Tips for Writing Effective Job Descriptions

The right words and formatting can help you attract the right candidates.

Assembling a stellar team for your law firm is crucial to your success. With the right partners and support staff, you can ensure that operations will run smoothly and your clients will be satisfied with your service.

“A well-written job description is an important part of the Senior District President at Robert Half Legal, a legal staffi evaluate potential hires, which can help determine what s possess. A job description can be used to form the basis fo consistent candidate assessment when the time comes to r

When searching for new employees to welcome into your guidelines for writing excellent job descriptions. Here’s w
Volkert says to begin with the basic requirements. These include the job position, clear expectations for the job and detailed descriptions of important functions, job qualifications and specifications, workplace culture and reporting relationships.

"Be as precise as possible in describing what you're looking for, without excluding the possibility of enticing unique candidates whose experience adds up to more than the sum of the parts."

Delia Swan, Founder of Swan Legal Search, specializes in placing partners and associates at firms. She says that if you’re looking for lawyers, you should list Juris Doctor (JD), academic and bar requirements, and specific practice areas you’re seeking out.

In your job descriptions, you need to, "Be as precise as possible in describing what you’re looking for, without excluding the possibility of enticing unique candidates whose experience adds up to more than the sum of the parts," says Swan. “For example, while you might want candidates with particular JD years, similar length of experience in the specialty might open you up to more seasoned attorneys who shifted gears during their careers.”

To appeal to attractive candidates — whether they are support staff, partners or associates — you should highlight exclusive perks of the position and interesting benefits that come with working for your firm.

“Include sizzle points about your company or firm [and] think about what makes the position or company/firm unique,” says Amanda Ellis, Senior Vice President at Special Counsel, which provides legal staffing and recruiting services. “The sizzle could include things like on-site massage therapy or pet insurance. Or, [the] sizzle could be a detail about the position, such as the opportunity to support the managing partner or [the] group leader.”

The particulars about company culture may seem small, but they can help you recruit only the most appealing prospects. “We find that candidates are attracted to firm culture as much as prestige,” says Swan. “Today’s best candidates are looking for a life..."
experience that brings more breath to their resumes. You thoughtful and mature lawyers.”

**THE STRUCTURE**

After you’ve determined the content of your job description, you have to then follow the best practices for all the technical details.

The particulars about company culture grand scheme of things, they’ll help you appealing prospects.

Volkert says you need to use a conversational tone as well the skills and capabilities required, and the key responsibilities language, but provide specific and detailed information. Use search-friendly keywords that will maximize viewing by increasing numbers of online job sear

According to Ellis, shorter is better, and the descriptions should be 150 to 500 words. That’s because many candidates will be reading the descriptions on their phones, so it’s crucial to avoid long paragraphs, and to use an opening paragraph followed by one or two sections with headings and bullet points. Another best practice is to write in second person using “you” and “your” to personalize the posting.

At all costs, you need to avoid using technical jargon, acronyms, buzzwords and abbreviations, says Volkert. It’s also crucial to go over the job description and make sure that there isn’t any language that could be considered discriminatory. When you’re formatting the description, keep it simple, and don’t feel the need to include large images that will take a long time for mobile users to download, he notes.

Aside from incorporating those search engine optimization-friendly keywords, you can make your job listing stand out by writing an article on LinkedIn about it.
Shorter is better, and the descriptions should be 150 to 500 words. That’s because many candidates will be reading the descriptions on their mobile devices while on the go.

In her own LinkedIn article, where she aimed to hire attorney recruiters, she started off the piece with conversational questions like, “Are you an attorney who is ready to leave the practice of law?” and “Do you enjoy attending networking events?” She then included some basics about the job and pictures of employees enjoying each other’s company. It served as a way to highlight the work culture, too.

SAMPLES TO GET YOU STARTED

After you figure out all the technical and structural details of your job descriptions, you can look to other firms and legal staffing agencies to see what they included in their own descriptions. Then, you can use what you learned in your own listings.

For example, in a job description on the Robert Half website, the recruiter started with the responsibilities of the job, the required experience, and whom the candidate would report to in a short paragraph. Then, in bulleted form, the recruiter listed some of the typical duties that would be required of the candidate.

Robert Half also provides firms with a list of the U.S. glossary of legal job descriptions. Use in their own efforts. The guide includes everything from job descriptions for law firm attorneys, litigation support staff, legal specialists and general administrative employees.

Effective job descriptions can transform your firm by attracting only the top candidates.

On Swan Legal, a job description for a bankruptcy associate is comprised of a summary of the job in a small paragraph up top, bullet points including the typical qualifications like having a JD, bei
practicing bankruptcy law for at least four years at a private firm. There are also personality qualifications, such as possessing the ability to multitask and:

**MAKE YOUR WORDS COUNT**

Effective job descriptions can transform your firm by attracting only the top candidates. Volkert says they have many uses beyond their initial purpose when it comes to hiring procedures.

"Written effectively, job descriptions serve as a valuable resource for many audiences and across a variety of functions," he says. "To name a few functions, job descriptions can be a comprehensive resource to advise job candidates about details and requirements of a position or serve as an objective guide to assist hiring managers during the recruitment and interview process."

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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