

An Expert's Guide To Lying On Your CV



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Ever looked at everyone else's LinkedIn bio and wondered if it was all true?

That trip saving the poor, building the school, being an advocate for change, did it really happen?

How about J-Lo's movie *Second Act*, where her entire CV is a fabrication that GETS HER THE JOB SHE HAS ALWAYS DREAMED OF.

Surely if it's good enough for Jenny from the Block, it's good enough for us to stretch the truth to get a role we want.



Well no. According to Karen Gately, founder of Corporate Dojo, and a leadership and people-management specialist, the worst thing you can do is lie on your CV.

J-Lo you've been TOLD.



"Any level of lie puts you at risk of being perceived as a dishonest person," she told 10 daily, somewhat disappointingly. "What you may regard as an innocent 'white lie' may in the eyes of the person assessing your application raise an integrity question mark too big to move past.

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While of course they may not initially pick up on the lie, if they do through the later stages of the assessment process, or even after you start the job, they are unlikely to be impressed.

Not even a teensy weensy little white lie -- like shaving a few years off your age, or adding a few letters after your name.... ? Asking for a friend.



"There is no need to include your age in your CV," said Karen, "and any information you do provide should be aimed at giving the employer honest insight to who you are, what you are capable of and why you believe the role you have applied for is the right next step for you."

Ah okay then. What about making up jobs long in the past that may *help* you get a new one? (This, ahem, friend was quite the fantasist!)

"While faking it until you make it can undeniably be a successful strategy, beginning any relationship with a lie isn't a great idea," warned Karen. "Even a job supposedly held long ago can come back to haunt you. For example, imagine telling someone you worked in sales, but then they meet your family years later and learn that isn't true. It's a pointless blight on your honesty record that can stick."

According to Karen, honesty -- even about mistakes -- really is the best policy.

"Trust is fundamental to your ability to win and keep a new job. In my experience, people are entirely more likely to be impressed by someone who is honest, including the mistakes they have made."



"If the lies you are tempted to tell really are small in your mind, contemplate why you would then bother using them. If they are unlikely to get you in trouble, they are also unlikely to make a big difference in helping you to land the job."

And while J-Lo managed to hide her inadequacies in the role by a process of, well, lying even more (including a genius move involving a Mandarin-speaking vet and an earpiece) Karen says it's actually pretty hard to do that in real life. Your lies will be picked up *wayyyy* before you get a chance to need that vet to impress your Chinese boss.



So what are 'tell-tale' signs someone has lied on their CV? "When the stories presented simply don't add up," she revealed. "Conflicting dates, the inconsistency of information shared through the CV and then interview process and referees who fail to paint a similar picture to the one shared by the candidate, are all a dead giveaway."

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It is also relatively easy to see when a candidate claims to have certain levels of experience or seniority in the past that simply don't align with the depth of their understanding and ability to talk at the expected level of sophistication about the challenges they have faced or outcomes they have achieved.

And has Karen seen any doozies in her time in HR? "Unfortunately, yes. One candidate claimed to have worked for an organisation whose HR Director was a close friend and industry colleague. It wasn't difficult to find out that the role they claimed to have held didn't exist."



And there's more.

"Another claimed to hold certain academic qualifications and even provided a poorly created fake certificate. No prizes for guessing that they didn't get the job!"

Consider yourself warned. And way to be a role model, J-LO!