

Tips to Writing a Better Experience Description

Looking to work with a student? Want to get the most attention to your experiential learning opportunity – no matter what the position may be? Follow some of these tips for crafting highly effective descriptions:

Get the title right

Job titles that don't accurately describe what the position is, actually may turn off some candidates or at the least, not garner the attention of the right candidate. Sure, "ninja" or "guru" may show that you are fun-loving, and your culture is laid back, but even something as ambiguous as "volunteer" does not tell the reader what you're looking for in a candidate. Look to industry standards regarding titles so that no one has to guess, and your opportunity ad isn't missed.

Avoid jargon

Every organization has their own short forms, acronyms and clichés but avoid using them in the ad. It becomes very difficult to read and again, if a candidate can't see themselves in your advertisement, they won't apply. If you must use an acronym or short-form, attempt to explain its meaning.

Speak to the duties or responsibilities, but with a caveat...

Of course, you need to tell the future incumbent what they will be doing in the role so that they have a good sense of what is expected of them, but avoid having your descriptions sound like operational manuals by putting the minute details into the ad.

Ask for the knowledge, skills and attitudes that you actually need

This is really important when hiring students or recent grads. Don't inflate what you are looking for so those with 5 years' experience would be intimidated to apply. A trend in writing descriptions is to write in a competency-based framework that focus on behaviour. Think about leadership, teamwork, problem solving capabilities in your candidate versus whether they have performed the exact task in the past. Be true to the position and you'll find that you'll have more candidates that will see themselves in the role.

Let students know what's in it for them

Of course, you are hiring someone because of a need you have identified, but if you offer some great benefits, are socially responsible, or your company is growing exponentially then share! students want to know about the culture of the organization that they will be working in and how this position may impact future career decisions.

Be wary of biases in your ad

Avoid alienating people by using gender biased language in your ad. Don't negate the fact that colloquialisms that are used may not translate to other cultures. If you are able to reach a wider pool of applicants, then you'll have a wider pool of applicants to choose from. As well, this diverse talent pool will attract an even more diverse talent pool in the future.



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