

Peak posting performance



Best practices for writing a better
Job Posting

Never underestimate the power of a Job Posting

As the first point of contact most candidates have with a potential employer, a job posting can make or break a candidates' impression of a company.

While job postings on online job boards are the number one resource job candidates use to find out about open positions, according to a 2012 study, it doesn't mean that simply posting a job on a job board will guarantee applications. Surprising as it may sound, what you say in a job posting – and how you say it – matters significantly.

In fact, in a recent CareerBuilder survey, 75 percent of job seekers reported that the look and feel of a posting influences their decision to apply.

The challenge with creating any job posting is finding a way to maximize what small amount of space you have in order to “sell” your company to a prospective applicant. After all, most applicants are probably skimming your job posting for relevant keywords – at best.

This report will give you the help you need to craft your CareerBuilder Job Postings to more efficiently attract qualified, relevant candidates and compel them to apply to your open positions.

The image shows a screenshot of a CareerBuilder job posting for a 'Product Manager' role at Paradigm Technologies in London. The page is annotated with nine numbered callouts, each pointing to a specific feature or section of the job posting:

- 1 Job title**: Points to the 'Product Manager' title.
- 2 Job description**: Points to the 'Job Description' section.
- 3 Job requirements**: Points to the 'Role Responsibilities' and 'Skills and Experience' sections.
- 4 Use Keywords**: Points to the 'Save Job', 'Email', and 'Report' links.
- 5 Proof Your Posting**: Points to the 'APPLY' button.
- 6 Visually Compelling**: Points to the 'Company Overview' section, which includes a video player and the company logo.
- 7 Tell your story**: Points to the company's mission statement text.
- 8 Cover all your bases**: Points to the video player.
- 9 Secure your success**: Points to the 'APPLY' button.

Start at the beginning:

Job title

1

As the first thing job candidates see, the job title is the most important component of your Job Posting. The job title helps determine – more than anything else – whether or not a candidate will click through to view your Job Posting. Use the following tips to create a job title that inspires action:

Stop advertising for “Rock Stars”. Unless you’re hiring someone for your Bon Jovi cover band, do not advertise that you’re looking for a “rock star” for your next hire. The same applies for “rainmaker” or “visionary”. Not only are these terms meaningless, but they also lessen the chances your posting will show up in organic search results, because job candidates simply aren’t searching for these obscure terms.

Use conventional job titles. Unconventional job titles confuse people. If wacky job titles are the norm at your company, highlight this fact within the body of the posting, not in the job title. Consider the search terms candidates enter when looking for jobs online and create your job titles from there.

Use specific but familiar job titles. If the candidates you want to target would search for a job by spelling out a title or using an abbreviation, you should use both. For example, if you are searching for someone who does computer-aided design, include the acronym CAD in the title, as well, which will ensure the posting comes up in more searches.

Focus on the job responsibilities. Job titles that focus on the main responsibilities of the job will bring in the most relevant candidates.

Job description

2

The job description is a crucial component to the Job Posting, because job seekers want to know exactly what they will be doing on the job. For the best results, try to include the following information in every Job Posting you create:

- Detailed overview of the responsibilities for the position
- Time commitments, salary and travel expectations
- Interesting challenges of the job and desirable aspects of the job
- Role the position and department has within the company
- Potential for growth within the company

Whatever you do, never write a job posting to appeal to a broad range of candidates. Have your specific, ideal candidate in mind and write the Job Posting to match that person’s attributes, skills and experience. For instance, if you are looking for a CPA with five plus years of experience and an MBA in finance, state it in the Job Posting. This practice effectively weeds out the candidates who do not meet your needs, and leaves you with more relevant candidates who meet your core requirements.

Job requirements

3

Every Job Posting should include the skills necessary to fulfill the role. When writing the job requirements, keep the following things in mind:

- **Section it off:** Make this section stand out to ensure candidates will see it.
- **Distinguish between the “must have” skills and the “desired” skills for the job.** Keep in mind that, the harder a position is to fill, the more you may want to be flexible on must-have skills. Before posting, think about the skills you’re willing to train for, and include those in the “desired” skills.
- **Avoid company jargon.** A lot of companies have their own lingo. Make sure your job descriptions do not contain any language only internal employees would recognize.
- **Use bullet points:** The easier it is for candidates to read and “check off” the requirements they meet, the less likely they are to simply skim the posting and miss crucial information.
- **State your intent:** Deter unqualified candidates from applying by adding a statement to clarify that only those who meet the minimum requirements of the job will be considered for the position.



