

## Research overview

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Over a 6 month period, 2487 job applications for the financial services industry were fact-checked for discrepancies, embellishments and false information. Employment histories, dates, university degrees, professional qualifications and criminal records were verified and checked against what candidates submitted when applying for jobs. The research was undertaken to uncover any trends in the discrepancies in applications understand the most common embellishments in financial services applications.

Follows are the overall results from the survey:

### 25% of financial services job applications had at least one major discrepancy.

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*Of all the applications verified, 25% had at least one major discrepancy.*

	Women	Men	Total	Percent
<b>Discrepancies</b>	249	372	621	24.97%
<b>No Discrepancies</b>	780	1,086	1,866	75.03%
<b>Total</b>	1,029	1,458	2,487	

This figure shows that 1 in 4 job applicants to the financial services sector are prepared to falsify information on their job applications in order to gain employment.

### The most common discrepancies...

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*The most common discrepancies on application forms are employment titles/duties, followed by employment dates.*

The research found that of the applicants who submit false background information, the most common discrepancy is their job title and duties. The second biggest is employment dates; most likely to cover up gaps in employment histories. Not surprisingly, the least common inconsistency is criminal records. This is probably due to a high awareness of the ease of access to the criminal records database.

The most common discrepancies:

	Women	Men	Total
<b>Titles/duties</b>	12.54%	11.73%	12.06%
<b>Employment dates</b>	8.45%	10.29%	9.53%
<b>CCJs/ Bankruptcy</b>	4.08%	4.32%	4.22%
<b>Academic</b>	4.96%	3.50%	4.10%

<b>Reason for leaving</b>	3.50%	2.47%	2.90%
<b>Compensation</b>	1.46%	1.44%	1.45%
<b>Directorships</b>	0.87%	1.23%	1.09%
<b>Criminal records</b>	1.17%	0.62%	0.84%

## Gaps in employment history

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*37% had gaps in their employment history.*

The research also shows that 37% of financial services applicants have gaps in their employment history. In addition, there is no significant difference between men and women when it comes to number of gaps.

	<b>Gap</b>	<b>No Gaps</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Females</b>	384	645	1029
<b>% of Females</b>	37.32%	62.68%	100
<b>Males</b>	531	927	1458
<b>% of Males</b>	36.42%	63.58%	100
<b>Total</b>	915	1572	2487
<b>% of Total</b>	36.79%	63.02%	100

## Men vs. women

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*When analysed, the difference between the rate of discrepancies between men and women was too small to come to any conclusions.*

### **Discrepancies on application forms**

% of women	24.2%
% of men	25.51%

## How many times?

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*Research has revealed that applicants can lie up to four times on one application with the majority only falsifying once.*

### **Number of discrepancies on one application form**

Number of discrepancies on application form	Females	Males	Total
0	780	1086	1866
1	153	246	399
2	66	105	171
3	24	15	39
4	6	6	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>2487</b>

## Does age matter?

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*The research shows as applicants get older they are more likely to have discrepancies on their applications, with the 51-60 year olds falsifying the most. (Excluding the 61+ due to the sample size being too small). The exception being that 21-30 year old applicants have the least amount of discrepancies on application forms. These findings could indicate that older workers are feeling the need to embellish in order to compete against their younger counterparts.*

<b>Age</b>	<b>% of applicants with discrepancies</b>
51-60	28.17%
41-50	27.69%
31-40	26.78%
20 or under	23.08%
21-30	22.36%

## Being British

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When a comparison was made between foreign applicants and British applicants it was found that 32% of British falsify information on job applications vs. 25% of their foreign counterparts. This percentage is primarily inflated by the British male, of which nearly 38% were prepared to submit false information about their background.

### **% of British applicants who have discrepancies**

British females	25.68%
British males	37.79%

## 2 jobs every five years

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The research also looked into the average amount of jobs held per applicant over the previous 5 years. Although 27.5% of applications reviewed held only one job in the last 5 years, the remaining 72.5% have held at least 2 jobs. This highlights a trend where moving companies is the norm.

<b>Number of jobs</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
2	<b>34.14</b>
1	27.5
3	17.49
4	11.82

5	5.55
6	1.81
7	1.21
8	0.36
9	0.12

## Which income bracket is most likely to falsify their CV?

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The chart below shows that 40% of people who earn between £80,001 - £90,000 are more likely to falsify their application forms, and people who earn £60,001 - £70,000 are least likely to embellish their application forms.

Salary bracket	Number of applicants	Number of discrepancies	% of discrepancies
£0 - £10,000	54	9	16.67%
£10,001 - £20,000	637	174	27.47%
£20,001 - £30,000	717	159	22.18%
£30,001 - £40,000	408	129	31.62%
£40,001 - £50,000	237	48	20.25%
£50,001 - £60,000	186	45	24.19%
£60,001 - £70,000	66	6	9.09%
£70,001 - £80,000	27	3	11.11%
£80,001 - £90,000	45	18	40%
£90,001 - £100,000	35	12	31.43%
£100,001 +	75	18	24%

### About the survey:

The Powerchex survey was based on 2,487 job applications that were verified and fact-checked for Powerchex's financial services clients over a six month period. The results were compiled by participants of the Shell Technology and Enterprise Program (STEP) on behalf of Powerchex Ltd, a London-based pre-employment screening firm.

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**Editor's note:** Powerchex is the UK's fastest-growing pre-employment vetting company. For more information see [www.powerchex.co.uk](http://www.powerchex.co.uk)

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