

How to Write an Effective Job Posting



With today's competitive market for talents, writing an effective job posting is your first key to attract qualified candidates and create a positive impact on your overall recruitment efforts. Additionally, an effective job posting can reduce the amount of turnover due to the lack of understanding of the overall expectations and dimensions of the job. This is why it is important for hiring managers to invest their time and efforts in developing their job advertisements.

Posting the job description of a position may seem like a good option since it lists all the duties the job entails. However, doing so, may inundate applicants with so much information that it may create more confusion than clarity, which could result in applicants developing a negative perception of the position and the hiring department. A short or overly generalized job posting is equally unproductive. The lack of information about the position allows the candidate to interpret the position based on his/her past work history. For example, an accountant from a large, complex higher education institution may interpret the job duties differently than an accountant for a small, private company. This can also hold true for academic personnel positions.

When writing a job posting, it is critical for a hiring manager to determine the target audience. In addition, the message should be crafted according to the industry and the level of the position. An effective job posting allows applicants to match themselves to the posting and determine their suitability for the position. This idea is supported by a study published in the *Journal of Business and Psychology* (Starner, 2015).

Creating a Job Posting

A well-written job announcement will define the pool of the applicants and potentially attract and appeal to passive (non-active job seeker) applicants. Active and passive applicants should be able to develop an overall picture of the responsibilities, the scope of the position, and the likelihood of success.

The following are the components of a job announcement at the University of Florida.

Let's look at the purpose of each of these areas.

Advertising Summary

The advertisement summary should include key details that provide applicants an overview of the job, why they should apply, and want to work at UF.

Hiring managers should consider using phrases or keywords that will capture applicants' attention and persuade them to take action, review the details of the posting, apply to the opportunity, or refer the opportunity to a friend.

Sample phrases include "join us", "come rise with us", "be part of change", etc. Sample keywords include "remarkable", "amazing", "discover", and "contribute".

When reviewing your job advertisement, ask yourself:

- Is the advertised summary an attention catcher?
- Does it sound fun and exciting?
- Does it list too many technical words?
- Is it too lengthy, or too short?

Who is my targeted audience, industry, level of the position? (Examples: IT, Medical Industry, Executive level)

Classification Title

This describes the actual title established by Classification and Compensation based on the position's needs and requirements (e.g. *Assistant Director, Career Services*).

Posting Title

This is also known as the working title. It should be more descriptive of the overall duties or responsibilities of the position if the classification title is not a close match (e.g. *Assistant Director for Career Events & Recruitment Services*).

When reviewing your job title, consider:

- Does the working title align the overall job functions, and responsibilities of the position?
- Is the posting title too long?

- Is it confusing?
- Is it clear?

Job Description

A clear and well-crafted communication to provide an overall picture of the position. This section helps the candidate better understand the position and his/her suitability for the position. This section should be tailored appropriately based on the level of position and the job industry.

For example, when posting a high level position, the posting may include the scope and the degree or depth of oversight along with expected outcomes. Hourly postings may include information on critical tasks, working environment (e.g. high volume or fast-paced), reporting structure, working hours (e.g. full-time or occasional over-time), etc.

When reviewing the job description, ask yourself:

- Does the job description list specific *targeted skills and expertise* required to succeed in the job?
- Does it list any specific *training that will be provided*?

Does it list a supervisory role?

Advertised Salary

The salary posted can affect the size and the quality of the applicant pool. Posting a salary range or a starting salary with the wording “commensurate with qualifications and experience” is highly recommended since it informs applicants what you are willing to pay while providing you the flexibility with your offer. Salaries should be competitive and it should also align with the job classification title.

When reviewing the recommended salary, consider:

- Is the listed salary a competitive salary for this position?
- Does the rate align with the salary of other employees within the same department/college?

Minimum Requirements

As defined by the established classification title, this indicates to an applicant what a candidate must possess minimally in order to perform the duties of this position. Hiring managers can consult with their departmental HR liaison or Classification and Compensation with Human Resource Services if the minimum requirements needs to be modified.

Preferred Qualifications

Besides the minimum requirements, hiring managers can indicate additional qualifications and experiences that a candidate should possess in order to perform all duties and responsibilities successfully.

When reviewing the preferred qualifications, ask yourself:

- What qualities and skills will the *ideal candidate* have?
- Are there any additional skills or experiences preferable for the job?
- Is there any specific preferable knowledge for the job?

For Example: Bilingual skills, or specific computer programs preferable?

Special Instruction to Applicants

Typically, this is used to provide additional information regarding the application process besides just submitting a UF application. For example, if you require them to submit a cover letter and a resume, then this is the place to inform the candidate of such requirement. Hiring managers can also list work schedules and restrictions under this section. In addition, this section can let applicants know whether it is an internal search.

When reviewing the Special Instructions, consider:

- Are there any specific instructions I should communicate to the applicants pertaining to this job posting?

For Example: This position requires a background check, or there are multiple positions available, and/or open to current UF employees only.

Health Assessment Required

This is usually denoted with “Yes” or “No” to inform applicants if they will undergo a health assessment prior to hire. Health assessments are required based on the position. This information is usually indicated in the job description.

Posting Start and End Date

The length of the posting varies dependent on the type and the level of the position.

- A faculty vacancy must be posted at least 14 days.
- A TEAMS vacancy must be posted for at least 7 days.

Postings can be for longer periods of time when needed.

When reviewing the posting Start and End date, ask yourself:

- How long should I post the position for?
 - ☐ Is two weeks too long?

Does it need to be listed as *open until filled*? If so, what is the review date?

Optimize for Search Engines

Since there are so many job boards in today’s market, it is not uncommon for applicants to search for employment opportunities by typing a few keywords in search engines such as Google and Bing. Adding industry specific keywords in the posting may increase the chance of applicants finding and applying to your position.

Example of a Job Description vs. a Job Announcement

Click on the following examples to analyze the difference between a job description and job announcement. The job description is a great starting point for your job announcement, but it should be tweaked so it resonates with the target audience.

- [Sample Job Description](#)
- [Sample Job Announcement](#)
- [Sample Job Posting](#)

Have questions or need help? For assistance, contact Talent Acquisition and Onboarding at 352-392-2477 or email employment@ufl.edu.

References

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