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RESUME

To Tell the Truth

Recruiters and resume experts draw a firm line between putting your best foot forward and lying on your resume.

By Lisa Vaas

THE WOMAN WAS MOUSY AND SMALL — just 5 feet tall and 105 pounds. She wanted to be hired full time at the Ohio-based manufacturing facility where she was temping, and asked what she had to do to make that happen.

Well, you have to fill out an application and go through an interview, and then we'll do a

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Truth in Advertising

By Matthew Rothenberg, Editor-in-Chief, TheLadders.com

YOUR RESUME IS AN ADVERTISEMENT — probably the most important ad you'll ever take out, considering the product you're selling is your own career.

And like any other ad, there's a line between selling and misrepresenting yourself. On the one hand, you want to strengthen your personal brand. On the other, stretching the truth in your resume is a dangerous game that will probably catch up with you.

Companies are screening resumes more closely than ever before, and the spots where job seekers are most likely to

lie — such as work history, job titles and education — are also the areas employers are most attuned to look for falsehoods. Getting caught in a lie won't just invalidate that data point; it will probably raise enough questions about your character to exclude you from consideration.

So where's that line between a hard sell and false advertising? In this package for TheLadders, reporter Lisa Vaas talks to resume writers and HR pros about common resume lies, how smart companies uncover them, and how job seekers can win that next position fair and square with a resume that embodies truth in advertising. ■

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What did you think of this package? Got a story of your own to tell? Have ideas for future coverage? Please write Editor-in-Chief Matthew Rothenberg at matthewr@theladders.com.

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background check, the vice president of human resources, Matthew Rosen, told her.

I'll have a tough time with the background check, said the woman.

That was an understatement. The background check revealed a criminal record and hard time in a penitentiary. When Rosen asked the woman about it, she said her husband had beaten her, repeatedly. So she shot him — a crime for which she spent seven years behind bars.

Rosen's jaw hit the floor. And yet, Rosen recommended hiring her.

It "turned out beautifully," Rosen said. The woman is still working at the plant today. She's one of the organization's best workers, grateful just to have been given a chance.

It's an extreme case. Many people have issues they'd rather sweep under the carpet than reveal on a resume —

from work-history gaps to degrees not received to an age that's either too ripe or too raw to admit. But all resume is-

“Who'll hire someone who's lied to them? I'm going to hire someone who did something and went to penitentiary. I'll never hire someone who's lied to me.”

—Matthew Rosen, Schiller International University

issues have one thing in common: Getting caught in a lie about them can obliterate your chances of getting hired.

“It's going to be discovered. If it gets discovered, or when, there will be no chance you'll get that job,” said Rosen, who is now human resources director for Schiller International University in Largo, Fla. “You have a better chance explaining it — much better. If they run a background check, then it will get discovered, and then you've lied to these people. Who'll hire someone who's lied to them? I'm going to hire someone who did something and went to a penitentiary. I'll never hire someone who's lied to me.”

But while it's easy to preach truthfulness, resumes are marketing documents that present candidates in the best light. It begs the question: What can you successfully gloss over, and how do you do it without turning yourself into a liar? When is it OK to polish, and when does an embellishment become a forgery?

In this package, TheLadders draws the line. Certified professional resume writ-

Lying on Your Resume

By Lisa Vaas

THINKING OF PADDING YOUR RESUME to increase your chance of landing a job in this weak economy?

Think again. History is littered with names such as these: George O'Leary, former football coach for Notre Dame, **fired in 2001 after only five days on the job** for lying on his resume about a master's degree he never earned and an exaggerated position on the University of New Hampshire football team. Sandra Baldwin, former president of the United States Olympic Committee, who **resigned in 2002** when a reporter revealed she never earned the doctoral degree she claimed on her resume.

Many job seekers are tempted to stretch the truth on their resumes, claiming degrees that they never completed, job responsibilities that are questionable and additional years of tenure they pull from thin air.

A June **survey of business owners** by online payroll provider **Sure Payroll** shows just how common the practice is:

- 21 percent of respondents reported hiring dishonest employees.
- 47 percent of respondents say the hiring mistake was caused by a job seeker who lied in an interview.

ers, job seekers, corporate recruiters and career coaches speak out to delineate the difference between an appropriate omission and a deliberate disguise. They break down the resume into sections and define what shows what and how you can tweak your resume to make it shine and still stay within the bounds of honesty. The result is a clear topography of this slippery slope for all those job seekers who've found themselves questioning the distinction between exaggeration and fabrication.

