



# CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

## AVOIDING FRAUDULENT EMPLOYERS

Protect yourself from fraudulent employers and jobs by learning about common red flags and how to research an organization. Use the information below to help you recognize red flags and know what to look for when researching potential employers.

### RED FLAGS OF A FRAUDULENT EMPLOYER:

- There is almost no description of the required job tasks or requirements to apply.
- There is no application or interview process.
- You cannot verify the organization's information (see the section below on researching the organization).
- The job salary, perks, and flexibility seem too good to be true or there is a very wide salary range.
- You have to send money to the organization to get a job.
- They instruct you to only contact them via chat or email.
- The job they offered you isn't the one for which you applied and they do not provide you context as to why they are offering you a different position.
- They ask for personal information (i.e. social security number, bank account numbers, credit card information, birthday, passwords, mother's maiden name, etc.) in the initial message to you or prior to you filling out your hiring paperwork.
- An organization or individual claiming to represent an employer asks you to process a financial transaction, such as cashing a check for them then sending the money to other accounts. Never process any financial transactions as you may be held responsible for the funds the bank has sent to other accounts at your direction.

### DO YOUR RESEARCH ON THE ORGANIZATION:

- Look at the organization's website and make sure it looks legitimate. Look for "stock photos," grammatical errors, and poor use of English language on the website, job description and in other communications.
- Ensure that the organization is using a company email domain versus a personal domain (i.e. @gmail.com, @yahoo.com). Match the email address to the company's website domain or search the email domain to see if it leads to the organization's website (i.e. "@thermofisher.com", "@sempra.com").



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- Verify the organization's address. Use Google Maps to find the organization's address and see if they have an office location. Be cautious of addresses that are non-US addresses, residential addresses or post office box numbers (P.O. Box).
  - If it's in a coworking space, review the coworking space website or call the space to confirm that the organization is based there.
- Review the organization's social media and LinkedIn pages to check that their content is relevant to their business and cross reference their contact information.
- Research the organization's reviews on websites like Handshake, Glassdoor, Indeed, etc. to learn more about their business practices and employee experiences.
- Google the organization's name followed by "scam", "sue", "fraud", "reviews", "complaints", etc. to review any lawsuits, public issues, and company incidents.

### IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN A VICTIM OF A JOB SCAM:

- Contact your local police department. They are responsible for conducting an investigation regardless of where the scam artist is located.
- If you are a current student, file a report with USD's Department of Public Safety by calling them at their non-emergency line: (619) 260-7777.
- If you have sent money to a fraudulent employer, contact your bank or credit card company immediately to close the account and dispute the charges.
- If the incident occurred completely over the internet, you can file an incident report by calling the Federal Trade Commission at 1.877.FTC.HELP (1.877.382.4357) or visiting this [website](#).
- Once you are hired, if you have any concerns about the legitimacy of the company or believe the work environment to be unsafe, contact the US Department of Labor to file a complaint. Utilize [this list](#) to find the form that best relates to your situation.
- Notify USD's Career Development Center at [careers@sandiego.edu](mailto:careers@sandiego.edu) or at 619-260-4654.

For more information on potential employer scams, please visit NACE's website [here](#).

If you feel uncomfortable or are not sure about certain organizations or individuals claiming to represent an employer, contact the Career Development Center at [careers@sandiego.edu](mailto:careers@sandiego.edu) or at 619-260-4654. We are happy to review a job posting with you and look for areas of concern.