

Changing Employment Requirements

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BY JO ANN MATHEWS

■ Exaggerations on a resume make headlines in high-profile cases such as when a prominent university hires a basketball or football coach. On the other hand, do employers confirm the accuracy of a resume and application for the average job-seeker?

“Absolutely...definitely...100 [percent] yes,” said Abby Kohut, author of *Absolutely Abby's 101 Job Search Secrets*. She gave the exact same response when asked if employers check references.

“Job seekers who lie on their resume or application do not get hired even if they are the perfect candidate,” she added. “Companies value integrity. If a candidate lies about their background, that means they might lie on the job.”

Ellia Kassoff, president and CEO of Strategic Software Resources, Inc., a recruiting firm in Irvine, Calif., estimates that more than 40 percent of resumes contain falsehoods. “I don't think employees understand how in-depth employee background checks are becoming. From credit and DMV checks to in-depth cross-referencing of last employers, companies are utilizing all the vast information they can find before hiring,” he said.

Kevin Connell, CEO and founder of Tampa-based Accu-Screen Inc., which specializes in pre-employment background screening and drug testing services, also confirmed that employers do check the accuracy of resumes and application blanks. “Yes, especially since the resume is a marketing tool used by job applicants to get their foot in the door. [The] job application is a LEGAL document—job seekers don't realize this.”

At the same time, he explained that less than 50 percent of employers call the references listed. More employers are doing criminal background checks while less than seven percent do a credit check.



“All applicants should assume that all of their information will be verified, including college degree and criminal backgrounds. Still, many job seekers roll the dice, thinking no one will check,” he added.

Along the Grand Strand, Michelle Pickering, branch manager at Kelly Services in Myrtle Beach, said the type of confirmations her firm conducts depends on what the employer requests.

“We work with all different businesses,” she said, noting that clerical, accounting and light industrial are a sampling of the categories of the 100 jobs her firm places people in each week.

However, typical checks include employment history, criminal and civil court background checks covering the past seven years, a 10-panel urine test and, depending on the job, a credit check. **CBL**