

Looking for Red Flags -- by Danielle Dresden

When you're behind a semi with a red flag, it means the truck has an over-sized load. But red flags in resumes or interviews should alert you to candidates who may be equipped with a good deal less than meets the eye.

Maybe you've learned this the hard way, from employees who didn't work out. But when you look back, the warning signs have been there all along.

Just what are these signs? First, look at the resume itself. Despite the pharmacist shortage, think twice about any applicant with a resume full of errors.

You also can't assume applicants are who they say they are, with the education and experience described. Reference checks are a necessity.

Companies don't like to give out a lot of information these days, but you can ask applicants for names of people who will talk. Furthermore, even barebones information, such as job title and dates of employment, can tell you if a candidate's resume represents experience or wishful thinking.

Be wary if an applicant's employment history includes several organizations that have gone out of business or don't exist. It's better than worrying later.

Don't let the number of positions a candidate has held turn you off. Now that job security has all but gone the way of black and white TV, job mobility should be expected from people committed to their careers.

To see if candidates have a career plan, analyze the way they describe their duties at previous jobs. If there's a reason for their choices, it will be apparent. But if they're inflating their experience, or worse yet, didn't understand what their previous job was about, that will be evident, too.

Consider the way applicants have left previous positions. Most employers look at tenure in previous jobs, but check out a candidate's reasons for leaving, too. If you notice that when a candidate moves on, they're usually either stepping down or doing so for personal reasons, take note.

These items aren't quite as noticeable as a red flag flapping in the breeze, but if you heed them they can help keep your hiring practices on track.

December Teaser

Can't We All Just Get Along?

They may be adults and they may not run with scissors, but sometimes your employees just don't play, or more importantly, work well together. Pick up tips on how to handle

collaboration problems, without once asking "Do I have to come in there?" Check it out in next month's newsletter.