

Envy pushes job seekers to fake their resumes

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Credit: University at Buffalo

Job seekers who stay in the search longer or see their peers getting hired may falsify their résumés, according to new research from the University at Buffalo School of Management.

Published in the *Academy of Management Journal*, the study analyzed how the length of a job search and a person's career situation may lead to [unethical behavior](#).

"Envy can be a destructive emotion that makes you cut corners to get the

same outcomes that others have," says study co-author KiYoung Lee, PhD, assistant professor of organization and human resources in the UB School of Management. "But it can also be a motivator that encourages you to make constructive efforts."

The researchers conducted two studies to measure job search envy at two different career points. The first study analyzed survey responses from 335 unemployed job seekers from an internet job board serving the Southeastern United States.

The second study tracked a cohort of 77 graduate students enrolled in a master's of human resources program at a large U.S. university. The researchers surveyed participants over the course of two years, tracking [job search](#) envy during both internship and job searches.

Lee says that hiring managers and career counselors should take note of [job seekers'](#) situation to help identify and prevent résumé fraud.

"If you're a hiring manager and applicants are coming from a very close cohort where they may feel very competitive to each other, be aware of the possibility that envy may impact what's on their résumés," says Lee. "Also, if you're a career counselor and you know someone who is very competitive and may be experiencing envy, you can try to help them affirm their self worth to channel that [envy](#) into more constructive efforts in résumé and interview preparation."

Provided by University at Buffalo

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