



Check the Background of an Employer: It's a Duty You Owe to Your Career

Many people never take a second look beyond a job opportunity, and almost never try to find out the nature of the source from where the job offer came. Even before you accept an offer you need to find out how many FTC cases are there against that particular employer. You need to be more vigilant today, especially about online job offers, because scammers and fraudsters are active in taking advantage of the economic crisis and in duping desperate jobseekers.

Regardless of whether your situation is desperate or not, the least you can do for yourself is to check the background of a potential employer before shooting off a job application or moving further. Knowing the company culture is important to find out how long you can possibly expect to stay with a particular employer, and you need to calibrate your **career plan** accordingly.

Some definitive ways to check on the background of a potential employer:

1. Keyword Checks in Online Search: If the potential employer is "X" then a search with usual keywords like "X scams," "X reviews," "X salaries," etcetera can give you an initial idea of an employer. However, initial reviews should always be taken with a pinch of salt. You can find disgruntled employees everywhere – check the ratio of people working for that company against the number of outbursts against it. Many a time you would find a few incompetent employees venting their anger against companies where thousands are working with consistence. You can also find threads that realistically and truly expose company malpractices. Do your research before applying for a job.
2. Find the company presence on the internet: Find their website and read up the About Us and Company History pages. That should give you a fair idea to work on, and something that is necessary if you are to face an interview. Check their presence and attitude on social media networks.
3. Find people who have worked for the company or working in it: Don't forget the 'real people' out there. Real social networks still carry concrete weight against social networks on the internet as companies of the new age have got strategies and agents in place to do reputation management and alter user perception about their brands. A real person whom you know physically would be a much more reliable source of information, usually.
4. Check sources like Better Business Bureau, but don't jump to conclusions: While ranks and complaints on the Better Business Bureau can be good indicators of a company's marketing practices and marketing ethics, automatic conclusions cannot be drawn about the same entity as an employer. However, it is safe to stay away from companies with a large number of consumer complaints against them if you have other alternatives.



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5. Check company reports: Company annual and quarterly reports are easy to access online, and if you are going for a high-profile job, then we don't have to tell you, you know that it is essential to thoroughly go through the company reports before you decide even to apply for the position.

The checks mentioned above are usually sufficient to expose if there is anything fishy about the employer. It's a pity that in spite of easy available resources millions of people still get duped by scammers posing as genuine employers.