

Leaving the **MOTHER SHIP**

Resume Fibbing is a Quick Way to Get Fired *Employers wise up – and so should employees*



Few people actually mean to lie on their resume, but they do it none-the-less. Businesses have to be on guard.

“Over the years, I’ve seen resumes with all types of problems,” says Randall Craig, management consultant, speaker, and author of the career planning book *Leaving the Mother Ship*. “Unfortunately, there are multiple ways of bending the truth, besides the outright lie. These include exaggeration, omitting key facts, leading the reader to make assumptions and taking other’s credit.”

Why would someone engage in these tactics? According to Randall Craig, one reason for this might be the extreme pressure facing job hunters. Some may believe that only by trumping up their experience will a potential employer consider them for an interview. Whatever the reason, it is clearly unacceptable and puts the perpetrator at risk.

Adds Randall Craig: “Who hasn’t thought that what they did was important and therefore trumpeted these accomplishments within a resume or cover letter? On the other hand, who hasn’t been a bit embarrassed about a particularly unimportant job that we held a long time ago? How tempting has it been to bend the description, ever so slightly, about your responsibilities or accomplishments? What’s the harm in letting the reader make their own assumptions about your role or capabilities, rather than describing explicitly what you did?”

There is real harm. “Most good recruiters can smell something fishy right away. A candidate either will not get the interview, or won’t get called back. And for those seemingly lucky few who do get job offers, a later discovery can lead to personal humiliation and likely dismissal.”

For job candidates, an easy test is to imagine that your current manager was reviewing your resume: would they agree with what you’ve written? For employers, Randall Craig gives the following advice:

1. **Look for the gaps.** Are there any unexplained time gaps within the resume? This may indicate a problem between jobs.
2. **Question the unlikely.** Just about everyone Leads, Directs, Manages (or uses some other similar action-word). Does anyone out there merely Help, Support or merely "Work"? While there are superstars, comparing job titles with the candidate’s actual accomplishments might also suggest an exaggeration.

3. **Check References.** Insist on references who understand the candidate's job responsibilities, and ask them to corroborate the resume content. If something doesn't sound right, it probably isn't.
4. **Verify Credentials.** Did the candidate actually graduate with that degree? Were they really in the top 10% of their class? Trust, but verify! And while you're at it, why not check to see if they really do hold that professional designation – and whether they still have the right to use it.

Spending a few minutes with your own resume, it doesn't hurt to see if it passes these simple tests. If you ever lose your credibility, you'll never regain it – and you certainly won't get that next job.



- Like this concept? Sign up for more with our (no-cost) *Make It Happen* TipSheet at www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com/news.
- Looking to take the next step? Purchase the Leaving the Mother Ship book and Workbook at www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com/store.

Randall Craig is a management consultant, speaker, and author of *Leaving the Mother Ship*, a career planning book. www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com. He speaks on the topics of Career Planning, Work-Life Balance, Entrepreneurship, and Consulting.