

GROWERTALKS

Features

12/1/2020

Searching With Style

Bill Calkins

It's truly a new day when it comes to acquiring talent to help drive your business into the future. And in keeping with the theme of *Green Profit* this month, it's all about style—clearly defining your style and engaging job seekers who share it. The first chance you have is usually a job posting, and like dating or selling a house, initial impressions lead to the next steps and hopefully closing the deal in a positive way.



First, it's critical to understand the difference between a job posting and job description. The hiring experts at Indeed.com explain the job post differs from the job description most clearly in its intended purpose. Job postings are meant to clearly describe your company's most appealing characteristics on job boards to attract top candidates. On the other hand, a job description is part of the job posting and should be more in depth.

Often, the description appears on an internal company page that covers all of the responsibilities, any education requirements and skills that potential hires should possess to effectively do the job. They share that the job posting only depicts the most marketable aspects of the job. In contrast, the job description delves into more detail.

Understanding the difference is important because both serve unique purposes. In this article, we focus on the posting.

The basics

Before you get too far into expressing your company's style, remember to incorporate the basics when putting together a job posting. (Note: It's the 21st century and most likely your posting will be digital, so keep that in mind.) An effective job posting must include these eight things:

- Engaging title
- Short list of the most attractive responsibilities
- A bit about your company's history
- The job location (especially important if you operate in multiple areas)
- All benefits
- Information about the general work environment
- The pay scale (Yes, this should be included!)

- Complete company contact information so candidates can reach you in whatever way they choose

You should be creative in these eight messages, but don't get carried away. These are the table stakes and potential hires should be able to understand them clearly. Nonetheless, put together your job posting with style—your style.

The best approach

Now that you understand the difference between a posting and description, and have a list of the necessary ingredients, let's take a look at the verbiage. It's always good to have a basic template to work from and use consistently. Here's a template to follow:

Job Title & Top 3 Benefits. Work with your management team to develop a concise, one-paragraph introduction and take the approach of asking candidates to answer a question. The final sentence or two should briefly list the job benefits and responsibilities. This is your hook. Here's an example of how it might begin: Do you love plants and have an interest in helping more people bring color into their lives?

Our Company. Take some time to craft an introductory sentence summarizing your company history and recent achievements. This might appear as three to five bullet points detailing your company values or mission, a description of the culture and purpose. This will help potential candidates see how your values align with their own. Don't underestimate the importance of this, no matter where the job lands on your hierarchy. Your goal is to hire and build team members, and alignment leads to longevity.

Specific Position. This is much more cut-and-dried because it's where you summarize employee requirements and potential compensation. Don't leave this open to interpretation and a good strategy is to offer three to five bullet points covering benefits. Potential hires will study this part of the posting, so make it as easy as possible to understand.

Job Location. Again, this is pretty straight forward and is extremely important when hiring for positions that might require relocation. If the job posting might mean a move, be sure to highlight the company's proximity to major cities (if applicable), school systems, local attractions (natural and cultural) and any other benefits. Consider asking your employees to list what they like about the area. Chances are, you'll learn a lot about what locals enjoy.

Why Here? This is your opportunity to get creative and showcase your style. Engage your hiring team to recapture the benefits listed above, clearly describing the position and the company itself. Consider this the conclusion to your story and don't post until you feel it captures your culture in the most appealing way. This is your final impression and it will stick in the head of potential candidates before they decide to contact you and continue the conversation. Here's an example to get your creative juices flowing:

- Medical/Dental/401(k)
- Two weeks personal time off
- Casual dress code
- Healthy atmosphere surrounded by plants
- Opportunities for internal advancement
- On-site gardens to enjoy daily
- Close proximity to the airport, and downtown shops and restaurants

Contact Us. Be sure to end your post with the best ways to get in contact. Consider that folks communicate in different ways, so include as many paths as possible. Phone, email, text and website are critical, but don't forget

your social pages like LinkedIn or Facebook. Encourage direct messages to engage the widest audience. If you have a hiring manager, include their direct lines so candidates have to jump through the fewest hoops possible.

Seal the deal

Once you have a job posting that reflects your company's style, the chance of finding a candidate who "fits" is much higher. Team members who share your values and mission will not only work harder, but stay longer and help build your future. There's nothing worse than a revolving door of employees—it costs money, demoralizes the rest of the team and adds unnecessary hassle for management.

Perhaps one of the easiest ways to reduce this risk is by taking extra time up front to create job postings that separate the wheat from the chaff. Of course, you won't bat a thousand, that's unrealistic, but showcasing your style effectively could raise the average significantly and lead to long-term benefits for you and your company.

Important Points to Remember

We caught up with Todd Downing, a managing partner with Best Human Capital & Advisory Group, which helps small- and medium-sized businesses in our industry conduct candidate searches, and he offered some excellent advice for today's job postings. Here are five tips from Todd:

- Be sure to respect diversity and inclusiveness. Make your job posting (and description) terminology gender-neutral.
- Identify behaviors for success. Too many job postings list the responsibility or technical requirements in generic terms.
- Your dream candidate might have five years of industry/product experience, but by focusing only on this ideal, we miss out on countless others from different backgrounds who would excel and learn this information quickly.
- Keep in mind that terms your company might be familiar with could be completely alien to those outside of the business and eliminate them from job postings.
- Be clear on the reporting relationships of the role both upwards and downwards.

Find more resources, blogs and articles from Todd and his team at BestHumanCapital.com. **GT**