The Complete Guide to Creating an Effective Job Listing

T he age-old conundrum of having to wade through the "noise" is something that increasingly affects hiring managers and HR professionals. With the ever-growing work force and propagation of job listing options, hiring professionals face challenges like never before. In order to find the right candidates for the right positions, without having to spend countless hours reading through irrelevant resumes, creating a solid job description is a crucial step.

This eBook serves as an easy-to-use guide for writing a job description that will help those responsible for hiring find the most relevant applicants possible.

Contents

Title

Grab candidates' interest—and get plenty of quality applications—
by giving your open job the right name.

A job title is the very first thing a candidate sees when your job listing pops up, and it's so much more than a title. It's a headline, a billboard and a vital marketing tool that goes a long way towards attracting qualified candidates. Without a solid title, your job posting might as well be invisible.

Here are five things you can do today to put your job title to work for you.

1

Be Clear

There's nothing worse than making a potential applicant work hard to figure out what, exactly, you're talking about. They'll simply move on to another position that more clearly matches their experience and needs.

2

Do Research

Do a bit of competitive research to see what similar companies are doing, and follow the industry standard. It's so much easier for a candidate to move from another company to yours if your naming conventions are in line with each other.

3

No Overloaded Titles

At every company, there's someone doing two jobs at the same time. Their title usually has the word "and" in it: "food AND science editor" or "email marketing strategist AND social media manager."

Candidates see "and" as a red flag that they're going to be overworked. So when you're looking to fill two slots with one body, avoid perpetuating their title just because that's how it's been done in the past.

4

Stay Relevant

The landscape changes frequently, and roles that were in vogue a few years ago can be completely obsolete today. No matter what you're hiring for, make sure the title is current.

In years past, when social media roles were first becoming popular, nobody knew what to call them. Every company created their own unique title, but now titles such as "social media manager" and "social media strategist" are the norm.

5

Be Honest

It's tempting to puff up a title to sound more impressive and get more applications. However, you don't want to wade through dozens of overqualified candidates with high salary requirements for a low-level position.

A few guidelines:

Only put "senior" in front of actual senior level positions. Don't be afraid to use "junior" when necessary.

Watch out for words like "director," "manager," and "supervisor," only using them if the position actually directs, manages or supervises.

Remember:
Think like a marketer.

Company Description

The one thing your job listing is probably getting wrong.

99% of company descriptions fail to do one important thing: Sell your company to the candidate. This section is a chance for you to sell someone not just on the job itself, but on the workplace culture and environment that they're going to experience every day. And you should do it in two to three sentences, max—an overly wordy description will lose their attention.

Top five reasons why it's crucial to sell your company to potential applicants:

1. They don't know about your company.

Even if your company has been in business for a hundred years and is considered a leader in your field, there are still people who have never heard of you before. A good exercise is to pretend you're describing your company to a recent college grad who doesn't yet know the industry landscape.

2. They have assumptions about you.

Write down a few preconceived notions that the public might have about your company. Position your company in a positive light and change those negative opinions. Don't miss out on fantastic applicants who wrongly believe you're not right for them. Focus on the positive.

3. Your standard "About Us" language doesn't mean much.

Erase the standard description from your brain and approach it from a different angle. What do job seekers want to know about you? What's important to them? That should always be your starting point.

4. You're missing an opportunity to show your company's passion.

Job seekers want to feel a spark of connection when they read a listing, and this is your chance to provide that spark. Mention what your company does, and then say WHY you do it. What's the driving force behind your business? Why does it matter to you? Why should applicants be excited about it?

5. Job seekers have no idea why your company is perfect for them.

Whatever sets you apart, make it known. Candidates will feel a stronger connection to your company right off the bat, and they'll be far more likely to fill out an application and begin the process.

Always remember:

Don't describe your company—*sell your company.*

Responsibilities

There are three characteristics of a job responsibility section that should be followed:

1. The intended result or outcome

2. A description of the task

3. An active verb

List all of the essential functions of the position, which should include around 5 responsibilities. Start each responsibility with a present tense, action verb and remember to be honest about how often a task will be performed or what percentage of the employee's time will be spent with each task. This will help applicants form an idea of what a typical day may look like.

Responsibility Statement

Describe the *What, Why, How* of the position. Also, make sure to describe the specific KPIs and goals involved.

The description of responsibilities should be detailed, but should not include the instructions or procedures for performing the job.

