



FLO

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Advocacy Programs Services

GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

Working Virtually - General Advice and Spotting Scams

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General Advice

Are You a Good Candidate to Work From Home?

- Self starter
- Independent
- Self-Motivated/Monitoring
- Well-Organized
- Time Priority Management
- Effective Communicator – especially in the written form
- Technically Literate – at least to some degree of competency

Be Resourceful; Be Creative; Think “Out of the Box”

- Radiologists can read their patients scans from home. Who would have thought of that?

Have a Plain Text Resume

- This means the characters will not change and look like garble to the reader.
- Copy your resume and put into Notepad or SimpleText and “save as”.Txt file.
- Always use Courier font.
- Remember that tabs disappear in SimpleText form.
- Think about using dotted lines.
- Use CAPS for bold.
- “*” to indicate bullet points.

Where to Look for Job Opportunities

- Approach your current employer. They know how you work and will be the most willing to give you a chance to continue your duties off-site. You should:
 1. **Have a plan, not a request** - stating how you intend to continue your work and how it will benefit the company.
 2. **Be flexible** – working from home often means giving up some of your more prestigious tasks. You might be less likely to be promoted as you will receive less “face time.”
 3. **Establish common objectives** - and a means of measuring them.
 4. **Arm yourself with facts** - use search engines like Google, ITAC and ATT to see who in the industry relies on telecommuters.
- Contact previous employers
- Internet searching/Networking
- Subscribe to reputable Work at Home (WAH) listings

Tips for Screening Ads

- When searching potential job lists, always use the Advance Search.
- Type in phrases like: work from home remote, work at home, work-at-home, WAH, telework, and include, “employer web sites only.”
- Put phrases in quotes for Google searches.
- Use work phrases like: “this is a work from home position” or “we are seeking a freelance...”

Spotting Scams

There is a 48-to-1-scam ratio among "work from home" ads on the Internet, and that is not counting the ones that arrive as spam in your inbox. In other words, for every 48 you find on the Internet, 47 will be either outright scams or downright suspicious - one will be legitimate (Chris Durst's and Michael Haaren's [Rat Race Rebellion](#)).

Tips for Spotting Scams

- **"Work at Home" appears in the ad header:** "Work from home" is not a job title. Scammers can't resist including it in the header.
- **Claims that no experience is necessary and no resume is requested:** In the “real world” jobs require you have specific experience or skills; a legitimate ad should tell you what you need.
- **You're required to pay a fee for information:** Legitimate jobs do not charge you for an inquiry.
- **Unbelievable pay:** Exaggerated claims of income are a sure sign of a scam.
- **The ad arrives as spam:** As if by a miracle, an ad for home-based work lands in your email inbox. If you receive unsolicited job offers in your email it's probably the result of a scammer having “harvested” your email address from another location frequented by people who are seeking work. Move it to your trash file and don't use the “remove me from this list” link at the bottom of the page. These links are often used to confirm that your email address is active and using them can result in even more SPAM.
- **No Job Description:** Most scams will give little or no description of the type of work you are supposed to be performing. Real job listings will always tell you what they expect.
- **Palm Trees, Mansions, Beaches & Bikinis:** If the ad you're looking at features palm trees, a mansion, and a Ferrari, it's probably a scam. Successful scammers often bag their prey by dangling enticing things in front of them.

Sites & Sources to Help You Stay Ahead of the Scammers

- Ripoff Report – www.ripoffreport.com
- Scambusters.org – www.scambusters.com
- WebAssured.com – www.webassured.com
- Scam.com – www.scam.com
- National Fraud Information Center/Internet Fraud Watch – www.fraud.org
- Federal Trade Commission – www.ftc.gov