

## Recruiters Guide

Are you a small company that needs advice and assistance with creating a recruitment advertisement? Our guide is designed to help you avoid mistakes, save time and attract the most suitable candidates.

**For those in a hurry, look at the Quick Guide first.**

### Contents

#### Quick Guide to Creating a Successful Job Advert

- Required information in your job advert
- Job advert checklist

#### Putting your job advert into words

- Avoid unsuitable applications
- Clarity means reaching the right people
- Cut down applications by setting a task
- Include your organisation's motivation

#### Organising Your Recruitment

- Defining job function and title
- Job requirements
- How many and which applications will you receive?
- Talking to your ideal candidate

#### How to submit jobs to EuroBrussels

- How to submit jobs to EuroBrussels
- Jobs within scope?
- Job posting at the recruiter's website or at our site?
- Highlighting your job ad to attract more attention?
- Why publish jobs at EuroBrussels?

#### Selecting the right candidate

- Short listing and interviewing
- Interview technique



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## Getting started

### Specific job advert elements

Effective job advertisement is like other forms of advertising. The job is your product; and the readers your potential customers. The aim of the job advert is to attract interest, communicate quickly and clearly the essential points, and to provide a clear response process.

- Design should concentrate on clarity of text, layout, and on getting a professional image across
- Branding should be present but not overbearing, and must not dominate the job advert itself

### Inspirational job advert checklist

Here is list of things that can inspire your job ad:

#### Formula

- Strong and exact job title
- Name of employer or recruitment agency
- Job base location
- Whether the role is full-time, permanent or a short-term contract
- Publishing date and application deadline
- Eventually job and advert reference number

#### Job description

- Succinct description of business, organization, and division activity, market position and aims
- To whom the position reports - or other indication of where the role is in the structure
- Outline of job role and purpose – set up in a list of points if possible
- Indication of size, responsibility, timescale, and territory of role
- Outline of ideal candidate profile
- Indication of qualifications and experience required
- Salary range
- Other package details or guide (pension, car etc.)
- Career advancement opportunities
- Equipment and systems to be used in the performance of the job, if necessary

#### Response and other information

- Response and application instructions
- Explanation of recruitment process
- Perhaps interview dates
- Contact details as necessary
- Equal opportunities statements

See the job ad as your working document; *the most efficient tool for finding the right person*. If you work this way, all elements should automatically get prioritized right.

## Putting your job advert into words

### Avoid unsuitable applications

At EuroEconomistJobs we see a lot of job ads come and go. It's stunning how many job ads that fail to provide basic information. And therefore recruiters waste a lot of time analyzing not qualified applications, and perhaps having to re-publish the advert.

Furthermore; using EuroEconomistJobs often means receiving many applications. To get only the best ones and to avoid having to respond to hundreds of your rejected applicants, consider this:

- Have very clear and narrowed down job requirement list
- Indicate that "only shortlisted candidates will be contacted"
- Write clearly where the job is geographically located
- Define clear posting and closing dates
- Make posting, mailing and telephone details easy to find

Prevent unqualified job seekers from sending useless applications by having a statement that explains that your job requirements are firm. For example: "*Please read the qualifications for this position carefully. The successful applicant will have to get up to speed quickly and therefore, we will only consider those who meet all the criteria listed.*"

This won't stop everyone, but it will deter people who are unsure whether you are serious about your stated requirements.



### Clarity means reaching the right people

Give candidates the information they need for applying. If an employer is vague or incomplete, job seekers may be less likely to apply. In fact the hired candidate might have a long term motivational problem, because of an unclear job description.

Here is some clear job description sample (taken from WHO) – it explicitly divides job tasks into clear groupings:

- *Negotiate agreements with external publishers (both nonprofit and for-profit) for the translation and publication of information materials in appropriate languages*
- *Cultivate and expand partnerships worldwide with both nonprofit and for-profit bodies in the area of publishing*

Things to avoid when wording your job description:

- clever or obscure headlines
- coded and idiosyncratic communications
- too much technical detail about the job or the company
- uninspiring descriptions of roles and ideal candidates
- too much emphasis on the job and not enough on the person
- words which are subject to differing interpretations, for example: "frequently," "some," "complex," "occasional," and "several"

Remember, it's a bigger decision to spend years or a lifetime working for your company than it is to purchase your service. The rule is to excite and motivate candidates to apply to your job posting - not scare them away.