Generally, you should be able to describe a job using 5 key responsibilities (no less than 3 and no more than 6).

You should estimate the percentage of time spent on each responsibility, adding up to 100%.

Essential and Marginal Duties

You will also need to identify whether each responsibility is Essential or Marginal:

Essential Duties

The basic job duties that an employee must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations.

Marginal Duties

Non-essential duties that could be removed without destroying the basic purpose of the position.

Action Verbs

A-B

accommodate
achieve
acquire
address
adjust
administer
advise
allocate
analyze
apply
appoint
approve
arrange
assess
assign
assist
audit
augment
authorize
budget

C-D

calculate
circulate
clarify
clear
collaborate
collect
combine
communicate
compile
complete
compose
compute
conduct
confer
consolidate

construct
consult
control
coordinate
correspond
counsel
create
customize
delegate
deliver
demonstrate
design
develop
devise
direct
disseminate
distinguish
distribute
document
draft

E-I

edit
eliminate
enforce
establish
evaluate
execute
expand
explore
facilitate
formulate
furnish
generate
guide
handle
hire
identify
illustrate
implement
improve
improvise
incorporate
increase
inform

initiate
instruct
interact
interface
interpret
interview
investigate
issue

J-O

lift
maintain
manage
monitor
motivate
negotiate
observe
operate
organize

P-Q

participate
perform
plan
predict
prepare
present
process
program
provide
quantify

R-Z

recognize
recommend
record
recruit
reduce
regulate

report
research
resolve
review
schedule
search
select
solve
specify
strategize
streamline
strengthen
summarize
support
teach
train
translate
troubleshoot
update
validate
verify

Required Skills/ Qualifications

The required skills section is where you take the responsibilities for the job. In this section it is important to clearly state, in bullet point form, the skills, experiences, and qualifications required.

These could include:

Familiarity with specific software/ computer programs
(eg. Excel, Word, Power Point)

Licenses or specialized certificates

Ability to perform certain functions

Years of experience in a relevant field

Comfort within certain environments
(eg. Fast-paced atmosphere)

Elements of a Successful Job Listing

Attract the perfect candidate for your job by following these essential guidelines.

