

Separating fact from fiction on a CV

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Can you really trust information declared on a CV as fact? The answer is a solid no! This is because embellished CV's are a dime a dozen and all it takes is a quick online search to prove just how prevalent this trend is among job applicants.

"Candidates want to have a standout CV that grabs the attention of potential employers and many are willing to add embellishments, misrepresent facts or even blatantly lie to get to the top of the pile. Adding to it is the stressful economic environment, which could even compel generally honest individuals to exaggerate in their applications in a bid to appear more employable," says Rudi Kruger, General Manager at LexisNexis Data Services.

Among the most serious CV embellishments are fake qualifications, fake identities, misrepresented criminal records, fraudulent work permits, inflated job titles, fabricated experience and incorrect reasons for leaving previous jobs.

While these gross misinterpretations may help the candidate appear more qualified for the job, it is only after they are hired that their inability to perform can become a serious problem for the employer.

"This is why recruiters and hiring personnel should never accept the information on CVs at face value and no applicant should be trusted blindly. You always want to qualify a candidate by validating the claims and statements on a CV to avoid great risk," said Kruger.

Claims around experience, job titles and reasons for leaving may be challenged at the interviews or through referrals. "Be sure to make that call to past employers for more information and their opinions, as this will help inform your decision. However, bear in mind that it is also common for managers to impose bias based on personal experience of their referral, whether positive or negative," said Kruger.

"Psychometric testing is very useful in determining whether a candidate's skill level, maturity and intelligence match what they have claimed in their application."

To verify qualifications, identities, work permits, criminal history, credit history and fraud listings, the best and simplest option is to use third party screening tools. Redefining screening since launching in 2000, Lexis®RefCheck is a leading South African pre-employment and background screening solution that helps to automate the hiring process while ensuring a candidate meets a company's employment standards.

RefCheck services include verification of tertiary and secondary academic qualifications held by the individual from registered local and international institutions; identity and South African citizenship validation; fraud history checks via the South African Fraud Prevention Services; credit history checks through detailed TransUnion and Experian credit bureau reports; verification of local and international employment history and professional association membership; verification of drivers' licence status; and matching of bank account information against an identity number or registration number.

For more information, visit: <https://www.lexisnexis.co.za/lexisrefcheck>

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