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## Hiring

### **Tightening Job Market Puts Greater Emphasis On Effective Screening Practices, Report Says**

**E**mployers can best meet their talent goals in 2015 by minimizing the high-cost risk of bad hires through better screening practices, background screening provider HireRight said in a March 2 report.

The report, “2015 HireRight Employment Screening Benchmark Report,” found that a majority of employers (56 percent) said that background checks help provide a better quality of hire.

Background screenings are becoming increasingly important, as about three-quarters (76 percent) of respondents said they will increase their workforce size this year, with over half (55 percent) planning significant growth of 3 percent or more, Rachel Trindade, vice president of marketing for HireRight, told Bloomberg BNA March 4.

The optimism in the growing economy combined with the talent shortage “means our work environment is moving toward a candidates’ market,” and employers will therefore need to adjust their hiring practices, Trindade said.

Respondents indicated that background checks are a critical step to preventing bad hires, as 86 percent reported finding lies or misrepresentations on resumes or job applications and 72 percent reported that screening uncovered issues they would not have found otherwise.

As employers look at their policies and programs for background screening, the type of screening has to be tailored to the type of role and authority the job calls for, Trindade recommended. There also should not be any blanket policy, and employers will best protect themselves from litigation by treating each individual hire on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the nature and gravity of any past offense, the time that has passed since the offense and the nature of the job itself, she said.

HireRight produced the benchmark report based on surveys of more than 3,000 human resources, recruiting, security and management professionals. The responses were collected in October and November 2014.

**Avoiding Risky Screening Practices.** The report revealed the risks many employers may be taking in their screening practices, potentially opening themselves up to significant security and legal exposure, including:

- **Not verifying credentials:** With the high numbers of candidates discovered to have misrepresented information on a resume, it’s critical that companies confirm

education and employment backgrounds, yet 50 percent do not check education and 32 percent do not check previous employment.

- **One and done screening:** Re-screening employees on an ongoing basis post-hire can be an important step, as changes in an employee’s record can leave an organization vulnerable to risks that may include negligent retention claims. However, more than half of organizations (54 percent) do not conduct re-screening of current employees.

- **Neglecting drug testing:** Pre-hire and ongoing drug testing can help ensure a safer and more secure workplace and reduce costs, but only 66 percent of companies conduct any kind of drug testing.

- **Not thinking globally:** Whether a company has international offices or employees who have lived, worked or been educated outside of the U.S., it’s important for employers to consider conducting global screening to verify the individual’s history and qualifications. Only 15 percent of respondents conduct global screening, meaning the vast majority of companies are running a risk of hiring an employee who could have a concerning international record.

- **Ignoring the extended workforce:** Contractors, temps, consultants, volunteers and vendor employees may have the same access to facilities and data as do permanent employees, yet many companies neglect to screen their extended workforce to similar standards, if at all.

- **Imprudent social media screening:** In today’s environment of publicly available information, a growing number of employers are using social media for screening (36 percent), risking the chance that they could unwittingly uncover protected information that could leave them open to discrimination claims. HireRight emphasized that companies that use social media in their screening process must develop, in consultation with their legal counsel, effective policies and procedures designed to protect their applicants’ and employees’ privacy.

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*The report is available for download at [http://www.hireright.com/benchmarking?utm\\_source=HR.2015+Benchmark+Report.take2&utm\\_campaign=HR\\_2015+Benchmark+Report\\_take2&utm\\_medium=](http://www.hireright.com/benchmarking?utm_source=HR.2015+Benchmark+Report.take2&utm_campaign=HR_2015+Benchmark+Report_take2&utm_medium=)*

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