

Quebec Labour Law Blog

Lying on your CV? Get ready to pay the consequences.

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During my career as an officer in the [Canadian Forces](#), I have had the opportunity to do a lot of interviews for candidates aspiring to be officers in the Forces. It was generally a pleasant experience. Candidates were knowledgeable and had excellent CVs. However, one candidate had a CV that was “too excellent”. It cited having gone to Yale and Harvard, but when questioned on his experiences there, did not have much information to give. We did a little research and it turns out that he was not being truthful. Moreover, we found out that he had some very bizarre statements about the Canadian Forces on some online forums.

Sufficed to say, he was not hired. But what if he had been hired? What recourse would have had then? In the context of the Canadian Forces and military law, he could have been guilty of fraudulent enrolment and charged with an offence under the [National Defence Act](#). Indeed, it appears from the Law that the very act of providing false information with regard to enrolment is a crime:

122. Every person who knowingly

(a) makes a false answer to any question set out in any document required to be completed, or

(b) furnishes any false information or false document,

in relation to the enrolment of that person is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to imprisonment for less than two years or to less punishment.

A maximum punishment of two years less a day in prison for lying on a job application? That’s pretty tough. Outside of the military, the consequences of lying on a CV are still severe, though no prison is usually involved.

As Howard Levitt, an Ontario attorney, outlines in his article “[Resume lies can haunt you](#)”, employees can be terminated for lying in their applications. This is also the case in Québec. Unfortunately, it seems that more and more employees are lying on the CVs in order to get ahead. Indeed, in a [recent survey](#) conducted in the U.S., almost half of all HR managers said that they caught applicants lying. Consequently, employers are resorting to background checks to verify CVs.

The lesson? Don't lie! You may get caught. If you do, your current job and your future career will be jeopardized. If you are applying to the military, the *National Defence Act* provides further encouragement to be truthful.

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