The age-old conundrum of having to wade through the “noise” is something that increasingly affects hiring managers and HR professionals. With the ever-growing work force and propagation of job listing options, hiring professionals face challenges like never before. In order to find the right candidates for the right positions, without having to spend countless hours reading through irrelevant resumes, creating a solid job description is a crucial step.

This eBook serves as an easy-to-use guide for writing a job description that will help those responsible for hiring find the most relevant applicants possible.

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PART 1

Title

Grab candidates’ interest—and get plenty of quality applications—by giving your open job the right name.
A job title is the very first thing a candidate sees when your job listing pops up, and it’s so much more than a title. It’s a headline, a billboard and a vital marketing tool that goes a long way towards attracting qualified candidates. Without a solid title, your job posting might as well be invisible.

Here are five things you can do today to put your job title to work for you.

1. **Be Clear**
   There’s nothing worse than making a potential applicant work hard to figure out what, exactly, you’re talking about. They’ll simply move on to another position that more clearly matches their experience and needs.

2. **Do Research**
   Do a bit of competitive research to see what similar companies are doing, and follow the industry standard. It’s so much easier for a candidate to move from another company to yours if your naming conventions are in line with each other.

3. **No Overloaded Titles**
   At every company, there’s someone doing two jobs at the same time. Their title usually has the word “and” in it: “food AND science editor” or “email marketing strategist AND social media manager.”

   Candidates see “and” as a red flag that they’re going to be overworked. So when you’re looking to fill two slots with one body, avoid perpetuating their title just because that’s how it’s been done in the past.

4. **Stay Relevant**
   The landscape changes frequently, and roles that were in vogue a few years ago can be completely obsolete today. No matter what you’re hiring for, make sure the title is current.

   In years past, when social media roles were first becoming popular, nobody knew what to call them. Every company created their own unique title, but now titles such as “social media manager” and “social media strategist” are the norm.

5. **Be Honest**
   It’s tempting to puff up a title to sound more impressive and get more applications. However, you don’t want to wade through dozens of overqualified candidates with high salary requirements for a low-level position.

   **A few guidelines:**
   Only put “senior” in front of actual senior level positions. Don’t be afraid to use “junior” when necessary.

   Watch out for words like “director,” “manager,” and “supervisor,” only using them if the position actually directs, manages or supervises.

Remember: Think like a marketer.
PART 2

Company Description

The one thing your job listing is probably getting wrong.
of company descriptions fail to do one important thing: Sell your company to the candidate. This section is a chance for you to sell someone not just on the job itself, but on the workplace culture and environment that they’re going to experience every day. And you should do it in two to three sentences, max—an overly wordy description will lose their attention.

Top five reasons why it’s crucial to sell your company to potential applicants:

1. They don’t know about your company.
Even if your company has been in business for a hundred years and is considered a leader in your field, there are still people who have never heard of you before. A good exercise is to pretend you’re describing your company to a recent college grad who doesn’t yet know the industry landscape.

2. They have assumptions about you.
Write down a few preconceived notions that the public might have about your company. Position your company in a positive light and change those negative opinions. Don’t miss out on fantastic applicants who wrongly believe you’re not right for them. Focus on the positive.

3. Your standard “About Us” language doesn’t mean much.
Erase the standard description from your brain and approach it from a different angle. What do job seekers want to know about you? What’s important to them? That should always be your starting point.

4. You’re missing an opportunity to show your company’s passion.
Job seekers want to feel a spark of connection when they read a listing, and this is your chance to provide that spark. Mention what your company does, and then say WHY you do it. What’s the driving force behind your business? Why does it matter to you? Why should applicants be excited about it?

5. Job seekers have no idea why your company is perfect for them.
Whatever sets you apart, make it known. Candidates will feel a stronger connection to your company right off the bat, and they’ll be far more likely to fill out an application and begin the process.