Employment and education history dates

BOTTOM LINE:

- It is acceptable to omit graduation dates, but it can lead recruiters to think you are trying to mask your age.
 - Every position must include the year, but not the month.
-

It's a bad idea to fudge dates, given how easy it is to check dates of employment and graduation.

But with age discrimination at both ends of the experience spectrum, there's sound justification for strategically dealing with dates — in particular, dates of college graduation. “For some jobs, like those of top executives, employers won't hire (somebody) in his early 30s,” said Steve Burdan, a certified professional resume writer who works with TheLadders. “They're looking for (an applicant) in his 40s or early 50s.”

Similarly, applicants in their 50s can face prejudice concerning older workers and their presumed inflexibility regarding salary, learning new technology or being managed by a younger person.

When to date yourself

Burdan himself was once a recruiter and admits that checking on college dates is the first thing he'd do when reviewing an application. “I'd take the hard resume copy and go immediately to the

college (dates) to figure out how old they are,” he said.

Now that he's a resume writer, Burdan handles resume dates differently depending on where a job seeker is in her career path. If a job seeker has had only three jobs in her career and received a degree in 1988, Burdan will include the college dates to signal how old the subject is. If the subject is in his early 60s or 70s, Burdan excludes college dates completely.

The point isn't to lie, Burdan said; the point is to “throw (employers) off the trail as long as possible.” An employer will eventually find out a candidate's age. But the longer it takes for that to happen, the less time there is for that employer to rule somebody out due to preconceptions about their age, and the more time there is for a candidate to get into an interview and to build a relationship with her interviewers.

But be forewarned: Recruiters know what you're up to when you're cagey with dates, and leaving them off can set

- 79 percent said they had hired employees with mismatched skill sets or who displayed underperformance on the job, despite the claims made on their resume.

For the hiring company, the mistake can be expensive: Forty-eight percent of business owners told Sure Payroll those bad hires cost them more than \$1,000, and 9 percent said losses exceeded \$10,000.

For a job seeker, a deceitful or exaggerated resume can devastate his chances of getting hired or staying hired, since every detail on a resume can (and likely will) be verified.

Prepare to be investigated

How likely is it that your resume, job application and credentials will be reviewed for inaccuracies? Nearly 100 percent, according to the Society for Human Resource Management. Ninety-six percent of human resources professionals reported that their organizations conduct some form of background check on every employee, according to **SHRM's 2004 Reference and Background Checking survey**.

For some candidates, it doesn't take much more than a Google search on the applicant's name to find out the truth, said Jacqueline Hudson, a senior account executive at executive-

search firm **Renasant Group LLC** of Fair Haven, N.J.

“You put somebody's name in and Google it, and it pulls up a lot of relevant information, both good and bad,” she said. “Articles published, what professional groups they're in and articles written about their (employers).”

Beyond that, most recruiters check references at every company you list to verify your duties, tenure, salary, even your W2, she said.

Their findings include the most damning documentation, including police reports, articles about misconduct and more. All that information is

“Dates show consistency and what your work history pattern is. Nobody wants to hire somebody who will turn around and work for someone else in less than a year.”

—Jacqueline Hudson
Renascent Group

off alarms. “Dates (are) something very critical to have on your resume,” said Jacqueline Hudson, a senior account executive for the Renascent Group LLC, an executive search firm. “I totally understand age discrimination, but (if dates aren’t included) automatically (a recruiter will think), ‘What are they hiding? Are they too junior or are they too senior?’”

Dates of employment

While leaving off education dates clearly has its pluses and minuses, leaving off work history dates is never a good idea. Recruiters like to see how long a candidate stayed with an employer and, specifically, how many years of experience they have in a given role. “If they list five jobs with no dates, we don’t know if they spent 25 years at one job and one with another,” Hudson said. “(Dates) show consistency and what your (work history) pattern is. Nobody wants to hire somebody who will turn around and work for someone else in less than a year.”

For those worried about a short tenure at a job, contemporary wisdom dictates eliminating months and including only years for job history dates.

Work history

BOTTOM LINE:

- It is acceptable to omit work experience, or limit details, after 10 to 12 years.
- Don’t cover gaps by extending your tenure at previous positions.
- Fill in gaps with consulting and volunteer positions or list the reasons for the unemployment (e.g. a sabbatical, family leave or maternity leave).

