

# NEWS ALERT

## Article

### Companies Step Up Background Checks Of Prospective Employees

As the economy rebounds and hiring begins to pick up pace, companies are going to unprecedented lengths with sweeping background checks of prospective employees. The scope of pre-employment screening, which has been traditionally limited mainly to senior executives and involved basic searches to verify the accuracy of the resume, the educational background and biographical data, is now getting vastly expanded. All job applicants, not just those at senior levels, are being scrutinised with a fine toothcomb. And almost no area is off limits.

While false claims about education and employment are among the main triggers for rejection, some job applicants have been tripped up by their personal lives. One such was denied a job after an agency specialising in background verification discovered that the individual was having an extra-marital affair. The agency asked the prospective employer, a multinational company, to put the application on hold by filing a 'pink' report and the employer obliged.

"In our lingo, green means a go-ahead, pink is doubtful and red signifies rejection," said SK Sharma, group director-HR at PremierShield, a security solutions company that carries out background checks on behalf of corporates. A red flag can be activated by a number of other factors: criminal history, substance abuse, a poor credit track record or even dodgy equity trading. While former colleagues, classmates and those living in the applicant's neighbourhood are tapped for information, some agencies go even further.

PremierShield admits to setting up sting operations to test for ethics and some companies infiltrate staff into the organisation where the applicant is working to gather information about the prospective employee's conduct with colleagues, especially women.

LET'S NOT FORGET THE  
FALLEN HEROES...



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Food inflation rose to 15.58 per cent for the second week of November from 14.55 per cent in the previous week as potatoes and pulses turned costlier.



### India To Be Among Top 10 Ad Market: Steve King

As the CEO of Zenith Optimedia Worldwide, Steve King feels that new and emerging advertising markets like India and China will power the global industry's recovery, on the back of positive signals from developed markets like US, Europe. "India, with an approximate 10% growth, will certainly be in the top ten advertising markets in absolute dollar terms by 2015," he said.

Zenith Optimedia, the world's third largest media-buying agency and an enterprise under the Paris-based Publicis Group is upbeat about India. India figures amongst Zenith Optimedia's 20 largest markets globally, but over the past five years, it has been among the top three fastest growing ones.