Always remember:
Don’t describe your company—sell your company.
PART 3

Responsibilities
There are three characteristics of a job responsibility section that should be followed:

1. **The intended result or outcome**

2. **A description of the task**

3. **An active verb**

List all of the essential functions of the position, which should include around 5 responsibilities. Start each responsibility with a present tense, action verb and remember to be honest about how often a task will be performed or what percentage of the employee’s time will be spent with each task. This will help applicants form an idea of what a typical day may look like.

**Responsibility Statement**

Describe the *What, Why, How* of the position. Also, make sure to describe the specific KPIs and goals involved.

The description of responsibilities should be detailed, but should not include the instructions or procedures for performing the job.

Generally, you should be able to describe a job using 5 key responsibilities (no less than 3 and no more than 6).

You should estimate the percentage of time spent on each responsibility, adding up to 100%.

**Essential and Marginal Duties**

You will also need to identify whether each responsibility is Essential or Marginal:

**Essential Duties**

The basic job duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations.

**Marginal Duties**

Non-essential duties that could be removed without destroying the basic purpose of the position.
Action Verbs

**A-B**

accommodate  achieve  acquire  address  adjust  administer  advise  allocate  analyze  apply  appoint  approve  arrange  assess  assign  assist  audit  augment  authorize  budget

**C-D**

calculate  circulate  clarify  clear  collaborate  collect  combine  communicate  compile  complete  compose  compute  conduct  confer  consolidate  construct  consult  control  coordinate  correspond  counsel  create  customize  delegate  deliver  demonstrate  design  develop  devise  direct  disseminate  distinguish  distribute  document  draft

**E-I**

edit  eliminate  enforce  establish  evaluate  execute  expand  explore  facilitate  formulate  furnish  generate  guide  handle  hire  identify  illustrate  implement  improve  improvise  incorporate  increase  inform  initiate  instruct  interact  interface  interpret  interview  investigate  issue  lift  maintain  manage  monitor  motivate  negotiate  observe  operate  organize  participate  perform  plan  predict  prepare  present  process  program  provide  quantify  recognize  recommend  record  recruit  reduce  regulate  report  research  resolve  review  schedule  search  select  solve  specify  strategize  streamline  strengthen  summarize  support  teach  train  translate  troubleshoot  update  validate  verify
The required skills section is where you take the responsibilities for the job. In this section it is important to clearly state, in bullet point form, the skills, experiences, and qualifications required.

**These could include:**

- **Ability to perform certain functions**
- **Familiarity with specific software/computer programs**
  (eg. Excel, Word, Power Point)
- **Licenses or specialized certificates**
- **Years of experience in a relevant field**
- **Comfort within certain environments**
  (eg. Fast-paced atmosphere)
Elements of a Successful Job Listing

Attract the perfect candidate for your job by following these essential guidelines.
Keep it short, bulleted, and easy to read.

79% of online readers scan content rather than reading word for word.

Prioritize your descriptions.
Candidates spend more time reading job and company descriptions than job requirements.

Job Description: 25.9 seconds
Company Description: 23.0 seconds
Job Requirement: 14.6 seconds
**SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR**

New York City

MediaHouse, a digital marketing agency based in New York City, is seeking a Social Media Coordinator to join our team. The Social Media Coordinator will work closely with the marketing team to develop and curate highly shareable content for our clients’ social media efforts and for MediaHouse marketing campaigns.

If you have a passion for all things social, love developing campaigns for a wide variety of clients and enjoy attending industry events to stay up on the latest trends (on us, of course), then this may be the job for you.

**At MediaHouse, we believe in free snacks, Happy Hour Fridays and these other perks and benefits:**

- Competitive salaries
- Exciting opportunities with room for growth within the company
- 401(k) with 3% matching
- A competitive health care package including medical, dental and vision
- Reimbursement on gym memberships

**Social Media Marketer: Responsibilities Include:**

- Work alongside clients to build and manage social media campaigns
- Managing the timely execution of content via Hootsuite for a variety of social channels
- Monitor the effectiveness of content and supply recommendations on content, execution times, and social platforms
- Assist marketing team on developing in-house marketing campaigns
- Use social media monitoring tools to monitor, report and respond to activity on client’s social channels.