If you began your professional career in 1974, are you required to fill several pages with jobs, promotions and duties dating back 35 years?

No. Convention in the resume industry — which is driven largely by the expectations of recruiters and hiring managers — dictates that candidates include the past 10 to 12 years of work history on their resumes.

Job seekers typically feel compelled to list “every single thing they’ve done since they started their professional careers,” said Stephen Van Vreede, a certified professional resume writer who works with TheLadders

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shared with the recruiters’ client: the hiring manager.

“It’s difficult in these days for a job seeker to hide that information,” Hudson said. “Something like that will come up in the end.”

If a candidate has been interviewed and a falsification is uncovered, it “wastes everybody’s time,” she said, given that 99 percent of the time “the client won’t start over” with the fibbing candidate.

Stretching the truth

More often than not, a dishonest resume is not an outright lie but a truth stretched too far, Hudson said.

Besides exaggerating salary, many candidates will exaggerate their experience, responsibilities and duties. For example, candidates who want to get into marketing but who have experience in sales will often puff up their resume to make it appear that they have much more marketing experience than they actually do, Hudson said. Stretching the truth in this way isn’t necessarily fraudulent, but it’s a waste of time, she said. HR pros and recruiters will get to the truth at some point, and you will likely be disqualified from consideration for the job.

“It’s really critical to be upfront and honest with the recruiter always,” she

said. “They’re the person representing you to a client. If they don’t have your full information, they can’t represent you to their best ability.”

Before they reach the point where they’re stretching the truth, Hudson recommends job seekers focus carefully on the positions for which they apply, making sure a given job is a good fit all the way around, not just because it’s at the director level, for example.

If it’s a good fit, as it should be, there’s just no reason to stretch the truth, she said: Your real qualifications will speak for themselves. ■

Caught Lying

Recruiters and hiring professionals share some of the whoppers and doozies job seekers have tried to sneak into resumes over the years.

By Lisa Vaas

48-hour promotion



I once got two resumes a couple of days apart from the same candidate — (who was) applying for different jobs. The dates of employment and some of the areas of responsibility were changed in the second resume. And she must have had a promotion in the past 48 hours because the second resume showed a new manager title at her current job!

—David Lewis, SPHR, Regional Manager, Express Employment Professionals

Me too



I not only interviewed countless people who lied on their resumes — I got the job because I'd lied on my resume... LOL ... and it wasn't the only time. Had I been honest about both my age and experience (or lack thereof, at the time), then I would never have been considered, never mind hired, for positions I knew I'd do well in and did.

—Didi Miesen, Former Recruiter, Snelling & Snelling (currently Snelling Staffing Services)

Habla Espanol?



Specific examples I have witnessed include...stretching a one-day volunteer activity into a semester's worth of skill building and community involvement, (and) inflating language skills. I have started out interviews speaking in Spanish when the resume claims fluency only to discover that the individual never got beyond the basics and I lost them at "Hola."

—Christine Bolzan, CEO, Graduate Career Coaching, and former VP in charge of Global Emerging Markets hiring for JP Morgan

10-credits shy

It was one of our large investment-banking clients who sent us a candidate for our outplacement program. The person in question was a technology professional and a foreign national. Human resources discovered, quite by accident, that the employee had not received his bachelor's degree from a university, as he had listed on his resume. The truth was, he was 10 credits short of having earned his degree.

The company had a policy that if an employee had lied on his resume, the person had to be released. Everyone at the company was heartbroken, as this was a generally beloved employee, but they had to terminate his employment, according to the letter of the law.

—Sally Haver, Senior Vice President, Business Development, The Ayers Group/Career Partners International

Sharing the credit

When I worked in Japan I reviewed the resume of one of our teachers who was teaching English at the company I worked at. He said that he went to Poole University (in the U.K.). Unfortunately, as I am English, I knew that there might be a Poole Community College but there was not a university. But he was a nice guy and a good teacher so I let it slip by!



I worked for a manufacturing company that was moving out of state so I helped a number of managers and supervisors polish their resumes. What was funny was that three people all had exactly the same accomplishment about designing and bringing a new product into production. It wasn't possible that they all led this project but that's what their resumes said!

—David Couper, Transitions Coach
<http://www.davidcoupercoach.com>

Fake references

(Some candidates) substitute the name of a company friend for that of their immediate superior. Call to check the reference and the friend tells you the candidate is a cross between Jack Welch and Mother Teresa. That's when the fun begins, especially if the candidate wasn't smart enough to send the friend a copy of the resume. The friend is willing to vouch for anything but they can never be completely sure of the fabricated details.

