

## ASK THE EXPERT

Companies are allowed to ask for employees' personal data

**I** drive a truck and pour concrete. My employer took on a project for a company that is requiring background checks on the drivers that go onto their property. They say by signing this form they can release my personal information, including my Social Security number, to



**AMY LIEBERMAN**  
Insight  
Employment  
Mediation

this third party. I have been with this company for 20 years and don't want them giving my private information to a third party. But if I don't sign, I don't work on the project either. Is this legal and who is responsible if my data is compromised?

It is legal for a company to request your Social Security number and to refuse to employ you if you do not provide the information.

Your Social Security number allows an employer to obtain information relating to your employment history, education, credit history and criminal and motor-vehicle records. A company wants to verify identity and be sure the employee is qualified and that there are no red flags or liability risks. The same concerns exist when a business hires another company to per-

form work.

To address your legitimate concerns about privacy, ask if the company has a privacy policy to protect against release of information. You might ask if providing your driver's license information would suffice. Seek assurances that the company takes measures to keep your information secure, such as encryption, and that it will be disposed of as soon as it is no longer needed. Monitor your credit.

If you have signed a release form, depending on the language, you may be prohibited from bringing any action for invasion of privacy or other civil action against both your employer and the company it is contracting with.

Many states, including Arizona, have laws that require immediate notification when there has been a security breach. The Attorney General can seek civil penalties in the event of a willful and knowing release of personal data. And companies can be held responsible for the cost of credit monitoring for a period of time if there is a data breach.

—Compiled by Georgann Yara

*Have a question? Send it to Ask the Experts, The Arizona Republic, 200 E. Van Buren St., NM19, Phoenix, AZ 85004. E-mail asktheexperts1@gmail.com or fax 602-444-8044.*

## 5 TIPS

for management success

Want to be a successful manager? You must be someone that others want to follow. Here's how to get there.

1

### Build effective personal relationships.

Staff members, colleagues and executives must respect and trust you.

2

### Communicate well.

Communicate effectively in person, print and e-mail. Give others a chance to talk and be heard.

3

### Build a team.

Help staff to collaborate more effectively together. Celebrate team accomplishments.

4

### Understand the finances.

Understand financial aspects of the business and lead your team accordingly.

5

### Encourage staff development.

Help teammates grow and develop their skills through education, on-the-job learning.

## JOBS TALK

# Make contacts for a shot at job

**I**m a registered nurse with 20 years' experience. I recently applied for a job as a nurse recruiter. The same day I got the e-mail telling me I was not chosen for an interview, the organization reposted the same job. Should I reformat my resume and try again, or give up? I think I would do well, but I don't know how to get the skills or experience they obviously want without actually being in the job.



**DALE DAUTEN**

**J.T.:** The solution isn't more education or a reformatted resume. Neither will increase your chances. It's the applicant tracking system that's tossing you out. These systems use keywords and years of experience to determine whether you are a fit, and since you can't lie about the recruiting experience, you won't make it through the online system.

**Dale:** Well ... while you can't lie, you can spin. If, for instance, in one or more of your jobs you helped recruit nurses, you can list it as a skill/achievement, and perhaps you will slip through the automated system. However, that's likely to be a false victory—you might get an interview, but prob-



**J.T. O'DONNELL**

ably not the job. Odds are that they need someone who knows exactly what to do in the job because they are not in a position to offer training/support to a rookie.

**J.T.:** So here's what you do: Find several nurse recruiters and contact them to learn more about how they broke into the field. This should give you inside information on what you can do to better your chances. In short, you need to connect with people and share your enthusiasm if you want to persuade them to give you a shot. You can't do that via a computer.

**Dale:** You might be wondering why these busy recruiting professionals would bother to meet with you. But with your 20 years of experience, you have a large network to call upon and to share with them. If you offer to help them make new contacts, they should be delighted to sit down with you. If it goes well, you might offer to help them as a paid intern or a part-time employee. You'll quickly gain the experience and skills to scoff at the robo-gatekeepers blocking your applications.

Contact J.T. and Dale at [jtdale.com](mailto:jtdale.com).