The Do's and Don'ts of Writing Job Descriptions

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You see them everywhere, **poorly written job descriptions** are costing you hires.

Use clear job titles

Job titles can be confusing in an overly technical industry. Keep your job titles as clear and simple as possible, but most importantly, be consistent.

X Don't switch between terms like junior and senior for grades such as I, II, and III OR Associate, Executive and Expert.

Don't use meaningless buzzwords in the title to make your job advert stand out.

✓ Be simple, concise, clear and ask yourself "would a person be able to reasonably assume job duties based on the job title?"

Avoid "jack of all trades" skills

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- Hard working
- Highly organized
- Juggle multiple projects
- Motivated
- Eager
- Well-spoken
- Flexible
- Team player
- Take on additional duties
- Ability to work in fast-paced environment

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- Good communicator
- Teamwork skills
- Self-management ability
- Eager to learn
- Great work ethic

Don't use gender-biased language

In addition to using third person language, certain words can come across as masculine or feminine, and can discourage good applicants from applying. Instead, use neutral language to convey the same message:

X We are looking for a strong sales manager to meet aggressive growth goals and build a highly competitive team of reps.

✔ We are seeking a sales manager who can achieve our growth targets and successfully lead a team of sales representatives to ensure they meet individual targets.

Avoid using negative words

These words are not just words that seem negative at first, but certain words have an implied or underlying meaning. The right, or wrong, kind of words can be interpreted as you telling your candidates what to do or convey an overly authoritarian tone.

X These types of words may include 'must', 'never', 'always', 'strict', 'can't', "expected to" and so on. These words feel absolute, imply a lack of flexibility or collaboration and like you are giving orders.

✓ Instead, try to use words that feel less absolute such as "you may", "you will be encouraged to", "often" and similar phrases to communicate a sense of collaborative action, rather than giving orders.

Include company information

Mentioning the company name, office location, details about the business create a sense of comfort and familiarity with candidates, and they feel like they know you better. Also, listing transparent details about the job such as salary, bonuses and benefits details shows you aren't hiding anything.

X *"We are hiring an Engineering Manager to head up a new business unit and will oversee new project development. This role will be paid competitive salary based on experience as well as be eligible for a generous benefits package."*

✔ *"ABC Inc. is hiring an Engineering Manager to manage project development in our Emerging Technologies Division. The budgeted salary for this role is $125,000 and will be eligible for full health insurance, dental, vision, 401k and health savings plan."*

Do! Talk to an expert ✓

Our recruitment team has reviewed thousands of job descriptions. We know what works, and just as important, we know what doesn't.

Talk to an expert