



VERIFYING YOUR INTERNSHIP OR JOB OFFER

Don't be fooled by something too good to be true.

Searching for an internship or job is hard enough — and the last thing you need is to get tricked by a job posting that looks amazing but is just a scam. It can take you from happy and optimistic to frustrated and discouraged in no time.

The bad news? Job scams are out there. The good news? You can spot them before they get you. Here are 11 telltale signs that a job posting is a job scam:

1. You never applied

A recruiter calls you but is not registered in Handshake and says they found your resume online. "You're a perfect fit for this amazing position," they say. While you may think how lucky you are, don't be fooled. It can happen if it's an email directly from Handshake or LinkedIn, but if it's not, there's a chance this could be a scam. Do your research or ask for help from the Career Center to verify the employer is legitimate.

2. The pay is too good to be true

If you are hunting for a job, you probably have a good idea of the average salary for your job and experience level. You can also find this information on [ONET](#) or [Salary.com](#). If you find a job posting that lists that position for two or three times the typical salary, be wary. Even if a company wants to get the best, it can beat the competition by a small margin. Paying double the going rate is bad business and not likely to happen. You've heard it before — if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

3. Your research comes up empty

Trust your research. If you see a listing but can't find a good website for the company, consider it a red flag. The same goes for a recruiter; if you talk to someone about a job but can't find the recruiter on LinkedIn or a company website, consider it a warning sign.

4. Letterhead, website, and logos don't match

Look carefully at all correspondence and the company website. Branding on logos, email addresses, and listings of company personnel should all match. There should be a company phone number and email address, not from someone's personal account or cellphone. An individual may have a cellphone number listed in addition to a company number, but there should also be a company phone.

5. Poorly written job posts and correspondence

You've seen this before: You scan a job posting or receive an email, and the wording is just off. It may be overly formal and awkward, or it could be full of grammar mistakes and punctuation errors. Professional companies don't tolerate these kinds of mistakes. A job posting should be easy to read and understand, which doesn't mean there can't be a typo or two. Think about it this way — if a job posting is unprofessional and awkward, what would it be like to work for that company?

5. Vague job description

The hours are good, and the pay looks great, but what exactly would you be doing? Job descriptions should be clear. If you need help figuring out what you would be doing in a particular job based on the description, assume you don't want to know. It's likely a scam.

6. Suspicious URL

While doing your due diligence, you check out the company website that was either listed with the job posting or given to you by the recruiter. First, check out that URL — is the company name spelled correctly?

Most companies want their website URL to be short and sweet, which helps Google identify their page quickly, so a long and confusing URL may be a bad sign. You'll also want to check out the country code if there is one. If the URL is clearly from another country, weigh that against what you already know about the job posting.

7. The recruiter has a generic email

Whether your correspondence is with a recruiter from a recruiting agency or the HR person at the hiring company, you should expect they'll have a company email address. If the recruiter uses a generic email service, like Gmail or Yahoo, they're either not legit or unprofessional. In either case, you'll want to move on.

8. Asking for an interview via messaging service

With it being an increasingly digital world, remote interviews are more commonplace. However, there are still some basic guidelines that should be followed. Interviews are typically held by phone or video conferencing software, like Skype or Zoom. Using a messaging or chat service is highly unprofessional and a good way for a scammer to hide his identity.

Simply put, no legitimate company will ask you to interview for a job via a messaging service.

9. You get an immediate job offer

If you apply for a job and are offered the position almost immediately, something fishy is going on. Even a great resume only tells part of the story. Legitimate companies want to talk with you first to get to know your personality and your list of accomplishments.

10. You get asked for personal information

Timing is everything on this one. There is a point in the interview process where the employer may need to get some personal information, such as your social security number, [to conduct a background check](#).

If an employer asks you for your social security number, bank account information, or other personal information and you're still early in the interview process, it should trigger your scam alert senses. It should be clearly stated upfront why they need this information, and most often, requests for this information only come after a formal offer letter has been issued.

11. You're asked to pay for something

You've been looking for a [work-from-home position](#) and finally found one that looks amazing. The only problem is that you're asked to pay some money at the start to help fund the equipment you'll need to get set up.

Don't fall for it — this is a simple grab-the-money-and-run scam. No reputable company should ask you to pay them to get equipment for your job. It's that simple.

Need help from the Career Center, email careers@hood.edu. You can also make an appointment in Handshake, stop by the office on the 2nd floor of the Apple building, or call (301) 696-3583.

