

SCAM?

Use these red flags and tips as a guide.

And if you ever have a concern... CES can help you evaluate job opportunities, resources, and hiring practices.

KEY POINTS

Job seekers have to be savvy consumers of the job market to protect both their private information and their personal safety.

AN EMPLOYER CONTACTS YOU OUT OF THE BLUE

Stranger Danger: If the employer contacts you via email, LinkedIn, or Handshake* and this person is unknown to you, it's wise to be cautious – even if they claim to be a Puget Sound grad. Before responding, research the organization and the individual.

Is the organization online? It's not a guarantee that they are scam-free. Scammers may pretend to represent real companies – to appear to be legitimate. Dig deeper.

Does their web content sound authentic? Or is it full of buzz words and misleading jargon? Research when the site website was launched. If it was created during in the past year, be on guard.

If the organization seems legit but something still feels off, double-check that the online job posting you were referred to actually appears on the organization's career opportunities web page. Scammers may pretend to work for a real organization but post fake jobs on other job search platforms.

The process seems too easy... No interview? Short timeframe? Don't let flattery mislead you, especially if you know you don't meet the position's qualifications. Take your time to research the situation.



Note: If your Handshake profile visibility is set to "Employers" or "Community" recruiters can reach out to you. ~Handshake encourages employers to connect with students. That's part of the point of Handshake — to facilitate connections.

Handshake's vetting process is robust, and outreach through the platform is likely legitimate. However, it's still possible for scammers to create fake accounts, so use your best judgment.

Questions or concerns? Reach out to CES.

YOU'RE ASKED TO PROVIDE PRIVATE INFO BEFORE YOU'RE HIRED

As a general rule: Don't ever share your social security number, bank account, credit card information, or any other personally-identifying information when first interacting with a potential employer. (Some employers ask for a social security number on an application form. You may choose to leave that line blank and provide it only after an offer of employment is extended.)

Exceptions to the rule:

- **Once hired...** You'll be required to complete federal documents for the purposes of taxes and to confirm your eligibility to work in the U.S. (W-4 and I-9). These documents legitimately ask for social security numbers as proof of identity.
- **Once employed...** You will likely be asked to receive your paycheck through a payroll direct deposit. To set up direct deposit, you will need to provide your employer with your bank account information.

YOU'RE ASKED TO PAY FOR SERVICES

Be wary of organizations that attempt to solicit funds from you, including (but not limited to) asking you to pay up-front fees to:

- **Use their recruiting services**
- **Access job listings**
- **Pay for a background check**

Legitimate hiring agencies and executive recruiters (a.k.a. head-hunters) typically charge their clients (the employer – not you) when they find a candidate to fill an employer's available position.

🚩 EMPLOYER INFO DOESN'T ADD UP

Does the email address connect to an organization?

Be wary if they use Gmail or another personal account.

Does the email domain match the org's website?

Scammers may create nearly identical addresses.

info@pugetsound.edu vs. **info@pugtsound.edu**

Are their claims vague?

"We work with major companies" or "We have thousands of jobs" without data to substantiate those claims may indicate a scam.

How do their communications read?

Poor grammar and sentence structure, spelling errors, and unprofessional or too-casual language may indicate a scam.

Does the organization have a physical location?

If they claim to have a physical location but only list a P.O. Box, dig deeper.

Does the physical address match across platforms?

Check their website and social media accounts to make sure the address is consistent. Map the address to check its validity.

Does the employer operate remotely?

Try to confirm their contact information. Run a reverse look-up on the phone number in whitepages.com.

Is the person who contacted you on LinkedIn?

If not, this does not confirm malicious intentions. And. Most recruiters use LinkedIn, where they are attached to the organization that they represent.

Is the employer legit?

- Search for the employer + "complaints" or "scam"
- Check the Better Business Bureau (bbb.org)

🚩 YOUR INTUITION TELLS YOU THAT SOMETHING IS AMISS

Legitimate recruiters (or others offering to help connect students with opportunities, even if their LinkedIn profile appears to indicate that they graduated from Puget Sound), will not make a candidate feel uncomfortable in any way. They will not:

- Arrange interviews in locations other than a known business (i.e. you're invited to interview at a hotel)
- Invite you to meet outside of typical business hours (i.e. you're asked to interview at 8 p.m.)
- Ask you personal questions that are irrelevant (such as your dating history, or whether you're single), or broach topics that are **illegal to inquire about in an interview situation**: gender; marital or family status; citizenship, nationality, or language; age; religion.