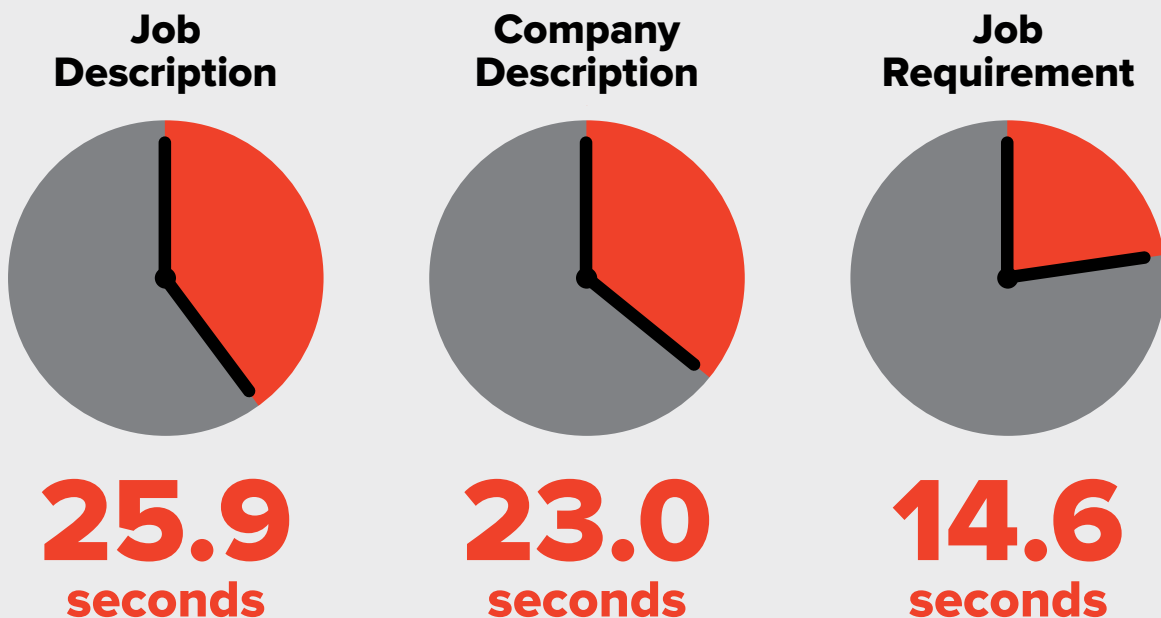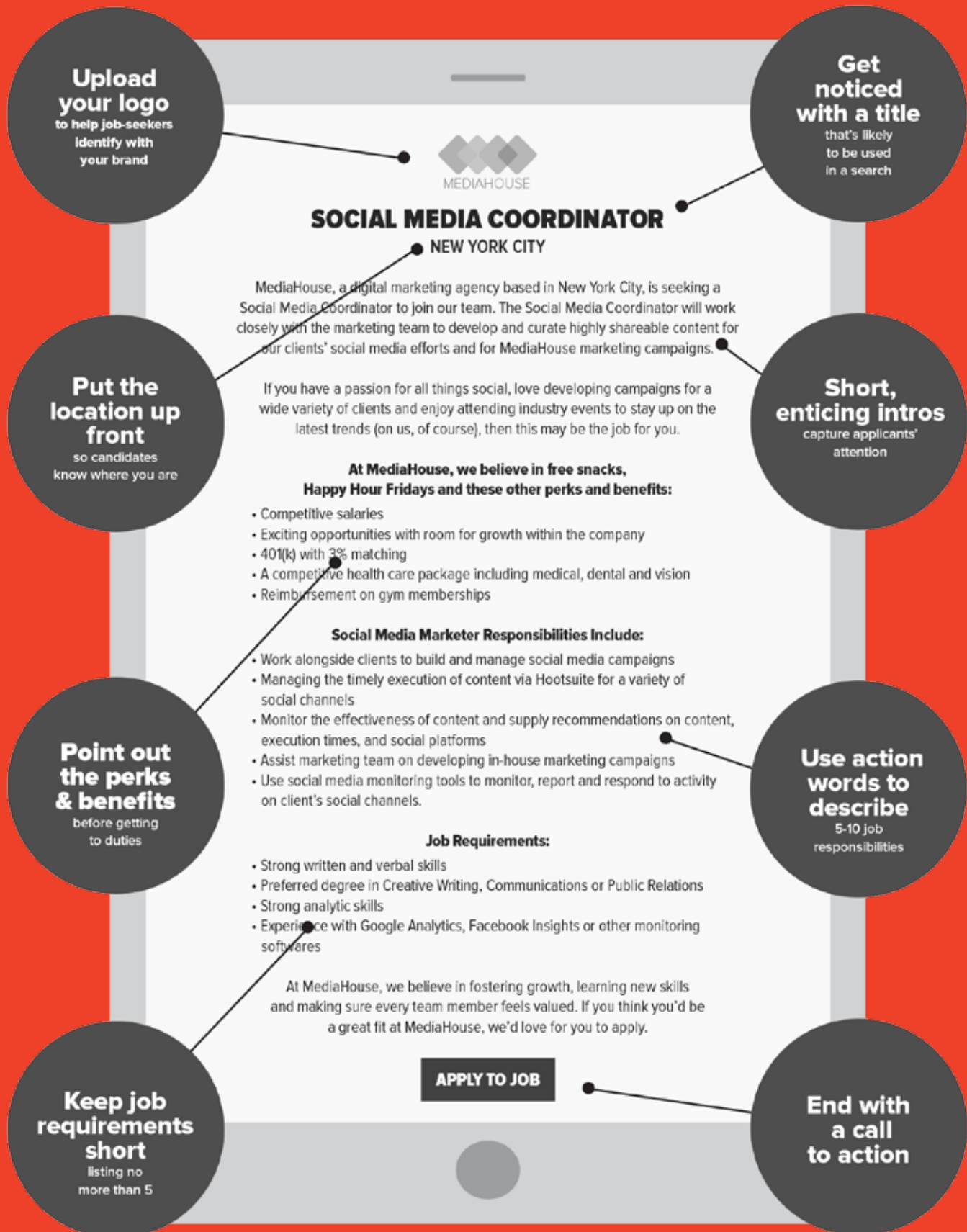# Keep it short, bulleted, and easy to read.

79%
of online readers scan content rather than reading word for word.

Prioritize your descriptions.

Candidates spend more time reading job and company descriptions than job requirements.