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Use keywords

4

The more relevant keywords you include in your Job Posting, the higher your posting will appear in job seekers’ search results. Take a moment to assess your Job Posting and consider where you can substitute keywords a job candidate would use in his or her job search. For example, instead of saying, “The person in this position will be required to...” say, “The Marketing Manager will be required to...”

Again, think like a job candidate to include words that individual might use when searching for jobs. Remember to include **important keywords** such as alternate job titles, responsibilities and skills needed for the position.

For example, if you are searching for a nurse, you should make sure to include the keywords of “nurses”, “registered nurse”, “RN” and “BSN”.

Proof your posting

5

Grammar and spelling mistakes on a resume can reflect poorly on a candidate, but it works the same way for employers. A Job Posting that contains spelling or grammatical errors sends a message that you do not care about the impression you leave candidates, and it reflects poorly on your employment brand.

Even the best, most thorough writers aren't immune to the occasional typo, so proofread your postings yourself or ask a colleague to check for errors you might have missed.

21%↑

Company logos or slogans can increase applications by 13% to 21%.

Make it visually compelling

6

As mentioned earlier, 75 percent of job candidates say the look and feel of a Job Posting has influenced their decision to apply. Include the following features to create a more engaging Job Posting:

Use bullets and bold type. Use bold type to draw attention to different sections of the Job Posting, from 'Job Requirements' to 'Company Benefits' to 'About Us' information. Then use bullets to break up long blocks of text and draw attention to important information under these sections. (Just don't go overboard: a long list of bullets is just as ineffective and daze-inducing as a continuous block of text.)

Compensation information. It may be a controversial subject, but including salary information in your job posting increases performance and ultimately saves time. If you don't want to include a definite number or range, consider including a benefit statement such as: "Great pay—higher than industry average, commensurate upon experience, bonuses paid each quarter, opportunities for additional commissions."

Graphics. Wherever possible, include company logos or slogans in the job posting, which can increase applications by 13 to 21 percent, as well as icons linking to any recruitment videos you might have. According to CareerBuilder internal data, Job Postings with video icons are viewed 12 percent more than postings without video, and CareerBuilder clients receive a 34 percent greater application rate when they add video to their job postings.

Remember, the easier a Job Posting is to read, the more likely a job candidate is to read it in full and recognize whether or not he or she is truly qualified for the position, and the less likely you are to end up with a stack of unqualified candidates.

Tell your story

7

Job Postings are your chance to “sell” the position to job candidates, so make sure you designate a section in the Job Posting for your employee value proposition. Clarify what it is that would make someone want to work for your company.

Whether you choose to communicate that message through employee testimonials, a listing of the best places to work awards you’ve won, or as the opening statement to your Job Posting, a truly effective job posting tells job seekers why they should apply to work for your company.

As you consider what information to include, consider a 2009 CareerBuilder study, wherein job candidates named the following factors to be most important attributes they sought in potential employers:

1. Stability and longevity in the market
2. Good career advancement opportunities
3. Good work culture
4. Flexible work arrangements

12%↑

Job postings with video icons are viewed 12% more than postings without video.

Cover all your bases

8

If applicable, associate your Job Posting with multiple industries to increase its visibility. For example, if you are a pharmaceutical company in search of a sales manager, link your posting to multiple industries, such as sales and marketing, health care and pharmaceutical.

Many professions can be cross-posted, such as public relations, accounting, Web design and programmers, just to name a few. Doing so allows candidates to pull up your Job Posting in more searches. Just, again, make sure the industries you associate your Job Posting are relevant.

34%↑

CareerBuilder clients receive a 34% greater application rate when they add video to their job postings.

Secure your success



Everyone benefits from a well-written Job Posting. Job candidates benefit because they have the knowledge to better determine if this is a position for which they would like to apply.

You and your company benefit because the detail you provided in your Job Posting will help you receive only resumes from more relevant, higher potential candidates. In the end, a well-crafted Job Posting can help you reduce your time to hire and save money in the process.

CareerBuilder is a global leader in human capital solutions, helping organisations match the right talent with the right opportunity through a wide range of solutions including medias and a powerful recruitment platform.

CareerBuilder works with the world's top employers providing resources for everything from employer branding and talent intelligence to recruitment support.

More than 10,000 websites feature CareerBuilder's proprietary job search technology on their career sites. Owned by Gannett Co., Inc. (NYSE:GCI), Tribune Company and The McClatchy Company (NYSE:MNI), CareerBuilder and its subsidiaries operate in the United States, Europe, South America, Canada and Asia.

For more information, visit www.hiring.careerbuilder.co.uk.

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