

Employment Fraud

Students should be aware that the job and internship search may not always go smoothly, and while most opportunities are legitimate, there are just enough fraudulent jobs/employers that you must be cautious. This problem has increased with the rise of remote work opportunities, which are more difficult to verify.

Many job boards do not screen the *employers* who use them. If the *employer* is willing to pay the fee, they may post jobs. Handshake, the job board that Mount Union uses, does evaluate employers before giving them access to the database, however, sometimes fraudulent employers still make it through the vetting process. With that in mind, Mount Union does not endorse any potential employer, even those who are present in our database. While it is impossible to identify every type of fraud, there are some red flags you may look for that indicate you should proceed with more caution than normal (see below).

Sales Jobs in Disguise: There is nothing wrong with sales jobs, but if that is not your career goal, it can be frustrating to invest time applying and interviewing for a job, only to find out it is a sales opportunity. This is sometimes referred to as “bait and switch”. Keywords and phrases that indicate a job could be sales in disguise include:

Pay-for-performance

Unlimited earning potential

You’ll develop your own book of business...

Direct marketing

Our unique approach to marketing...

You’ll be trained in... (but no mention of what you’ll actually do)

Our clients are... (repeated or significant emphasis on clients rather than job duties)

Sports-minded

We will train the right people. If you are enthusiastic, motivated, leader, organized... (qualifications that are so general that everyone qualifies)

We are rapidly expanding and hiring 10 new employees ASAP...

Lots of CAPITALIZATIONS and exclamations marks!!!!

Identity Theft and Financial Theft: The key here, is to watch out for requests for personal information too soon. Usually, an employer does not need personal information until you have been hired and are filling out your new hire paperwork. Proceed with caution if:

You have never had an on-site interview or have never had an opportunity to tour the workplace or headquarters.

The recruiter has always communicated with you via their cell phone or a personal email address (gmail, yahoo). At some point, you should receive communication through a corporate land line or a corporate email address.

They ask for your social security number or bank account number. Never provide this information until your first day on the job when you are completing your payroll paperwork.

The recruiter responds to your questions, but they don’t really answer your question. If it feels like you are getting the run-around or that they are side-stepping an issue, then your instinct is probably right.

If you have any concerns about a job or an employer, ask at least 3 other people for their opinion. The staff in Career Development will be happy to review any job in question.