### **Filter your applications before they flood your inbox**

Don't make the application process too easy. Instead of just asking for a CV, include an assignment in your posting.

For example, a company looking for a Web editor could include the following:

- *When applying, please provide an outline of your approach to online news editing. The successful applicant will be asked to completely overhaul the site, so we'd like to know how you would approach that process.*

Or an association looking for economic analysts could ask applicants to write a cover letter outlining their take on a specific economic issue. Qualified candidates will be excited to have the opportunity to stand out from the crowd, while casual applicants will be less willing to put in that much effort for a long-shot application.

### **Tell your story**

Every organisation and company is unique. They have different strategies, cultures and ways of doing business. Some people do better in one environment than another. You should give job seekers a profile of your company to decide if yours is the right one for them. Sell your company as you would sell your services

Take a look at this concise organisation description (taken from ICLEI):

- *The Water Campaign is based on a series of performance milestones that advocate the systematic identification and evaluation of water resource management challenges facing local governments*

But still, don't forget to make your job ad attractive. Find out what attracted the existing team to apply for their jobs and use that information. You may find that training is a key motivator or that the financial package was a major draw.

- Play on your strengths and keep the ad benefit-oriented

## Organising the recruitment mystery

### Defining job function and title

Recruitment is not just carried out to meet immediate vacancies but should be seen as part of an overall organisational strategy for resourcing personnel. See if you can discuss the job role with involved departments, managers, colleagues, leaving job holder etc., to get the whole picture.

- If the candidate is to **replace a leaving job holder** (in other words an existing job role), then take the opportunity to re-evaluate the job scope
- If the candidate is to fill out **a new job function** with many unknown factors, then sketch out the overall lines and objectives – be honest about uncertainties
- If the candidate is to fill out **a temporary vacancy** or an internship, then clearly define expectations and organisation limitations. Your temporary job vacancy will be attractive to many who see your temporary opening only as an unimportant step towards other jobs. You want to avoid this lack of involvement and should be concise in your job ad.

If the job title does not implicitly describe the job function, then use a strapline to do so. You may work a lot with the job title, so that it is not obscure and doesn't convey what the job function is.

- Try to incorporate something new, innovative, exciting, challenging in the role
  - people are attracted to new things



### Job requirements

Job title and ideal candidate should meet each other. In the eyes of the new candidate, and the colleagues, the official job advert remains the most important document for the job role (together with the contract). So you must take it seriously, otherwise you might put performance of the new professional at risk.

In other words your choice of wording is important – too complex and you could give the impression of inaccessibility, too jocular and you may lose credibility.

- Ask colleagues to compare your proposed wording with their experiences of the company

### How many and which applications will you receive?

An instrument to control the amount of applications is the job requirements. The more specific your job requirement list, the fewer, better targeted responses you are likely to receive.

- If the role is specialist and senior, you may prefer to receive five excellent applications rather than fifty average ones
- For a graduate trainee position you may prefer a bigger choice

Writing a goal oriented job description will attract potential candidates who want to grow within the position, and learn how to make larger contributions to your organisation. See the difference between these two phrases:

1. Routinely ordering office supplies for the company and keeping the storage closet well stocked
2. Developing and implementing a system of ordering office supplies that promotes cost savings and efficiency within the organisation

Likewise will clearly defined job role **objectives**, instead of a list of job **responsibilities**, turn focus more towards the personal qualities than the skills. This is critical for high responsibility jobs. But perhaps to be avoided in more administrative functions.

### Talking to your ideal candidate

Build a mental picture of the sort of person you, and the team, see fitting in. Write as if you were speaking to your imaginary candidate. Use language that your reader uses, and describe the job as practically as possible. Refer to the reader as 'you' and use the second person ('you', 'your' and 'yours' etc) in the description of requirements and expectations. It gets the reader involved.

The job description should be as practical as possible. Make it short. Cut down on formalities (and explain them later to the candidate).

Omit any unnecessary articles such as "a", "an" and "the". Mark for example the difference between these two:

1. Greets all visitors and the office personnel to the building in a friendly and a sincere manner
2. Greets office visitors and personnel in a friendly and sincere manner

Remember that there is a major difference between an online ad and print version. Online job boards force users to read much more from top and downwards.