"So you can verify the candidate made \$250,000 their last full year there?" I'll ask, looking at the line on the resume that claims he made \$150,000.

"It was right around there," the friend says, thinking he's being cagey. "Maybe a few dollars more, a few dollars less, but in that ballpark."

I make up a couple more "facts" the friend is happy to swear to, and then move on to the next candidate.

—Barry Maher, Business Speaker,
Barry Maher & Associates

No class

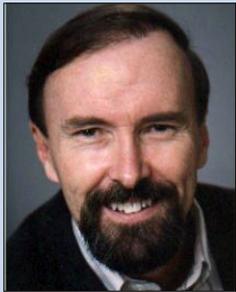
I've had three placements in the past year and a half fall off due to candidates exaggerating their educational backgrounds. In all three placements the candidates indicated they had earned a master's degree when they had not completed the program.

In one placement the candidate had earned a master's certificate from a university in Canada and was continuing on with the master's program, but his resume simply said "M.S. in Software Engineering." The hiring manager revoked the offer for demonstration of his exercising poor judgment. He was of Chinese origin so it might have been due to a language barrier.

Another candidate, who has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, received an offer from MITRE that was revoked. He indicated on his resume that he had earned a bachelor's degree and two master's degrees, but he was four credits shy of earning the second master's degree. The hiring manager said this demonstrated a lack of integrity and education is very important to a research institution like MITRE.

Another candidate wrote on his resume that he earned a "B.S. in Electrical Engineering" at a university some 30 years ago, but didn't mention he was only enrolled and didn't complete it. Again the offer was revoked as a demonstration of lack of integrity.

—Marsh Sutherland, President,
Walden Recruiting ■



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But, Van Vreede added, most recruiters and hiring managers don't care to go back that far, and exhaustive detail is unnecessary.

Use discretion to cull work history beyond the 12-year mark. If a job held more than 12 years ago seems relevant to the position you're applying for, it's acceptable to include the employer, job title and dates of employment without a full job description. Just be prepared to explain why this experience is relevant.

Gaps in your resume

Lying by omission occurs in the work-history section when candidates exclude or try to hide employment gaps. Hiring professionals are trained to spot such gaps or to weed them out in background checks, and they'll typically assume that a candidate is trying to hide something if they find an unexplained gap.

Gaps can result for myriad legitimate reasons: Examples include a retirement that was cut short due to a nose-diving 401K plan; childbirth or family issues; a sabbatical; or a return to school to pursue a degree.

Candidates often write what's known as a "functional" resume to try to cover up such gaps. In a functional resume, company names and job accomplishments are provided without dates.

Don't do it. When looking at a functional resume, hiring professionals can't tell when or where a given accomplishment happened, and it will signal to most hiring managers that a job seeker is trying to hide something.

"I think that's a big mistake," Van Vreede said. "Right off the bat, you're making people worry about you. And if worried enough, they'll leave you out of consideration."

Fill in the gap

Be forthright by documenting all work-history gaps just as you would a job, said several certified professional resume writers. For example, if you took a sabbatical from 2001 to 2003, include that information on your resume, with "sabbatical" in all capital and/or bold letters, just as if it were a company name.

That way, (the gap is) right up front, addressed and filled in for the hiring manager who's just looking at the dates," Van Vreede said. "It gets you through the human resources screen, but you won't be accused of trying to hide anything. And in today's environment, a lot of people have gaps on their resumes."

Case in point: Schiller International University's Rosen reviewed a resume in mid-July that included a gap in employment, but the applicant had been clear that the gap was due to time spent as a stay-at-home mother. "Well, that's fine," Rosen said. "That was explained. But the other point is, especially these days, losing a job is not a black eye anymore. At one point, if you got laid off, people thought there was something wrong with you. Nowadays if you lose your job, it's no big deal."

Explain the gap

Rosen is also understanding of work histories that are somewhat inconsistent, as long as the inconsistencies are explainable. He talked to another job seeker in mid-July who had been at one job for a long time, followed by short tenures at two companies — a potential red flag from a recruiter's perspective. The candidate explained that he had moved on from the long-term position to a new one, but left because of a disagreement with a supervisor. He had then moved into a position in the mortgage industry, but lost his job in the early days of the recession. "That's OK," Rosen said.

"They were at one job for 18, 20 years — that's OK. That's a reasonable explanation. It really is."

