

Job Posting Guide

The following tips will help you post an accurate job ad that reflects the position requirements as well as gets the maximum number of qualified applicants to apply. While this list is not exhaustive, following these practices increases the likelihood that you end up with higher quality candidates.

1. Think about “searchability”

Using the appropriate keywords in a job posting is the most important thing an employer can do when placing ads online. Start by brainstorming a list of terms or phrases that someone who is looking for similar jobs may search online. Another option is to look at similar job postings from other organizations. You can even use tools like Google Keyword Planner to find the terms that get searched on Google every month. The hard part is balancing searchability with being lost in the shuffle of the internet, so be sure to share your post in the right place so it gets the traffic you are hoping for!

2. Ditch the creative job titles

While creating fun titles for positions in your organization may seem like a great way to express individuality, creativeness, and a fun culture, it can dramatically impact your searchability. In addition, going outside industry standards of title progression may impede a candidate’s ability to find your organization when doing searches online or in job boards. This can also hurt a job seeker’s ability to understand the level of the position in your organization and the tasks for which the person in the job will be held accountable.

3. Communicate clearly—Eliminate slang, jargon, abbreviations, initialisms, and acronyms.

In education, jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms are part of how we speak with each other but using such terms can reduce the searchability of a posting. Furthermore, it can deter individuals from applying for positions, especially when people from outside of the education industry are looking at your job openings. We suggest limited use of jargon, slang, acronyms, initialisms, or abbreviations unless they’re extremely position specific and widely used. Thus, avoid “Sr.” for Senior or “CFO” for Chief Financial Officer. The practice of using initialisms with the title is permissible, such as “Physical Therapist (PT)” or “Registered Nurse (RN).”

4. Introduce everyone to your organizational brand

Introducing people to your brand can start when they look at your organization for employment. Utilize images, logos, colors, and language that matches your organization's current branding. Don't forget to share your district's website address as well as information on other important aspects of your organization.

5. Create your own content

Work with leadership or the manager of the position to identify the job requirements, tasks, and other relevant information for your job postings. Ensure the posting matches the job description. Create your own content rather than copy other postings on the internet since sometimes materials are copyrighted. Another option is to use websites like the [Occupational Information Network](#) from the U.S. Department of Labor that identify knowledge, skills, abilities, tasks, and other information for a wide range of positions. This information is open to public use and updated yearly.

6. Establish realistic minimum qualifications

Clearly define the minimum requirements for the job. This should include information related to education, licensure, certification, training, and experience. Accurately defining this information ahead of time and including it in your posting saves everyone time. It will also help you quickly make decisions about who should be considered a qualified candidate. It is also important to be realistic when creating this list. For example, requiring five years of experience for entry level positions is not realistic.

7. Define job tasks clearly.

Include major tasks the individual will be performing. This will help individuals decide whether they want to apply for your open positions or not. This information should be mirrored in your job descriptions.

8. Disclose the salary range

It has been the practice of many organizations in a variety of industries to exclude information on pay in job postings. This can be a deterrent to applicants. Posting should include information on whether the position is hourly or salaried and the length of the work year or contract.

9. Make timelines transparent

To ease applicant's confusion and anxiety, communicate information on the selection process and/or timeline. Often jobs are posted with no closing or end date. Unless you are regularly accepting applications and hiring individuals for a job throughout the year, job ads need a closing date. This helps everyone involved in the process.

10. Be aware of gendered language and how that affects applicant's behaviors.

A great deal of research has been done on the habits of men and women when it comes to applying for jobs. In short, women react differently to the language used in postings than men do. Being aware of these behaviors is important as we strive for equity in our organizations. According to a 2011 study from researchers at the Harvard Kennedy School, "Job ads using more masculine wording were perceived by women to be less appealing than the same ads using more feminine wording." While we may not have this intent, hidden gender bias can affect how both women and men respond to postings.

The following strategies can help:

- Be aware of assigning pronouns (genders) to work such as "in this position *he* will..." or the "perfect candidate will have *her* bachelor's degree in..."
- Gendered wording doesn't only include the use of pronouns. If you Google "gendered word list" you will find many examples of male-gendered and female-gendered words. Male or masculine words include aggressive, confident, courage or courageous, independent, self-confident, and self-reliant. Female or feminine words include child/children, compassion, cooperate, empathetic, responsive, sensitive, support, together, trust, and understand. If you want to check the language in your posting, there are several free gender bias decoders available online. These decoders allow you to insert your posting language, and it returns an analysis of your posting. You can then proceed as you would like when it comes to content changes.
- Ask others for their feedback and reactions to content prior to posting.

11. Be aware of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces laws specific to discrimination against applicants and employees due to someone's age, color, national origin, race, sex (which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), religion, disability, and genetic information. The [EEOC website](#) provides a great deal of information for employers including a list of prohibited practices and lists of best practices. On the [prohibited practices page](#), they note that it is "illegal for an employer to publish a job advertisement that shows a preference for or discourages someone from applying for a job" due to an individual's protected class (listed above). The website clarifies this with the follow example: "a help-wanted ad that seeks "females" or "recent college graduates" may discourage men and people over 40 from applying and may violate the law."

Review the EEOC website for further information on the law, prohibited practices, and best practices when it comes to employment practices in the United States. Further, if your organization has a question about the legality of a practice, contact your legal counsel for advice.

12. Proof-read before you post

Run the spell-check and have someone else take a quick read through for grammar and punctuation errors. While this seems obvious, postings do make it to job boards and websites with errors, and this will not look good to job seekers.

13. Share, share, and share again

Sharing a job posting in multiple places increases the likelihood that a person searching for a position will locate it. Post job ads on social media accounts, your organization's website, and job boards to increase the likelihood that it is seen by qualified applicants.

14. Close the communication loop

The number of applicants who report that they are "ghosted" by organizations is dramatically increasing. What does this mean? After applying for an open position, applicants never receive any kind of response. Another version of this is when an applicant receives notification that their information has been forwarded, but never hears from anyone after that point.

If you want to set yourself apart from everyone else, a standard email response may be enough. After filling a job opening, send applicants an email that thanks them for their interest and lets them know the position has been filled. Treating people with respect isn't difficult, and it can leave applicants with a favorable impression of your organization even when they aren't selected for the open position.

15. Post job ads only when you have an intent to hire

Some organizations use job postings to gather information about applicants they might consider in the future. This pipeline building practice will more than likely result in long-lasting brand damage. Post positions you look to fill in the short-term, not wish-list jobs where you're fishing to see who responds.