

Building the Best Background Screening for your Industry



Part 1

In recent years, the employment landscape has changed dramatically. Background checks have become an essential component of the hiring process to mitigate risks in every industry. An increasingly unpredictable economy coupled with the rise in identity theft, workplace violence and government scrutiny on employment practices has prompted the organizations to develop a new approach to applicant screening. With cases of fraud coming to the fore with ever-increasing regularity, it has become necessary for organizations to seek for and obtain unbiased information or opinion from an external professional background screening organization.

As employment opportunities have become more competitive, HR professionals are forced to evaluate a candidate's history more closely to ensure they are genuinely qualified. Creating a successful company starts with hiring well-qualified employees who remain invested in the organization. Background screening helps reduce employee turnover by identifying the qualified & trustworthy candidates for organizations. The scope of work for background verification service differs for each organization and mostly includes education check, employment verification, identity check, address check, criminal check and drug testing.

In fact, the three most common areas where potential issues start are:

- Undeclared criminal record or disqualification
- Overstatement of academic qualification
- Fraudulent employment history

In this part of the E-book, you can see the areas where background screening is mandatory and essential background checks which are required to be performed on a potential applicant.

Pre-Employment Background Screening:

Inaccuracies and falsifications on resumes and applications are unfortunately not uncommon in today's environment. Candidates with false credentials can have an unfair advantage over genuinely qualified applicants and hiring based on wrong or misleading information can seriously damage the organizations' integrity and reputation. Background verification can offer organizations with complete peace of mind when hiring a new staff. Pre-employment background check is mandatory to minimize the organizational risks and they help screen candidates for a range of background details, including:

- Criminal records
- Employment history
- Educational Qualifications
- Drug abuse.

So, companies should never provide space for any hazards to impact their success by neglecting a thorough background verification of the applicant before they step into the organization.

What happens if background screening is skipped?

Negligent hiring claims are on the rise, as people come forward with complaints about the improper or harmful conduct of employees. If an organization hires someone who harms a customer or one of the employees, then the organization can be held liable, especially if the organization does not have a background verification process in place. Considering the investment by any organization in terms of time and money for legal activities like visiting a court, sorting through documents, pulling evidence and other approaches of defense arrangements to filter the 'right' candidate, running a background check through professional screening company will cost them lesser and at the same time provide quality output. Isn't it always worth to affirm a candidate's previous records to defend your organization's reputation and culture?

Setting up your Background Verification Process:

What you as an organization should need to know before performing the first background screening process is explained below.

Demands of background check:

When most employers think of a background check they think of a simple criminal history check. In reality, a background check is much more than that. It's the process by which you find your best candidate by checking not only criminal records, but also education and employment history, civil records, references, etc. Background verification helps your organization stay safe by ensuring the applicants are who they claim to be. Also, they help protect your organization, your employees and your clients.

Performing a perfect background check?

While we all wish we could trust in the basic goodness of humankind, background checks are a critical way to protect the many facets of your organizations that need to be protected. Lack of background checks and poorly done background checks can lead to horrific crimes. Protection of your employees is imperative in any business.

Thorough background screening procedures provide far better and more accurate details indicating a candidate's capabilities. It is crucial to adopt a multi-layered approach in candidate screening starting from identity verification, academic & employment credentials, criminal records and other details. For more credibility the documents provided by the candidate are checked with respect & in accordance to the issuing authority of the said document. The fact that the price of replacing a bad hire far outweighs the value of a good background check, points to the necessity and advantage of the background screening process.

Are background checks required in all industry sectors?

A number of industries, especially those that handle other people's personal and private information, requires background screening for their employees. Healthcare industries, BFSI (banking and financial sector) are some of the important verticals where such checks need to be implemented. Even if the business does not operate around or provide services to these industries, there are enough crucial reasons to run background verification process.

How to run background verification in organizations?

There is no standard background check package that fits all organizations because different industries will have different criteria for hiring. Background checks should be set up based on job role, industry vertical and company culture. The depth of screening should reflect the risks associated with that position and the aftermath effects, in cases of 'wrong' or 'bad' hire. When running background checks, remember that if screening guidelines are too lenient you may hire criminals and welcoming unnecessary risks to your business.

Background verification Customization:

As explained in previous topics, criminal history checks are often the biggest and most important component of a pre-employment background screening, but that doesn't mean they are the "be all, end all." Supplementary checks like credit history, employment history, address verification, driving license verification, professional reference and education verification are additional ways to learn more about your applicant. The same way customization is required when it comes to the job role the candidate have applied for and based on the industry vertical. Each industry needs to design their background check depending on their organizational needs and job responsibilities.

A financial institution, for instance, will have good reason to know about an applicant's credit history, because that person is probably applying for a job where the candidate will be handling money. Similarly, if you are hiring a driver, then driving license verification is arguably just as important as criminal check. You need to know if an applicant has been convicted for reckless driving or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or if the candidate has a suspended license.

In all industries, the basic checks you will run are education, employment, Address & criminal verification. An applicant's job position, responsibilities and employment date should be verified by taking up employment history details and verifying it with a concerned company and personnel. Educational qualification checks are done by contacting the university to make sure an applicant indeed got the college degree they are claiming. Even professional licenses and certifications are verified nowadays since there might be a chance of breaking the law due to hiring someone who isn't properly licensed for the job at hand. Screening the candidate for any criminal misconducts through court and police records is a proposed way to safeguard your organizational environment and employees from negative and unhealthy exposures. Adding to all these

screening, the address verification on a particular candidate supports the above mentioned checks to be performed in a neat and thorough manner.

Advantages of Background verification Customization:

- Customizing the background verification according to industry sectors helps in saving a lot of time in appointing a right candidate for the job role.
- Cost savings from negligent hiring is an added advantage while running a customized background check on your organization.
- Eliminating or avoiding the unnecessary checks always results in a better match and good quality hire for a specific role.
- The efforts of both parties (HR & Candidate) are directed towards required area and excessive care is taken for obtaining relevant details.

So, a customized background check with the required scope of work, according to the need and relevance, should be performed with the help of a professional background check service provider. Screening service providers can assist you with establishing proper procedures, information through credible sources and accurate reports. As an organization, you have the right and the responsibility to verify applicant-provided information and have the legal requirement to provide a safe workplace.

Full package of background verification checks:

Through background check a 360 degree view about a potential candidate can be revealed and the same can be used for further scrutiny according to the requirements of the employer. Background checks compile a detailed report about the candidate from various perspectives starting from personal characteristics details, professional history to criminal background with assistance of authenticated sources. The different types of checks that are part of a background check are education verification, reference checks, address check, identity check, drug screening and credit check.

We will focus on the importance of framing a background screening process according to the IT/ITES industry in our second part of the e-book, with snippets, stats and much more interesting facts about background checks.