

What makes a good job advert

The perfect job advert would be one that attracts a manageable number of keen, well qualified, available candidates in the right location, with the right work permits and with appropriate salary expectations.

The reality is that job ads with fairly low entry requirements can attract hundreds of applicants, many unsuitable, and some highly skilled roles don't attract nearly enough good candidates.

A concise, well-written, well-targeted job ad is your best tool for appealing to the correct target market. All job ads should, as a minimum, provide the following information; job title, location, job type (permanent, contract, full-time, part-time) responsibilities of the role, and the requirements to fulfil them.

Brevity is important because there is a huge volume of jobs adverts out there and job-seekers tend to scan quickly and move on. Key information for the candidate - location, job type and salary (if listed) should go right at the top, followed by a couple of sentences summarising responsibilities. This may be all candidates see when deciding whether this role is of interest before "drilling down" to get more information.

A job ad is different from a job description, you don't need a long list of detailed daily tasks, just a summary of the key responsibilities along with the qualifications, experience and attributes you need to succeed in the role.

What about the salary package? Salary is crucial information for the applicants. However much we say that it's not about the money, it often is. Candidates will be looking for a specific salary range and may be reluctant to apply for jobs where this is unknown. You will get more applicants for jobs where the salary is shown. Without it, a good proportion of candidates will be unsuitable because of their salary expectations.

Where salary is sensitive information within the company, one option may be to advertise the role with salary but without specific company details (through a recruitment agency). A broad salary range will cast the net as wide as possible but exclude those definitely looking beyond your upper limit.

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A good ad will stand out among its competitors. It pays to be aware of what other similar roles are currently being advertised in the same location to ensure yours compares favourably. If your company has a unique job culture, or a particularly attractive working environment, promote these, without burying the information in long dry paragraphs about company history or corporate goals.

Benefits beyond salary are often a key factor for candidates. If what your company offers in terms of pension, bonus, flexible hours, working from home etc. is better than the average, be sure to mention them.

So, to summarise, a good job advert will;

- Be concise but specific and informative.
- Contain location, job type and ideally a salary range
- Compare well with similar roles
- Promote valuable company benefits

A recent LinkedIn reports (2015 Global Recruiting Trends) shows that there are