

LIARS INDEX® NEWS

Lyin' King Selected for 2010. Liars Index® Remains Elevated

The Liars Index®, which tracks the changes in the percentage of education misrepresentations among executives, again skewed high in the second half of 2010, although retreating to 17.46%, from the 21.43% rate of mid-2010. The two-year running average remains high, at 17.71%, on a par both with recent trends and the high recessionary levels of ten years ago.

We maintain our concern that employers too often overlook checking this easily verified credential. Candidates walk a tightrope, risking being dropped from further consideration because they have puffed their majors, claimed unearned degrees, or altered dates. Some will even claim degrees from schools that they had never attended. Employers who skip this check risk learning a painful lesson when they belatedly retrace their selection steps, often provoked by a distressing on-the-job issue.

The wise employer will verify education claims at the outset of the screening process... and the wise candidate will play it straight. Discovery of false education claims can cause a potential employer to take a pass on an otherwise attractive prospect. Candidates often fail to realize that the education level of a candidate is not as key a hiring criterion as are other factors, yet clearly, a falsified academic record can be enough reason to move on to other candidates.

The "Lyin' King" for 2010, chosen for the most outrageous puffery among all of those liars surfaced, is a fellow who claimed a degree in Political Science from a college that had no record of his ever having enrolled there. Along with his claims of various Information Technology Certifications, this year's awardee reports a history as a consultant contracting with various U.S. Federal agencies.

Over the years we have noted a higher incidence of false education claims among resumes of IT versus other professionals. Their technical skills can bring them attractive offers that tempt good IT talents to suspend their college studies to accept a bird in the hand position. Later on, after failing to resume their studies, these skilled people are tempted to grant themselves a degree, inventing "life credits" sufficient in their own minds to poach an unearned degree to enhance their resumes. Or perhaps, a Math major may decide that a self-granted Business degree could be claimed because of work experience. An interested employer's discovery of this false inflation of credentials deflates the candidacy of otherwise appealing prospects, closing out their opportunities.

Here is our latest data:

Data Point	1st Half 2007	2nd Half 2007	1st Half 2008	2nd Half 2008	1st Half 2009	2nd Half 2009	1st Half 2010	2nd Half 2010
Semi-annual Percentage	15.15%	10.34%	15.91%	11.43%	15.87%	16.07%	21.43%	17.46%
Prior Two Year Average	14.17%	13.85%	14.25%	13.21%	13.39%	14.82%	16.20%	17.71%

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