

## HOW TO AVOID ONLINE JOB SCAMS

Today's employment climate is more competitive than ever with increasing numbers of job seekers competing for the best opportunities in town. With many taking to the internet as a primary resource for seeking employment, unfortunately, the inevitable online scams have also emerged.

Louise Campbell, Managing Director of Robert Walters, Ireland shares some insights and tips on how to identify and avoid online job scams.

### 1. Check for known “red flags”

Job scams usually contain certain common “red flags” that can alert you to fraudulent jobs. These include misspellings or grammatical errors in job ads, or a contact email address that is not the primary domain of the organisation. For example, a job ad that uses a microsoft@yahoo.com email address should raise some alarm bells.

Other discernable clues that something is amiss include ads that require you to put in some form of monetary deposit before giving you access to or offering you the jobs advertised. A legitimate job should be paying you for what you are worth, in terms of your experience and contribution – instead of expecting you to pay upfront for the career opportunity.

### 2. Be careful of jobs that request your bank account information

There are some types of job scams in which the applicant is asked to accept payment to his or her bank account. These payment-transfer scams usually involve a con artist who pretends to be an employer, and uses fake job ads to lure unsuspecting job seekers and extract personal details and information from them.

The scary thing is that such con artists can even go to the extent of stealing company logos and corporate names to convince jobseekers that they are legitimate employers.

Always be wary of jobs that request information or personal details beyond that usually contained in your resume, and as a rule of thumb, you should never give out your bank account details before landing the job.

### **3. Post your resume anonymously**

The increasing danger of identity theft or someone posing as an employer to gain an applicant's personal data are good reasons to post an anonymous resume. Many swindlers target genuine job hunters and obtain their personal particulars through fraud with the purpose to spam them with business opportunities – which are more often than not; fictitious and illegal pyramid marketing schemes.

Avoid including your home address, phone number or date of birth on resumes that you post publicly, in case identity thieves abuse the information available to create bogus credit cards or take out loans.

### **4. Check with reliable sources**

Check on the firm's reliability, credibility and complaint record with friends or contacts from the industry or seek advice from other reliable third party resources, such as The Chamber of Commerce or institute bodies.

Never divulge personal and financial information on the phone, email or over the internet until you have done due diligence on the company's reputation and marketplace record, and are comfortable with the company's privacy protection policies. However, be aware that some of these scam organisations may even give out false references, so make sure your sources are trustworthy and reliable.

### **5. Be sceptical of easy money schemes**

The work-at-home job market is rife with scams. It pays to be more sceptical about the lucrative money making opportunities this market promises. If the returns sound too good to be true, most of the time, they probably are. Jobs that gives grandiose income claims or ads that do not specify the details and requirements of the job itself should raise a red flag.

A legitimate job should be clear and precise on the job specifications and responsibilities, instead of relying on heavy marketing and sales copy, success stories, testimonials and hype, which is a trademark of many work-at-home programs.

### **6. Work with reputable headhunters**

Last but not least, always work with a reputable headhunting firm or job agency. Proceed with caution whenever you receive an email which claims to have seen your resume online and invites you to complete the application details online. You should check out the company

through your internet browser and contact the organisation via telephone to find out if the job offer is genuine.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE VICTIM OF JOB SCAMS**

1. Contact the company and ask for your money back. Let the company know your intention to alert relevant government or business authorities about your experience.
2. Report the matter to the police immediately, with copies of all correspondences, contact details of the bogus organisation, and bank or credit card statements if you suspect that your identity may have been stolen for illegal activities.
3. Close all bank accounts at the bank where the scam occurred. You may want to consider changing banks in case the con artists attempt to extract your new account information with your previous particulars and details.
4. Ensure you monitor your credit card reports for any unusual activities.
5. Victims should report the scam organisation's name, the job advertisement and all contact details to the job sites or other media platforms where the scam was posted.
6. Close all email addresses that were associated with the job scam to prevent further abuse by the con artists.

- ENDS -

For more information, please contact:

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### **Notes to Editors**

Robert Walters is a leading specialist professional recruitment consultancy, which focuses on placing high calibre professionals into permanent, contract and temporary positions at all levels of seniority. The Group specialises in the accounting, finance, banking, legal,

compliance, IT, engineering and secretarial and support fields. Robert Walters' blue-chip client base ranges across multi-national corporations covering all market sectors.

Established in 1985, Robert Walters has built a global presence, with 38 offices now spanning 17 countries across 5 continents.