Certified professional resume writers Van Vreede and Burdan recommend that job seekers fill in gaps on their resumes resulting from layoffs with any consulting, freelance or contract work completed. Include pro bono or volunteer work, as well.

For those who have done nothing since losing a job, putting nothing down can work if there have been only a few months of downtime. If you've done nothing for more than six months, you're getting to the point where people will start to worry. However, unemployment remains common enough in this economy that it should not automatically disqualify a job seeker.

“At one point, if you got laid off, people thought there was something wrong with you. Nowadays if you lose your job, it's no big deal.”

—Matthew Rosen

Job titles

BOTTOM LINE:

- Insert the official title(s) used by your previous employer(s) on your resume.

When it comes to job titles, there is no way around the truth. Certified professional resume writers say you must always be honest because titles are easily verified by reference and background checks.

By default, you should provide the title referred to by the employer,” said Burdan. “Companies like the Big Five, they’ll have titles like ‘senior auditor.’ You have to go along with that,” he said, even if that title has an unclear meaning out of context. “That’s what the industry knows and the company uses. It’s awkward, but you’ve got to use it.”

It is also easily verified by reference and background checks.

Exceptions to the rule

But there is some wiggle room, said several certified professional resume writers.

An example of an acceptable title change would be for an applicant whose past job was as both a sales representative and a manager. If that job seeker decides he wants to do only sales and would rather not manage anymore, it’s permissible to include only the sales experience on his resume, said Mary Schumacher, a certified professional resume writer who works with TheLadders.

Job seekers who were business owners present a particular problem for Burdan. Too often they include inflated titles, such as president and CEO, he said. He advises against those titles, even if that’s what the individual’s business card said. Instead, he advises using a title such as “principal.”

The rationale boils down to perception: There’s a big difference between being the president of a one-person company and being the president of General Electric, and, in most cases, it’s wise to “dial it back” to avoid being seen as exaggerating your role, he said.

Burdan also suggests translating or converting titles of candidates who have military or government experience, given that titles such as “colonel,” “major” or “agent in charge” don’t have clear meaning within the business community.

Education

BOTTOM LINE:

- Never claim a degree or certificate you do not possess.
- Never falsify or round up a GPA.

Accu-Screen, a company that specializes in employment background checks, has found during the course of tracking 15 years worth of screens that some 16 percent of academic degrees and institutions listed on resumes are falsified. Job seekers also falsify 15 percent of technical skills and certifications, Accu-Screen has found.

Many job candidates who have gone to college but haven’t graduated lie by saying that they’ve completed a degree. Resume writers also often find such candidates using qualifying language such as “only four credits left to get a Bachelor of Science degree.”

Both tactics are “huge mistakes,” said Van Vreede. “Any reasonable person will look at the candidate and say, ‘Are you stupid? Why didn’t you go back and finish your degree? Go back and take correspondence courses online; I did it and got a degree. What are you waiting for?’” he said.

More to the point, language tricks send up red flags, giving the impression that a job seeker is trying to be sneaky. A better approach than lying or manipulating language is to say that you attended a program or did coursework at a given institution.

Here’s another technique that resume writer Burdan uses: For those who have college degrees, he labels the appropriate section “Education.” For those who lack degrees, he bundles their education up in a section he labels “Professional Training.”

In a Professional Training section, Burdan will state, for example, that a subject has completed three years of a Bachelor of Science in finance program at the University of Georgia.

By labeling it “Professional Training,” it appears less like an aborted degree and more like continuing education. After all, many people churn through a “boatload” of seminars and workshops above and beyond their formal education, Burdan noted.

“I won’t hide it, but I’ll downplay it,” he said. “For somebody not to have a college degree is rarer today,” and that makes it best to draw attention away from the hole, Burdan said.

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When it comes to job titles, there is no way around the truth.

Top 7 Resume Lies

The most common places on the resume where honesty slips off the page.

By Lisa Vaas

What are the most common tall tales Americans tell on their resumes? According to Accu-Screen Inc., a Tampa, Fla., company that specializes in background screening of employment applicants, the most common resume lies are exaggerations and inflated numbers including dates of employment, salary and fictitious job titles. Bogus degrees and imaginary certifications are less commons, but frequent enough, the company reports.