Job Description

Company Description

Job Requirement

25.9 seconds

23.0 seconds

14.6 seconds

Upload your logo to help job-seekers identify with your brand

Get noticed with a title that's likely to be used in a search

MEDIAHOUSE

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR
NEW YORK CITY

MediaHouse, a digital marketing agency based in New York City, is seeking a Social Media Coordinator to join our team. The Social Media Coordinator will work closely with the marketing team to develop and curate highly shareable content for our clients' social media efforts and for MediaHouse marketing campaigns.

If you have a passion for all things social, love developing campaigns for a wide variety of clients and enjoy attending industry events to stay up on the latest trends (on us, of course), then this may be the job for you.

At MediaHouse, we believe in free snacks, Happy Hour Fridays and these other perks and benefits:
- Competitive salaries
- Exciting opportunities with room for growth within the company
- 401(k) with 3% matching
- A competitive health care package including medical, dental and vision
- Reimbursement on gym memberships

Social Media Marketer Responsibilities Include:
- Work alongside clients to build and manage social media campaigns
- Managing the timely execution of content via Hootsuite for a variety of social channels
- Monitor the effectiveness of content and supply recommendations on content, execution times, and social platforms
- Assist marketing team on developing in-house marketing campaigns
- Use social media monitoring tools to monitor, report and respond to activity on client's social channels.

Job Requirements:
- Strong written and verbal skills
- Preferred degree in Creative Writing, Communications or Public Relations
- Strong analytic skills
- Experience with Google Analytics, Facebook Insights or other monitoring softwares

At MediaHouse, we believe in fostering growth, learning new skills and making sure every team member feels valued. If you think you'd be a great fit at MediaHouse, we'd love for you to apply.

APPLY TO JOB

Put the location up front so candidates know where you are

Short, enticing intros capture applicants' attention

Point out the perks & benefits before getting to duties

Use action words to describe 5-10 job responsibilities

Keep job requirements short listing no more than 5

End with a call to action

Watch out for jargon.

The more natural your job listing reads, the more likely it is that candidates will respond. Your job listing is not only an advertisement for your open position, but for your company as well. Attract the kind of applicant you want by avoiding tired turns of phrase in favor of words that are more dynamic and honest.

Commonplace Cliches

DON'T say this → **DO try this!**

DON'T say this	DO try this!
Fast-paced	Busy
Multi-tasker	Shifts gears
Results-oriented	Follows through
Communication skills	Candid, vocal, honest
Detail-oriented	Conscientious
Self-starter/self-motivated	Ambitious
Creative/Innovative	Original
Dynamic	Flexible
Team player	Relationship builder
Deadline-driven	On time, all the time
Passionate	Enthusiastic

Unwelcoming Words

DON'T say this → **DO try this!**

DON'T say this	DO try this!
Ninja	Skilled
Rock star	Virtuoso
Guru	Visionary
Jedi	Talented
Evangelist	Enthusiast
He/She	You
BA required	Degree preferred
Include salary requirements	Don't say anything—skip this one!

Boring Buzzwords

DON'T say this → **DO try this!**

DON'T say this	DO try this!
Entrepreneurial	Pioneering
Conceptualize	Dream up
Execute/Implement	Make it happen
Synergize	Cooperate
Optimize	Improve
Standard EOE language	Rewrite in your own words!
Competitive salary	Include actual salary range!
Additional tasks and responsibilities as needed	Here's another one to skip!

Sources:
- forbes.com/sites/briansutter/2015/12/18/the-most-overlooked-factor-of-content-marketing/#539b4fe37c00
- blogs.wsj.com/atwork/2013/05/02/how-we-really-read-job-ads/

Mobile Friendliness

1. Keep job titles short.

Cut each job title down to 50 characters or less.

2. Delete extraneous text.

Job seekers on their phones should be able to scroll down the page less than four times to reach the very end of your job description.

3. Break up paragraphs.

Insert double-spaced paragraph breaks every 2-4 sentences to make sure it's an enticing read.

4. Watch out for bullets, numbered lists, symbols.

Make sure your bulleted or numbered lists are double-spaced for easy readability, and that any symbols are rendered appropriately on mobile.

5. Use a listings site that offers clean mobile design.

Don't use a job search site without a fully optimized mobile design as part of their package.

6. Make sure candidates can take action in the moment.

The job search sites you use should allow applicants to submit their information right from their device. They should also be able to save, send or share a position they like.

7. Do quality control from your phone.

Once you've posted an open position, take out your phone or tablet and read your entire listing as if you're a candidate doing a search.

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