

How to spot candidate red flags

Know what to look for
and what to avoid



As a talent professional, you want to narrow in on your top candidates as fast as you can. In this guide, we present methods to help you better identify them from day one, including tips for reviewing resumes and invaluable ways you can identify candidates you'll want to engage.

Let's start with the basics:

- 1 What to look for when reviewing resumes and LinkedIn profiles
- 2 Know what high-performing candidates have in common
- 3 Avoid candidates with potential red flags



What to look for in a candidate

1

Culture fit

Compare the company size and culture of a candidate's previous companies with your own. Similarities or disparities may give an indication of whether they'll be a good fit.

2

Loyalty

Pay attention to how long a candidate has stayed in past jobs. What are the circumstances or industry norms? These could give you some insight into their loyalties.

3

Flexibility

Look for details that show a candidate's willingness to take on diverse or increasing responsibilities.

4

Focus

Look at their career progression. Does it make their career goals clear – or have there been multiple shifts? This can give you an idea of their level of focus.

5

Growth

Is there evidence showing a career plateau? Or have they been steadily rising in the ranks? These could demonstrate either a lack or abundance of ambition.



Signs of a high-performing candidate



Stats and results

Does a candidate include facts or numbers referencing accomplishments like growth percentages or direct bookings? This may indicate an analytical and results-focused candidate.



Recommendations

The inclusion of testimonials may share more about a candidate's performance and personality. Look for recommendations from former employers or industry peers.



A complete profile

Is their LinkedIn profile complete? This may demonstrate a detail-oriented and serious job seeker.



Group and community involvement

Active participation in LinkedIn Groups or volunteer organizations alludes to greater interests and solid connections with certain industries and their community.

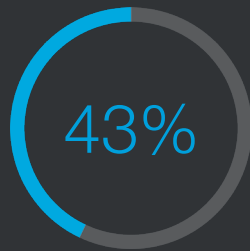


The 7 candidate red flags

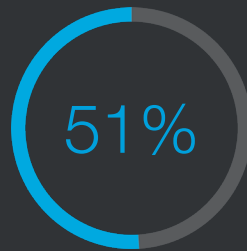
1

A lack of professionalism online

How does your potential candidate act online? This online resume offers another read on a potential candidate that may shed light on how buttoned up they are outside their professional world. A serious job seeker does their due diligence to put a good face forward across all digital touchpoints.



of employers use social networking sites to research job candidates, meaning that there is a second resume to groom¹



of employers who check candidate social media profiles have found content that disqualified a candidate¹

¹Recruiterbox, [#FirstInHR: Resume Red Flags to Look For](#)



The 7 candidate red flags

2 Discrepancies

Do you notice an inconsistency in a person's resume, LinkedIn profile, or previous application? It might be a sign they aren't as detail oriented as they say they are – or may not be truthful about their capabilities.

3 Short job tenures

An average employee stays in a position for 4.2 years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Profiles that show frequent job hopping could indicate poor relationships or quick burnout.

4 Vague language

The use of ambiguous language, such as “familiar with” or “participated in,” could imply the candidate didn't actually work on the project or they simply assisted in some way.

5 Unprofessional profile photo

Unprofessional photos can raise a red flag, suggesting the candidate isn't aware of how they present themselves in a professional environment.



The 7 candidate red flags

6

Dishonesty

Always check references and verify employment history to see if they are exaggerating training or job responsibilities.

7

Mistakes and typos

Profiles that have typos, grammatical errors, and poor formatting demonstrate a lack of attention to detail.



of all resumes have a typo of some form¹



of employers have caught a lie on a resume¹

Common lies include:²

40% of candidates inflate their salary

30% of candidates inflate job titles

30% of candidates alter employment dates

¹Inc., [85 Percent of Job Applicants Lie on Resumes. Here's How to Spot a Dishonest Candidate.](#)

²Recruiterbox, [#FirstInHR: Resume Red Flags to Look For.](#)



Read between the lines to find the best hires

Finding the best candidate is essential to making the best hire. With a tried and true process, you'll find quality candidates as quickly as possible. Know what to look for when evaluating a candidate based on how they present themselves through their resume and online profiles. As you review candidates, look for qualities that indicate high performers and avoid candidates that raise red flags. Follow the guidelines highlighted throughout this guide and you'll be finding quality candidates in no time.