

# Be wary of recruitment agencies asking for money

Re-entering the job market after many years of employment or entering the job market for the very first time can be daunting: there's the pressure of finding suitable vacancies, of preparing for the interview process and of course, of successfully securing the job. But there's another hurdle new job seekers have to overcome - that of fraudulent recruitment agencies that not only don't deliver on the services they promise, but demand money upfront for them too.



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According to Niteske Marshall, MD of Network Recruitment, new job hunters unfamiliar with the recruitment process are easy fodder for scam artists who prey on their vulnerability and inexperience.

"South Africa is still grappling with a massive employment deficit, and jobs are hard to come by. Scamsters know this, and tap into candidates' anxiety around finding a new job by making empty promises they can't keep," Marshall says.

One of the most common scams fraudulent recruitment agencies employ is asking candidates to pay money upfront for various services. These include paying to be listed on their candidate databases, paying to be put onto job shortlists and paying to be included in interviews with hiring employers.

Some fake recruitment agencies take this a step further and contact job seekers directly saying they have already been shortlisted for a position, and must pay to sign up with the agency in order to take advantage of the opportunity.

"At no point ever does a candidate pay a recruitment agency. All recruitment services provided by legitimate agencies to job hunters are free. Some agencies might offer candidates value-added services such as assistance with compiling their CVs or interview training and techniques, and will charge for these accordingly, but they will never ask candidates for money to sign up with them or be listed on their databases. The hiring company that is looking for new employees pays the recruitment agency for its services in helping to identify the most suitable candidates for the available positions," Marshall explains.

To avoid being caught in the net of fraudulent agencies, get to know the names of the genuine agencies that work in your industry. They will have good reputations, come highly recommended by word of mouth, and will be registered by SARS as

legitimate companies. Their adverts will also be authentic and follow due recruitment protocol without requesting upfront fees or offering any kind of job guarantee.

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