

## AT WORK

# Expert reveals dumb ways people have got the sack — and how to avoid them

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AN AUSSIE workplace expert has shared the mind-boggling ways people have lost their jobs — and some are truly bizarre.

According to leadership and people management specialist [Karen Gately](#), the key to avoiding the sack usually comes down to “common sense” and “reasonable effort and behaviour”.

However, she said the following examples were proof not everyone was able to understand workplace boundaries — and how to stay within them.

Here are four crazy ways people have managed to sabotage their own careers.

### 1. Outsourcing it

In 2013, a US software developer made headlines after he paid a Shanghai consultancy one-fifth of his six-figure salary to do his entire job for him.

The unnamed man, aged in his 40s, got away with the scam for years, even managing to win employee of the month on several occasions — while spending his days “surfing the web, watching cat videos on YouTube and browsing Reddit and eBay”, according to the [BBC](#).

Ms Gately said if you are so bored you can't bring yourself to do your job, it is time to leave.

“While earning money for doing nothing may seem attractive, reflect on what really makes you happy in life,” she said.

“What gives you energy and a sense of fulfilment? For most people making a meaningful contribution is essential to thriving. Choose to work in role and for organisations you enjoy.”

## **2. Faking it**

Earlier this year, [Veronica Theriault](#) pleaded guilty to fraud after scoring a job by listing fake credentials on her resume.

Ms Theriault, a former chief information officer with the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Adelaide, claimed to have “20 years of experience” working at several big tech firms, including accommodation-booking site Wotif.

But it was all an elaborate lie, with the company confirming to ABC she had never worked there.



 Sacked chief information officer Veronica Theriault faked her CV. Picture: Supplied

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Ms Gately said it was “ridiculous” to think you can get away with lying about qualifications and experience you don’t actually have.

“Being authentic in life is entirely more likely to enable you to thrive than cheating your way into positions you probably don’t deserve,” she said.

### **3. Social media blunders**

In February, [US waitress Tamlynn Yoder](#) was fired from her position at an Outback Steakhouse restaurant after complaining about not getting a tip on a \$940 order.

However, Outback Steakhouse has a strict policy forbidding workers from posting about customers on social media, which led to the controversial sacking.

Ms Gately said social media rants have led to many job losses — and warned fired-up workers to think before posting.

“While it might feel great in the moment to let off steam and tell the world how aggrieved you are feeling, you might not like the consequences of your actions,” she said.

“Consider if there is a more productive way of dealing with the issue.”

### **4. Getting into fistfights**

In 2017, [Kristian Weir](#) was sacked by Bechtel Construction from his job as a rigger on Chevron’s Wheatstone LNG Project in WA’s Pilbara region for “serious misconduct” after getting into a fight at an on-site bar.

Mr Weir was drinking with co-workers when an unknown person snatched his cowboy hat from his head.

A fight ensued, and Mr Weir was fired for breaching his contract prohibiting “offensive, intimidating, anti-social or violent behaviour”.

Ms Gately said it was essential to deal with your frustrations before they escalate.

“Remember how you behave while ‘off duty’ can matter as much as when you are on the job,” she said.

“Avoid heavy drinking with colleagues and don’t allow a single moment of uncontrolled anger to ruin your career.”



📷 Karen Gately says most people are fired for failing to demonstrate the capabilities or character traits needed to carry out the job. Picture: Supplied

While these are extreme examples that could be avoided by a bit of common sense, Ms Gately said the average dismissal was caused by failing to demonstrate the capabilities or character traits needed to carry out the job.

She said other terminations were caused by a lack of emotional intelligence or a workplace culture that allowed workers to “get away with” bad behaviour — until a final line was crossed.

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