

Trending...

Job Scams Are on the Rise—Here's How to Spot Them and Steer Clear



by Lisa Rabasca Roepe

What Are Job Scams?

Job scams are essentially fake job postings. Sometimes the scammer is trying to get access to your bank account or to steal a bank's money, and other times they're after your personal information.

"Employment scammers will typically conduct online interviews, provide employment forms that collect personally identifiable information, and ask the target to perform job duties before the scam is discovered," says Sandra Guile, BBB spokesperson. The BBB's survey of 10,670 U.S. and Canadian consumers reporting employment scams found that students and individuals ages 25 to 34 are more susceptible and likely to be victimized, while those ages 45 to 54 and 65+ report higher median dollar losses.

"These scams are also often part-time, flexible jobs that fit within the growing gig economy," Guile says. Unfortunately, it is very easy to set up a job scam for work-from-home jobs, says Mark Silverman, CEO of Amava, a member website that connects people with legitimate work-from-home jobs and volunteer opportunities. The increasing number of job scams has led his website to offer classes on how to spot a fake online job posting.

What Warning Signs Should You Look Out For?

There are many red flags to look for when you're searching online job listings. Here are the most common:

The job posting claims that you will make thousands of dollars each week working from home. "If a job ad mentions it's an easy job or alludes to you earning a lot of money but not having to work hard, that is definitely a clear sign," says Charlette Beasley of Fit Small Business, a digital resource for small business owners, who's advised job seekers on how to avoid scams and helped business owners ensure their own ads didn't resemble fraudulent ones.

You notice typos, misspellings, poor grammar, and other errors. Be on the lookout for grammatical errors, oddly worded phrases, and website links that don't go back to the company on the job posting. "Little errors in these details are easy to overlook but could be clues that you're being phished for information," says cybersecurity expert Ryan O'Ramsay Barrett, founder and CEO of ORAM Corporate Advisors, a firm that provides IT services—including cybersecurity—to small businesses.

You're asked to send a resume but there's no specific job posting. For instance, an ad that states, "We have a lot of jobs, send us your resume and we will match you with jobs," strongly suggests they are looking for personal identifying information including phone numbers, email addresses, and home addresses, Silverman says.

You're asked to pay for training, an application fee, or background check, or required to purchase items upfront. "Anyone who asks for money to apply for a job is providing a huge warning sign," Silverman says. While they may be legitimate businesses, they are often pyramid schemes that ask you to make a significant investment into the business that you may not earn back, he says.

The email address isn't quite right. Any company using an email provider like Yahoo! or Gmail instead of their own company email is probably not legitimate. Also take notice of whether the company name is spelled correctly in the email; it's not uncommon for scammers to use an email or domain that's one or two letters off in the hopes that you won't look closely enough and assume it's authentic.

Be careful if the hiring manager contacts you via text only. "A legitimate job opportunity will come through via email as opposed to text," Silverman says. If it does come via text, "It usually means that someone got your data, including your phone number, from someplace." Signs that it's not legitimate include the text coming from an unknown number and the way the hiring manager addresses you. For instance, do they call you William but you typically go by Bill? Does the message sound oddly formal? "Also, if you don't have any recollection of applying to the entity they claim to represent or you have a funny feeling about it, you're probably right," Silverman says. If you're interested in pursuing the opportunity, do some research on the recruiter, Beasley says. Can you find them on LinkedIn, and do they work for the company they claim to work for? You can also call the company's HR department and confirm that text interviews are a legitimate part of their process, she says.

Be wary of ads that mention brand names like Amazon, Walmart, or Target but don't include a specific location for the job. And if you can't find the same job on their website, it is probably not a job for that company, Silverman says.

What Can You Do to Avoid Being the Victim of a Scam?

There are a few simple ways to avoid becoming a victim of a scheme.

Don't...

...use your primary email address when applying. Create an email with the word "jobs" at the end of it. That address looks legitimate and then, if it's a scam, they don't have access to your primary account. "If you limit the amount of information you provide, you limit your exposure," Silverman says.

...give out your bank information, social security number, or credit card number. This information is only required once you are hired and you only submit it through a tax form, Silverman says. Before sending this information to any hiring manager, you need to confirm they are an employee with the authority to hire.

...send them money or cash a check they send you. "They are essentially stealing money from the bank and you will end up owing the bank money," says Beasley, who's seen job seekers lose money falling for similar scams.

Do...

...verify the person you are speaking with works for the company and the job you're applying for exists. "If you can't verify the person by calling the main number of the company, you have to assume they are not legitimate," Barrett says.

...make sure you are dealing with a real company. Check to see if they have a website. If they do, how long ago was it created? You can look this up here. If they say they've been in business three years but the website was created a week ago, that is a huge red flag, Beasley says.

...find the job posting on the company website. "Most companies have a 'jobs and careers' page on their website so there should be a posting there for the same position," Barrett says. Some companies will even post an alert on their jobs page that they've received reports that individuals claiming to represent the company have sent fraudulent job offers to unwitting candidates.

What Should You Do if You Spot—or Have Already Fallen for—a Job Scam?

If you suspect you're dealing with a job scam, no matter how far in you've gotten, follow these tips:

Stop what you're doing. Don't cash that check or mail in a payment and halt any correspondence.

Notify your bank if you already cashed a check and then realized it's a scam...

See the [full article](#) on themuse.

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Company: Deloitte
Apply direct [here](#)
- **Role: Strategy and Transactions Manager - Valuation and Business Modeling - Business Valuation - Houston**
Company: EY
Apply direct [here](#)
- [Other Full-Time Opportunities](#)

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Apply direct [here](#)
- **Role: Communications Internship**
Company: The Pollination Project Foundation
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Coog Opportunities

Virtual Company Visit with EDF Trading

EDF Trading is a global leader in low-carbon energies and participates in the wholesale and retail energy markets. Join us to learn more about the company and available opportunities.

- Date: April 16th 10:00AM-11:00AM
- RSVP in Gateway

Bauer Graduate Women's Network Presents: Navigating Your Career with Lillian Davenport

Why did you decide to pursue a graduate degree? If it is to continue moving forward with your career, BGWN is hosting leadership coach Lillian Davenport who will discuss how women can navigate office culture and build their careers.

- Date: April 27th 12:00PM-1:00PM
- More details in [flyer](#)
- RSVP [here](#)

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Put your analytical skills and energy expertise to the test for a chance to win up to \$20,000! One team of 4 will represent UH at the 2nd Annual Energy Innovation Case Competition and the final 4 teams will make their presentation in person at the NAPE Summit on 8/18

- [Apply](#) by 4/30
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- Questions? Contact [TCU](#)

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Company Engagement Opportunities

- Details: See [PDF](#) for companies, dates and topics

Upcoming Case Competitions

Why Case?

Case competitions help students:

- Showcase abilities to solve current business challenges
- Sharpen soft skills
- Expand their professional network

View this [list](#) for upcoming competition opportunities!

Registration, application requirements and costs vary per competition.

RCC Reminders

Chat with RCC

MBA/MS weekly drop-in hours and Zoom links:

Tuesdays
[10am-11am](#)

Thursdays
[2pm-3pm](#)

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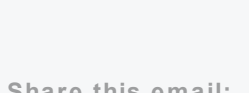
Still looking for a full-time or part-time opportunity? Let us know and we will feature you on LinkedIn!

Email the following to Senior Director of Graduate Career Services, [Kelly Collins](#):

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- Top 3 areas of focus (function/industry)
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