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Job descriptions

Overview

A job description is your organisation's sales pitch to the best available talent in the same way as a candidate's CV is their sales tool. Don't be complacent; you need to sell the reasons a candidate should come to work for you and not a competitor.

Where to start

A good job description is critical to finding the best candidate to fill your vacant role. Think about what you want the person to bring to your organisation, then outline the experience, essential technical and managerial skills the role demands. Can you picture where the role could lead a candidate in the future as they progress in your organisation?

Try to give just enough information to appeal to and interest candidates and then offer much more detail when you have them engaged in the process. Your job spec is a wish list, but too much detail can put off good candidates who may feel underqualified if they don't match all the requirements you list. This way you don't exclude the perfect candidate who may lack one specific skill but who does have the potential to grow into the role and with some training and a little more experience will match your wish list.

How to structure a job description

Keep it simple; split the job description into four categories. Our experience at Conspicuous is that candidates want to know about the company, the role, opportunities and the recruitment process.

1. Company info

An introduction to your organisation that sets the scene for the candidate:

- The size/scale of your company
- Your unique selling points (USPs)
- Your company culture, values and benefits.

Your USPs may include a low staff turnover or a policy of promoting from within which is attractive to potential employees.

Benefits could include great training programmes, daily yoga sessions or an onsite subsidised canteen.

We recommend including a link to your company's home web page, for example:

www.conspicuous.com

2. Role

Explain why the role is available then:

- Define the opportunity
- The size and structure of the team
- Key skills required



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- Role's responsibilities and parameters
- Line management
- Financial
- Salary banding
- Benefits
- Bonus
- Relocation allowance
- Remote working criteria.

It might be helpful to ask yourself, "what type of company or ideally what specific role within that company would my ideal candidate come from?"

3. Opportunity:

A good question to ask yourself at this point is, "*Why would a candidate make the move from a rival business?*"

Our Conspicuous recruiters regularly find that candidates also value opportunities for professional development. Specify:

- Opportunities to gain skills
 - Any technical or managerial training on offer
- A potential career path for the winning candidate.

4. Recruitment process:

Make the recruitment process clear in the job description:

- How many stages are involved
- What will each step include
 - Video interview
 - Technical/skills test
- Timeframe
 - How long the process may take
 - When you will provide feedback
 - Potential start date.

Conspicuous candidates tell us that they value additional information such as quote from the line manager, or the person vacating the position. A client testimonial on your job description can also be helpful– little extra touches that make you stand out in the market.

Importantly, remember a job description may be the first time a candidate has engaged with your company and brand – make it count. It's your shop window to attract the best possible candidates and bring the best possible talent into your organisation.

Next steps

For more information about job specs or how to build brilliant teams, please get in touch.

01483 233 000 /646 202 1761
admin@conspicuous.com
conspicuous.com



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