

## Tales of Those Who Tried

Since the events of September 11, the majority of companies in America have made performing pre-employment background checks standard procedure. However, most educational institutions have not kept the same pace with their background screening programs, and may not check faculty members for criminal histories. The following excerpt is from a story that was published in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and exemplifies why all companies and institutions should conduct background checks.

Paul Krueger, a Penn State professor, was well liked by his students and praised by his colleagues. Krueger was more than qualified to work as a professor at Penn State, having earned two doctorate degrees and had an extensive resume working not only at other academic institutions, but also in corporate America. By the looks of his employment history and his academic credentials there was no reason to run a criminal background check on him and no reason not to hire Krueger.

To their surprise, university officials learned that Krueger was charged and found guilty with murdering three people in 1965. He was 17 when he committed the murders and served 13 years in prison for the crime. In 1979 he was paroled and crept into the corporate and academic world landing job after job, with no one picking up his conviction. After the news that his conviction was uncovered, Krueger resigned.

Krueger's story should act as a reminder as to why all organizations and institutions should run background checks.

Extensive background checks have revealed numerous cases of fraudulent information. The following instances show the creative ways people try to use false information to obtain job opportunities:

A man put on his application that he received a bachelors degree from the University of Maryland. The verifier could not find any records of him attending the university. The verifier then contacted the applicant who explained that he attended the school, but never actually enrolled at the University of Maryland. He stated that he went to school with his girlfriend every day, attending all of her classes for four years, therefore earning his degree. He then admitted that he had put the degree on his resume for the past 10 years but was never caught, and said, "You aren't going to tell the employer, are you?"

One applicant put on his resume that he worked for an Arizona prison. As it turned out, he didn't work for the prison, but was an inmate. Making license plates was the extent of his work.

Sometimes an applicant is required to fax over a copy of the diploma if education credentials cannot be verified directly with the institution. There was a case in which a woman stated that she received her bachelor degree and would fax it over. When the fax was inspected, the verifier noticed that the degree received was a "Batchelor" Degree.

When one applicant was asked why his brother's name was on his diploma, he replied that he had used his brother's name in school! Nice try.

Another applicant, apparently not happy with his own record, applied for a job using the name and social security number of a dead person