams. Here are some good tips that the job is probably fraudulent:

1) Use common sense when applying for and engaging in off-campus employment. If a potential employer asks you to participate in an activity that makes you uncomfortable in any way, don't do it.

2) Be wary of 'check cashing scams.' If someone asks you to complete the following, you should refuse and contact our office immediately.
   - deposit a check/money order into your personal account
   - send money to another individual,
   - ask you to give credit card or bank account numbers,
   - provide copies of personal documents
   - You are asked to provide a photo of yourself.
   - make an initial investment and/or for you to send payment by wire service

3) Watch for anonymity. If it is difficult to find an address, actual contact, company name, etc. - this is cause to proceed with caution. Fraud postings are illegal, so scammers will try to keep themselves well-hidden.

4) While there are legitimate opportunities for individuals to work from home, be sure to research the position (Envelope Stuffers, Home-based Assembly Jobs, Online Surveys) in advance of applying.

5) The promise of a large salary for very little work. The salary range listed is very wide (i.e. "employees can earn from $40K - $80K the first year!")

6) The posting neglects to mention what the responsibilities of the job actually are. Instead, the description focuses on the amount of money to be made.

7) The contact email address contains the domain @live.com.
8) The position initially appears as a traditional job and upon further research, it sounds more like an independent contractor opportunity.

9) The employer contacts you by phone; however there is no way to call them back. The number is not available. The employer tells you that they do not have an office set-up in your area, and will need you to help them get it up and running.

10) Look at the company's website. Does it have an index that tells you what the site is about; or does it contain information only about the job you are interested in? Scammers often create quick, basic web pages that seem legitimate at first glance.

11) Google the employer's phone number, fax number and/or email address. If it does not appear connected to an actual business organization, or if the word "scam" (i.e. Acme Company Scam), appear concerning this company this is a red flag.

12) The employer responds to you immediately after you submit your resume. Typically, resumes sent to an employer are reviewed by multiple individuals, or not viewed until the posting has closed. Note - this does not include an auto-response you may receive from the employer once you have sent your resume.

**Most Effective Steps for Victims of Job Scams**

Unfortunately, not everyone will escape job fraud in time. Job seekers who are victimized by payment-forwarding scams are advised to take the following steps.

1. Victims should report the company name, the job posting, and all contact names to the job sites where the scam was posted.
2. Victims should permanently close all email addresses that were associated with the job fraud.
3. Close all bank accounts at the bank where the scam took place. It is a good idea to change banks to avoid "social engineering" attempts by the con artists to fool bank workers into giving out new account information.
4. Order a credit report from all three credit bureaus every 2 to 3 months. Watch the reports for unusual activity.
5. If you have given your SSN to the fraudster, we advise that you place fraud alerts on your three credit reports - Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion.
6. Victims of payment-forwarding scams should contact their local Secret Service field agent. The Secret Service handles complaints of international fraud. Fraud victims should also file a police report with local law enforcement officials as well. To place a fraud alert on your credit reports:

**Other Sources**

Check out these links for additional advice and tips on determining whether the job, opportunity and/or company you're applying for is legitimate.

- Better Business Bureau (http://www.bbb.org/us/consumers)
- AT&T's Anywho (http://www.anywho.com)
- U.S. government's Consumer Assistance (www.consumeraction.gov/state.shtml)

**If you suspect a position is fraudulent, please contact the Career Planning and Development.**

We will alert the proper authorities i.e. campus police and local authorities.

GUC Room 202 / 256-765-4276/careerservices.com