

# CV LIES

THE RISK ADVISORY GROUP 2015



---

## INTRODUCTION

The Risk Advisory Group has been providing employee screening services to its clients since 1997 and in that time we have seen the practice of candidates providing false or inaccurate information on their CVs continue to grow. In our latest analysis 63 percent of CVs contained discrepancies, a rise of 15 percent in the last decade.

The ever growing global talent pool has intensified the competition for jobs, and the financial crisis has only added fuel to the fire. Rising tuition fees in the UK have also played a part, with more people now feeling compelled to fabricate qualifications in order to get ahead.

Not all lies or inaccuracies on CVs are malicious, but even the slightest anomaly can skew an employer's judgement and mean they might not be getting what or who they were expecting.

Deliberate or accidental, CV lies are a serious problem for every business. They can lead to employers making the wrong hiring decision, resulting in brand and reputational damage, financial losses, reduced staff morale and, in some instances, regulatory fines.

Our 'CV lies 2015' report sets out to share the extent of the problem – with some interesting examples of extreme CV lies that might surprise you.

Crucially, it offers a way forward for employers with practical tips that will help them separate the rogue candidates from the genuine.

**But if you only take one thing away, it should be this: in today's digital world where so many processes are automated, there can be no substitute for suitably qualified specialists carrying out the necessary checks and verifications.**

This is the key to seeing beyond the information contained on CVs to uncover the truth about candidates and make the best hiring decision for your business.

I welcome your feedback on the report and am happy to answer any questions you have on employee screening and how it can support your business growth.

**Michael Whittington**  
Head of Employee Screening,  
The Risk Advisory Group

# THE NATION'S CV LIES

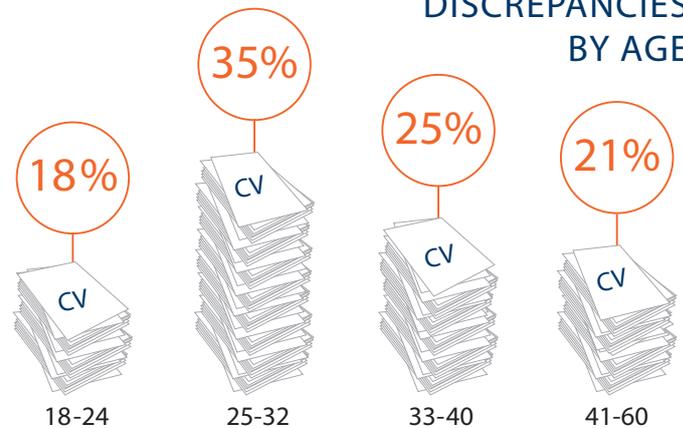


**63%**

of CVs contain discrepancies

...that's a rise of 15% in the last decade

## DISCREPANCIES BY AGE



## TYPE OF DISCREPANCY

Employment history

**35%**

Academic background

**26%**

**12%**

of candidates

inflate their job titles in an attempt to climb the career ladder

## EXTREME LIES

Following are some of the most far-fetched lies that The Risk Advisory Group's employee screening team has come across in its latest analysis:

- A senior compliance applicant creating a fictional employment history to cover up a past misdemeanour involving time served in prison for stealing client money
- Candidates forging degree certificates
- A candidate creating a work history overseas to cover up the time he spent in prison for drug offences
- Candidates presenting degrees from bogus universities in India, Pakistan and, increasingly, the UAE
- A candidate building a website for a fictional school and arranging for a virtual office to answer calls acting as the school, all to create an inflated academic background in a desperate bid to secure a work experience placement with a leading bank

This analysis is based on a sample of 3,000 CVs

# Make sure the CV matches the reality

Contact The Risk Advisory Group's employee screening team: [screening@riskadvisory.net](mailto:screening@riskadvisory.net)

---

# FIVE TOP TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS FROM ROGUE CANDIDATES

Making the wrong hire can cost a company time, money and, potentially, its reputation. But there are steps that businesses can take to ensure that the people they employ are genuinely qualified to do the job. This starts with putting the personal touch back into the employee screening process.

Process automation brings speed and greater efficiencies, but it needs to be coupled with human insight and analysis in order to identify anomalies in candidate CVs. Effective employee screening involves looking beyond the information, spotting what is not there as much as what is – and that's best performed by people, not technology.

Following are some of the key ways that businesses can filter out candidates who aren't all they appear to be based on their CV.



## THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL

One way to validate a candidate's experience is to delve into the detail of their previous roles at the interview stage.

Quiz them not only about what they were good at and what they liked about their previous job but also what some of the challenges were and where they think they could improve. In our latest CV analysis we spotted a growing trend for people to embellish their job titles. Check if people have the managerial skills they claim to have by asking them about their leadership style and some of the issues they faced.



## VERIFY AND THEN VERIFY AGAIN

It is surprising how few recruiters and employers check candidates' ID at the beginning of the recruitment process – and then again on the first day of employment.

This is really important, particularly when you are hiring in large groups. There have been instances where the person who attended the recruitment day and secured the job was not the person who showed up for the job.



## MITIGATE THE RISK FROM CONTRACTORS

Contractors and temporary workers can pose a risk to your business if they aren't verified in the same way as permanent staff.

Protect your company by screening all of your employees to the same level – and don't assume that the temp agency you use has already done so or works to your standards. Run spot checks to ensure that the screening carried out by the temp agency is sufficiently thorough.



## DON'T BE FOOLED BY FAKES

Some candidates will stop at nothing to secure the job – and that sometimes means producing certificates that aren't worth the paper they are written on.

We recall one candidate using a friend's degree certificate and a touch of Photoshop magic and passing it off as his own! This is a particular problem when hiring candidates from abroad and you may not have come across the university they have – or claim to have – graduated from. Never take certificates at face value – however official they look; always go back to the issuing institution to validate that the person has the qualifications they say they have.

The same applies to references. Always validate the source and check that the referee and the organisation do exist and that they have a record of the candidate having worked there.



## NOT ALL OF THE 'LIES' TOLD ON CVS ARE DELIBERATE

Some are a result of people simply not remembering precise details from their past.



## VIVE LA DIFFÉRENCE

Recruiting from an increasingly global talent pool can make it difficult to get the information you need to verify a candidate's background – either because the information isn't readily available or because it involves communicating with non-English speakers.

In many countries employers aren't allowed to access criminal record or credit information, but it is sometimes possible to get hold of this information with the candidate's assistance. Be aware of what is legally permissible and ensure you have the applicant's full consent to overcome obstacles such as these.

Clearly having the language skills and cultural understanding to converse with referees and academic institutions in their mother tongue can facilitate the whole process – and if you don't have these skills in-house ensure that the screening partner you work with does.

However, these tips will help ensure that you don't fall foul of those candidates who fabricate and invent in order to advance their career.

By being vigilant and validating the information contained on a candidate's CV you can ensure that you make the right hire for your business.

---

# OVERVIEW

The Risk Advisory Group has been providing systematic employee screening solutions for its clients since 1997.

We are one of the most experienced providers in the global market and we pride ourselves on having a multinational team.

Operating directly from London, they can process work in 21 different languages within the screening department, and have access to over 40 languages as a group.

Our client base includes some of the world's largest corporations and our objective is to work closely with them to create tailored screening packages that support their business' risk appetite and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.

Michael Whittington  
Head of Employee Screening

The Risk Advisory Group  
3 More London Riverside  
London, SE1 2AQ, UK

T: +44 20 7578 0000

F: +44 20 7578 7855

E: [screening@riskadvisory.net](mailto:screening@riskadvisory.net)