

JOB DESCRIPTION CHECKLIST:

Remember These 10 Indispensable Writing Tips

Well-written job descriptions not only attract more applicants and better quality candidates; they also save businesses time and money. Poorly written job descriptions, on the other hand, produce subpar results (both in terms of the volume and quality of applicants). And when that occurs, hiring leaders are forced back to the drawing board: **over 45 percent** of organizations report needing to rewrite job descriptions **more than 20 percent of the time**.

What does this add up to? Nearly **\$650 million** in costs and as much as **3.75 million labor hours annually** where the job description had to be rewritten and reposted.¹

So rather than risk compromising your most important resources, when it comes time to develop your next job description, use the following checklist to make sure you're taking the right steps to hire the right people—faster and easier:



1 Do the Groundwork.

Before putting pen to paper, there are some things you must do first: a) justify the role, b) confirm budget and reporting structure, c) validate responsibilities, d) identify who to include on the hiring team, and e) check out similar job descriptions.



2 Include All 7 Ingredients.

There are seven essential ingredients that need to be included in a job description. Make sure you don't leave any out when following our recipe: a) job title, b) location, c) job summary, d) job responsibilities, e) skills and qualifications, f) about the company, and g) how to apply.



3 Write for the Candidate.

Craft the job description for job seekers. Don't build it for employees, HR, or even the job itself. Job descriptions that focus on candidate needs generate a 14 percent higher response rate than those solely focused on employer requirements (qualifications and skills).²



4 Be Specific and Succinct.

Remember the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"? You need to craft copy that is neither too short nor too long, but rather just right (aim for around 700 words). Use bullets—yet wisely. Understand the difference between primary responsibilities and those that are secondary. Avoid dense and lengthy paragraphs and lists—job seekers will get lost in the detail.



5 Think SEO.

It might sound strange to talk about SEO and job descriptions, but SEO is actually an important consideration if you want job seekers to find your job description. Include keywords in your job title to ensure job seekers find the job description. Research shows you'll see a 116 percent increase in candidate views.³



6 Avoid Overusing 'Strategic'.

Not every job is strategic. Be careful about how strategic you make a role sound. Just because a role isn't strategic doesn't mean it isn't compelling to job seekers.



7 Remember Mobile.

Forty-five percent of Americans use their mobile devices to search for a job once a day! And 18 percent have submitted a job application on their smartphone. Yet, less than half of companies offer mobile-friendly career sites and even fewer offer mobile-friendly applicant tracking system (ATS) solutions.⁴ Get ahead of the competition by making your job description mobile friendly.



8 Showcase Your Company.

Company culture hits home with job seekers. Seventy-two percent indicate that an organization's reputation has a significant impact on their decision to apply for and accept a position.⁵ Bring your company to life by telling your story and advertising your core values.



9 Tell How to Apply.

Don't forget to tell job seekers how to apply for a position and what documents they will need to supply. Make your submission process as simple as possible; longer applications equal fewer candidate submission.⁶



10 Include the Salary Range.

Including a salary range and overview of benefits increases the likelihood that a job seeker will apply and helps eliminate candidates who aren't interested or not qualified.

Now you're ready to test out your new job description writing skills by posting your first job.



¹Infographic: 7 Essential Ingredients of a Winning Job Description," MightyWorks, March 2016.

²Lauren Weber, "The Simple Change That Attracts Great Job Applicants," Wall Street Journal, February 11, 2015, and Kris Foster, "Writing It Right in Job Ads," University of Saskatchewan News, May 14, 2014.

³"Not All Job Postings Are Created Equal: How to Write a More Effective Job Posting," Recruiting.com, 2015.

⁴Aaron Smith, "U.S. Smartphone Use in 2015," Pew Research Center, April 1, 2015.

⁵"Not All Job Postings Are Created Equal."

⁶Ibid.