

### Spot the Warning Signs of Fraud Before it's too Late

Online fraud happens every day to thousands of people around the world. The question we all need to ask ourselves is whether we are prepared to spot the signs when a fraudster knocks on our virtual door.

Regardless of your background, or if you are educated or informed, you can still fall victim to online fraud. We've provided a handful of techniques to vet an offer you may feel uncertain about:

#### Slow down

- A common theme in many fraud attempts is a sense of artificial urgency created by the fraudster to prevent you from thinking things through. When presented with an enticing offer, stop and think about it. Give yourself time to ruminate on it and if the fraudster says it's only available now, chances are it's not a real offer.

#### Apply the 'Too good to be true' test

- Listen to your gut. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Looking back to our previous tip, if the offer is limited or only available 'now', then chances are it is not a real offer.

#### Question Everything

- Who is the person who contacted you? Do you know them? Is their request unsolicited? Why did they approach you? What are the risks? More importantly, would you trust them to watch your wallet, purse or phone?

#### Get a Second Opinion

- If you are being asked to do something — wiring someone money or sending bitcoin, for example — and you feel uneasy about it, bounce the idea off someone else. Contact a trusted friend, a colleague or someone at your credit union and run the proposal past them. Do they think it's a good idea, too?

#### There is no Such Thing as a Free Lunch

- Many scams play on the appeal of quick, easy money. It's easy to get blinded by the dollar signs. Don't let that distract you from making a reasonable, informed, cautious decision. Sometimes being blinded by dollar signs can cost you many of your own.
  - If someone sends you money and then says you need to send some of it back to them — for any reason — it's a scam. The money they sent you is fake; the money you'll send back them is real, and was yours.
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