

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH 'GIFT CARDS,' FAKE BILLS, & SIMILAR FINANCIAL SCAMS



If you have been a victim of a scam, report it to cybersecurity@ucdavis.edu ASAP

Cyber criminals use sophisticated methods to steal money and data. A typical scam tries to trick you into sending money. It might direct you to a fake vendor website, or say your supervisor wants you to buy gift cards. Scammers use email, phone calls, texts, social media ... whatever they think will work.

General advice

- **Most scams try to prey on a sense of urgency and anxiety. Resist it.**
Examples: A fake email from your boss demands that funds be sent to some account ASAP; or a fake email for a vendor states it never received a payment and will contact a lawyer if payment is not received ASAP. Feeling anxious? That's the scammer's goal.
- **Fraudulent messages don't always have bad grammar.**
Yes, countless scams use awkward language. Others look valid. Maybe they claim to come from your boss, finance person or a dean, and ask for a payment that sounds legitimate.
- **Don't be rushed into financial decisions.**
Have a standard process for procurement that includes a standard intake process, and has checks and balances to ensure a transaction is legitimate. If you need to deviate from this process, call a known contact and ask why there is a deviation.

Continued...

(TIPS FOR DEALING WITH ‘GIFT CARDS,’ FAKE BILLS, & SIMILAR FINANCIAL SCAMS, cont.)

Here are common attacks, what to watch for, and what to do.

Scam	What to watch for	What to do
Apple (or any) gift card scam	An email impersonating your supervisor or other high-level individual asks you to purchase gift cards ASAP, and to reply to the email with the codes.	Have a standard process for purchasing anything, including gift cards. If a request is urgent, call your supervisor and double-check.
Vendor imposter fraud	A change, or an unexpected invoice, arrives from a known vendor.	Always call your known vendor contact if you receive altered or unexpected invoices.
Wire transfer fraud	An email asks you to wire funds, for any reason.	Stop, and review the request with your supervisor or accounting department to ensure the payment is appropriate. Call a known number; ask the purported requester to verify the request for the payment.
Check fraud	An unexpected check arrives, with a request to wire some or all of the amount back to the sender	Check with your accounting department, and perhaps with the bank, to verify the check.

Questions? Inquire with Your Local IT Support or Call the IT Express Service Desk at 530-754-HELP (4357)

For more information:

- [“April 2019: Whaling, SMiShing, and Vishing...Oh My!”](#)
- [“Boss on vacation this month? Beware the employer imposter scam”](#)