Therefore the job ad must quickly get to the points. If it doesn't grab attention, your race is lost before it begins.

How to get your job advert noticed:

- Don't use long words where a short one will do
- Where possible to cut a word out, cut it out
- Never use passive when you can use active forms
- Really strong verbs and specific nouns give energy
- Keep sentences short
- Be specific

Things to avoid:

- Over-designed graphics
- Extravagantly presented layouts and words
- Font too small or too large
- Capital-letters
- Paragraphs in italics - they are a lot more difficult to read quickly

## Web site practicalities

### How to submit jobs to EuroEconomistJobs

Normally organisations post their job vacancies on their own web pages, and then they need other channels as well for more publicity.

There are three considerations for the recruiter before submitting a job to EuroEconomistJobs:

1. Does the job fall within the EuroEconomistJobs job scope? If not, then there is a small charge.
2. Is the job description posted on your website, or should it be posted at our website? The link alone will be at our pages, but should the job text description also be hosted with us?
3. Should the job be highlighted in our listings to attract more attention? We have effective ways of doing that.

#### 1. Out of scope?

If for one reason or another job postings do not fall within our general scope and our free posting model, we can still publish it on EuroEconomistJobs.

What are job vacancies out of the EuroEconomistJobs scope?

- Jobs that do not require an economics qualification
- Jobs not in Europe
- Accounting, IT, secretarial and administrative jobs – please mind that such jobs are free on our sister site [www.BrusselsJobs.com](http://www.BrusselsJobs.com)

#### 2. Job posting at the recruiter's website or at our site?

Not all recruiters want to or are able to post the job on their own web site, for us to link to. You must talk to your in-house webmaster and HR department about that. So the recruiter has the choice whether the job should be:

- Hosted at the recruiter's own web site, with a link to it from EuroEconomistJobs pages
- Or hosted on a unique EuroEconomistJobs web page, at our site

Accordingly EuroEconomistJobs can create a custom web page, uniquely for your job vacancy, with your logo prominently displayed.

- The job ad will be linked to from our latest news and category pages on the web site, and finally in our newsletter
- The ad will displayed for four weeks

#### 3. Highlighting your job ad to attract more attention?

To get more visibility and responses to your job ad, EuroEconomistJobs can highlight or promote the ad in our listings.

You can have your job ad highlighted to make it stand, as well as your vacancy being displayed in the 'Top Jobs' box in the right column of the front page. Both of these options will draw attention from the Economics community to your job and your organisation during the whole recruitment period.

For the recruiter who urgently needs intense promotion of one or several jobs, we can also display the job ad at the very top of the front page's job list – and they stay in top during the whole week! The recruiter can even advertise multiple jobs in such a single announcement, if needed.

## Selecting the right candidate

### Short listing and interviewing

Drawing up a shortlist means cutting through the pile of applicants until you have a selection of candidates that you would like to request for interview. You will be surprised how many people apply for jobs that they are obviously under qualified for.

When you contact the prospective interviewees, provide clear instructions covering:

- where you are located and how to get there
- what they should bring with them
- who they should ask for
- how long the interview is likely to last
- whether they will be reimbursed for travel expenses

Interviews should generally last around 45 minutes each, plus any extra time needed for specific tests.

### Interview technique

Interviewers often have a number of set questions which they ask every candidate. These questions are based around the requirement of the job, and by asking the same questions, they can draw a direct comparison between each candidate.

- The interviewer should ask questions, which are open, for example how, when, what, why etc. giving the candidate the opportunity to answer fully, rather than responding with a simple 'yes' or 'no'.
- Avoid interrupting the answers or leading them in any direction.
- Summarize the responses back to the candidate, before making notes, to ensure that you have fully understood.

Normally the interviewer shouldn't be tempted to talk too much to fill any potentially uncomfortable moments of silence. The silence can from the interviewers point of view be a very effective way of encouraging the candidate to offer up more information.

Interviewers must remember that what appears to be a more informal chat than a 'grilling' tends to put a candidate at ease to get a more honest response. This gives valuable insight into the candidate's personality traits, rather than simply an understanding of their skills and experience.

The recruiter should remember to notice the body language of the candidate:

- The initial shaking of the hand and introduction tell much about a person
- As does the ongoing seating position, use of hands and use of eye contact