The company is an expert at how and how often job seekers lie, having tracked the findings of extensive background checks since its 1994 inception. Accu-Screen's reference checks reveal 8 percent of accomplishments listed in resume job descriptions to be, at best, exaggerations, and 18 percent of resumes include fake companies or lie about companies no longer in business. ■

• **“Ghost” company (self-owned business)**
18 percent of past employers and businesses listed on resumes are fake. Job seekers may also use this tactic to cover up employment gaps.

Where they'll find the truth:
Legitimate businesses can be verified by business licenses or DBA (doing business as) filings. Background checks will also uncover criminal records.

• **Inflated salary**
Confidentiality issues often prevent employers from divulging salary information. Sneaky job applicants can and do use this to inflate their salaries.

Where they'll find the truth:
A thorough reference check.

• **Job title**
Resumes magically give promotions more often than do employers. A fudged job title often goes hand-in-hand with an inflated salary on job applications.

Where they'll find the truth:
A thorough reference check.

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Annual Salary: \$12 million

- Sales Director and Founder for the nation's number one latex manufacturing company.
- Imported both long matches and chips (potato and corn) and primarily exported distributors.
- Designed the addition to the Guggenheim as well as several railroads.
- Licensed Architect

Previous professional positions: Representative for Kruger Industrial Smoothing, Assistant to the traveling Secretary for the New York Yankees, candidate for Pensky Company, author of "Venetian Blinds" and Marine Biologist. Details available on request .

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Bachelor of Science in Architecture and Design
Queens College, Queens, N.Y.

• **Dates of employment**
It's understandable to be a little fuzzy on dates, but when years of tenure creep in to a job description, an applicant is likely hiding employment gaps.

Where they'll find the truth:
A thorough reference check.

• **Professional license (MD, RN, CPA, et al.)**
Dishonest job applicants hitch unearned titles to their names. This is an especially egregious lie, given that employers are legally liable and can suffer serious financial penalties.

Where they'll find the truth:
Background screening includes verifying licenses with accrediting agencies.

• **Education (e.g., bogus degrees)**
16 percent of academic degrees and institutions listed on resumes are bogus. Job seekers also falsify 15 percent of technical skills and certifications.

Where they'll find the truth:
Background screening includes verifying educational claims with universities and other training facilities.

• **Criminal records**
A criminal record rarely creeps into a resume. It is more common for a candidate to omit or disguise jobs or years of their career associated with a criminal charge.

Where they'll find the truth:
A criminal background check.

Chip Buchanan/TheLadders.com

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Certifications

Technical certifications represent a special case.

One field wherein which it is common to find faked certifications is the technology industry. Many IT job candidates will load their resumes with certificate lists or even paste in graphics that only certificate holders have the right to use — such as is the case with the MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer) credential — thinking they won't be checked.

But faking certifications, professional accreditations, trade memberships or professional licenses is a cardinal sin, said several certified professional resume writers.

It's very easy to check with the organizations that award the titles, and the hiring companies often face liability for hiring someone who faked an accreditation.

GPA

Another education-related lie to avoid: fudging your grade point average. Christine Bolzan, former vice president in charge of Global Emerging Markets hiring for JP Morgan and current CEO of **Graduate Career Coaching**, said that job seekers often exaggerate GPAs but that even the slightest tweak

will raise a red flag. "In today's job market, you can't create any type of question about your candidacy," she said.

"(Employers) want highly ethical individuals, and hiring companies have their pick. You might say you have a 3.8 GPA and it comes back as a 3.78 GPA. That will raise the red flag. The candidate will say, 'I was just rounding up,' but with the job market as competitive as it is now, there's no room for rounding up."

BOTTOM LINE:

- If you are caught lying it is too hard to keep lies covered, and, once caught, your chances of being hired are all but obliterated.
- The Internet and background checks make it hard to cover up a lie.
- Even exaggerations can hurt you in a tough employment market.

The bottom line is that there is no stepping over the line that separates advertising yourself and lying on your resume.

Your chances of being hired if you are perceived to be a liar are extremely low. And, with the Internet, rest assured: There isn't much that can remain hidden for long. ■

“Employers want highly ethical individuals, and hiring companies have their pick.”

—Christine Bolzan,
Graduate Career
Coaching

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Lisa Vaas is a freelance writer who covers software technology for several publications. She has written about database and security technology since 1995. Lisa is based in Boston. To contact Lisa please refer to her Web site, <http://www.lisavaas.com>.

Career Advice from TheLadders

- Do Your Own Laundry
- The Anatomy of a Background Check
- When Background Checks Make for Tough Interview Questions
- Employment Law and Your Rights