**Job Requirements:**

- Strong written and verbal skills
- Preferred degree in Creative Writing, Communications or Public Relations
- Strong analytic skills
- Experience with Google Analytics, Facebook Insights or other monitoring softwares

At MediaHouse, we believe in fostering growth, learning new skills and making sure every team member feels valued. If you think you’d be a great fit at MediaHouse, we’d love for you to apply.

**Apply to Job**

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**TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE JOB LISTING:**

- **Upload your logo** to help job-seekers identify with your brand
- **Put the location up front** so candidates know where you are
- **Point out the perks & benefits** before getting to duties
- **Get noticed with a title** that’s likely to be used in a search
- **Use action words to describe 5-10 job responsibilities**
- **Short, enticing intros** capture applicants’ attention
- **End with a call to action**
Watch out for jargon.

The more natural your job listing reads, the more likely it is that candidates will respond. Your job listing is not only an advertisement for your open position, but for your company as well. Attract the kind of applicant you want by avoiding tired turns of phrase in favor of words that are more dynamic and honest.

**Commonplace Cliches**

**DON’T say this**
- Fast-paced
- Multi-tasker
- Results-oriented
- Communication skills
- Detail-oriented
- Self-starter/self-motivated
- Creative/Innovative
- Dynamic
- Team player
- Deadline-driven
- Passionate

**DO try this!**
- Busy
- Shifts gears
- Follows through
- Candid, vocal, honest
- Conscientious
- Ambitious
- Original
- Flexible
- Relationship builder
- On time, all the time
- Enthusiastic

**Unwelcoming Words**

**DON’T say this**
- Ninja
- Rock star
- Guru
- Jedi
- Evangelist
- He/She
- BA required
- Include salary requirements

**DO try this!**
- Skilled
- Virtuoso
- Visionary
- Talented
- Enthusiast
- You
- Degree preferred
- Don’t say anything—skip this one!

**Boring Buzzwords**

**DON’T say this**
- Entrepreneurial
- Conceptualize
- Execute/Implement
- Synergize
- Optimize
- Standard EOE language
- Competitive salary
- Additional tasks and responsibilities as needed

**DO try this!**
- Pioneering
- Dream up
- Make it happen
- Cooperate
- Improve
- Rewrite in your own words!
- Include actual salary range!
- Here’s another one to skip!

**Sources:**
- forbes.com/sites/briansutter/2015/12/18/the-most-overlooked-factor-of-content-marketing/#539b4fe37c00
- blogs.wsj.com/atwork/2013/05/02/how-we-really-read-job-ads/
1. Keep job titles short.
Cut each job title down to 50 characters or less.

2. Delete extraneous text.
Job seekers on their phones should be able to scroll down the page less than four times to reach the very end of your job description.

3. Break up paragraphs.
Insert double-spaced paragraph breaks every 2-4 sentences to make sure it's an enticing read.

4. Watch out for bullets, numbered lists, symbols.
Make sure your bulleted or numbered lists are double-spaced for easy readability, and that any symbols are rendered appropriately on mobile.

5. Use a listings site that offers clean mobile design.
Don’t use a job search site without a fully optimized mobile design as part of their package.

6. Make sure candidates can take action in the moment.
The job search sites you use should allow applicants to submit their information right from their device. They should also be able to save, send or share a position they like.

7. Do quality control from your phone.
Once you’ve posted an open position, take out your phone or tablet and read your entire listing as if you’re a candidate doing a search.
Need relevant and qualified candidates to join your company?

Leverage Mediabistro’s skilled and motivated community to source candidates for the following media-related positions:

- Marketing & Communications
- Sales & Business Development
- Production
- Operations & Strategy
- Writing & Editing
- Creative & Design

POST A JOB >