

What's More Important to an Organization: Reputation or Money?

Place the Focus on Employee Background Screening

By Aniqah Bukhari

"Honesty is the best policy." There is no doubt this old saying should be followed by anyone applying for a new job. Unfortunately, there are cases in which applicants are less than truthful during the hiring process, and the boss discovers discretionary information through some other resource. Such deception is occupational fraud, and represents a valid reason for denying employment.

But what if it is an employee already on your payroll – and doesn't have the qualifications for which he was hired? To stop and think about this possibility – unqualified employees working in sensitive positions at your organization – can be alarming indeed.

To look at it another way, which is scarier: imagine that you are waiting for takeoff in an airplane operated by fake pilots with forged licenses? Either of these realities would be frightening, and unfortunately, this is not just an abstract question. Unqualified employees with forged qualifications have penetrated even the highly prestigious aviation industry. A recent, shocking case that highlights this type of fraud involved a worldwide airlines, a National Flag Carrier in Southeast Asia, that dismissed four pilots who logged thousands of air travel hours for owning forged degrees.

According to news reports, one of the dismissed pilots of that State run Airline had flown for over 25 years, and two of them had piloted special aircraft utilized by renowned individuals throughout the regime of Country's former military ruler. Chairman of the Airline and Defense Secretary of the country in question revealed that persons with fake degrees were still working in high posts in the organization. The case further hurts the reputation of that National Flag Carrier, a giant that has in recent years suffered from malfunctions on problems resulting in regular delays in flights and grounding of aircrafts, according to news reports. Further research revealed that there is no pre-employment screening program being part of hiring and recruiting while just politically based employee get in.

As the saying goes, "better safe than sorry" -- organizations need to do better employee screening, which would discourage fraudsters and foster a culture of honesty in the organization.

Certified and experienced companies committed to providing pre-employment screening exist in most locations around the world. Their services include offering, in writing, authentication of a person's history, drug checks, background checks, bankruptcy history, education degrees verification, license verification and employment history – all of which are vital to really know the person you are potentially hiring. Any individual who applies for a job, particularly a position of a sensitive nature, should be thoroughly checked before they are hired. Few felonious individuals will be willing to report transgressions from their past; it's your job to find out the things that could come back to haunt your organization later.

According to recent business trends, especially those in the IT sector, some companies hire renowned and certified verification agencies that undertake rigorous background checks on candidates. Personnel

in such verification organizations are well-trained in fraud detection by different means. These include Certified Fraud Examiners (CFEs) or those affiliated with NAPBS-type authentication organizations. This is a serious topic amongst corporate leaders, as fake certificate situations cause harm to organizations all over the world.

IT and financial institutions are the most impacted by cases involving forged credentials for new hires. Independent investigations and background checks are crucial to these and other businesses while recruiting.

When an organization invests in the proper pre-employment screening services, the benefits far outweigh the cost. Background screening not only helps an employer protect the company from potential fraud losses – it also sends a message to honest, legitimate employees that the company takes every means possible to assure the success and security of the organization. Seize the opportunity now to begin applying background screening to help your business succeed in the future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aniqa Bukhari is a Manager Business Development and Research of CRI Group (www.crigroup.com), a global supplier of investigative, forensic accounting, business due diligence and employee background screening services for some of the world's leading business organizations. You can reach her at abukhari@CRIGroup.com