Trust your instincts!

🚩 YOU'RE ASKED TO WIRE MONEY

Money-wiring scammers ask you to deposit funds into your account and then wire money back to them, minus a small fee for your payment.

These scammers can be difficult to distinguish at the outset, often taking over the identity of a legitimate business. Sometimes the only clue that you're dealing with a scam artist is when they make the request.

And it's not just a matter of being duped – these scams can have long-term effects on *your* credit rating.

What to do if you come across this scam:

- **If you receive a check, DO NOT CASH IT.** Actual employers will NEVER ask you to cash a check and send them money. This request is always a scam.
- **Alert your bank immediately** if you've already deposited the check in your account.
- **Report the scam.** Let CES know if you encounter a scam employer that is using this tactic. But also be aware that this kind of scam exists in many kinds of interactions, like selling items online.

LEARN MORE & GET HELP

Federal Trade Commission (ftc.gov): Search for "job scams" to access a wide variety of resources, including:

- Job-Hunting/Job Scams
- Scam Alerts
- Pyramid Schemes

Identity Theft Resource Center (idtheftcenter.org):

This BBB-accredited charity offers advisors who are trained to provide one-to-one help for all types of identity theft.

Puget Sound Technology Services Guide to Phishing Scams (b.link/TechServicesScamGuide)

TechGenix (techgenix.com) offers "*LinkedIn Scams: How to Protect Yourself Against Them*"

ENCOUNTER A SCAM?

Report it on the platform (and to CES)!

- Report LinkedIn issues at LinkedIn.com/help. Search for "Recognize and Report Scams"
- Flag an organization for review at Support.JoinHandshake.com/HC

If you ever have questions or concerns about an employer, don't hesitate to reach out and consult with CES Career Advisors!

THE *Anatomy* OF AN JOB SEARCH SCAM

I am sharing a Part-Time job opportunity with a weekly pay of \$500.00 from World Health Organization (WHO).
Read the attached document for further information about the employment. If interested, follow the steps in the document and contact Ms. Dianne Arnold with your personal email address (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.), for more details on the employment.
Take note; this is strictly a work-from-home position.
Sincerely,
Daniel Rios
HR Manager

This is a scam from August 2022. Students who responded were later asked to wire funds after receiving what *appeared* to be an authentic check.

Legitimate organizations don't send unsolicited emails about job opportunities. (Organizations may use Handshake to facilitate connections. *Handshake@notifications.joinhandshake.com* should **not** trigger a red flag for you. That's likely a legitimate contact.)

Requests to communicate via a non-university email is odd. This may be an attempt to sidestep campus email security measures.

The pay seems excessive.

"Dear student" sounds like a mass marketing appeal.

The phrasing is awkward and there are obvious spelling/grammatical errors.
The excessive use of exclamation points would be unusual for a professional recruiter.

The heightened level of urgency is not typical for a legitimate employer.

Dear Student,

*Are you seek flexible hours for a remote part time job ?
Are you self-motivated and able to work from home or school?
Here is amazing virtual job position that pays over 500 weeklies!!!
APPLY NOW to read about this great opportunity and how to Apply.
Job seekers should not hesitate to apply for this job, We have students who are working already; more workers are needed urgently.*

Despite the weird formatting and poor use of punctuation, this offer sounds vaguely legit. But in a 3-week span, CES received 5 nearly identical messages, each with a different company name and with an oddly generic email address that didn't match the company url – which may be a real company that the scammer is pretending to represent.

Edtengineers.com | Part Time Job Posting | Job Description.

We are seeking a dynamic Office/Personal Assistant for part-time work, up to 20 hours per week/\$400 weekly Duties include, but aren't limited to: Handling Accounts Payable/Receivables Purchasing products Coordinating product shipping and Answering phones Receiving mail Ordering office supplies Having an understanding of QuickBooks Pro is a plus, but is not necessary Running errands is necessary within this role - including picking up samples, making small deliveries/returns. Interested applicant should reply with resume to (Brantleekase@engineer.com)
You will be working pretty independently most days, so this is a super important quality to have Task-Oriented, with the ability to initiate the follow-through for task completion Highly Organized and Detail Oriented - The ability to organize and prioritize workflow accordingly.

Thank you
Brantlee kase .

Does the tone of a message strike you as odd? **Listen to your instincts.** Don't respond to the message or click on any links.

Unsure about the legitimacy of a message? Contact CES or Puget Sound's Technology Service Desk.