BEFORE YOU WRITE, GET THE ANSWERS TO SEVEN QUESTIONS

A good job description does three things:

- Gives the candidate a clear understanding of the job, so they can decide if it's the type of job they're looking for.
- Showcases the unique selling points of the job (and your company) that make the job special.
- Satisfies the compliance requirements applicable to your company.

Instead, many employers post job descriptions that contain every detail about the job in no specific order. Though there are some legal considerations, it's not necessary — or good practice — to include every possible detail about the job. For example:

- For a warehouse job, it's important to state that the job requires the candidate to be able to lift up to 75 pounds.
- For a sales job, however, you probably don't need to note that the candidate will be expected to track their work in the company's CRM system.

The idea is that job seekers are just like your customers: They'll get bored and move on if your job description is long and full of irrelevant information or is otherwise uninteresting. This is especially true of the best performers; they know they can be choosy.

When you're crafting job descriptions, keep in mind the idea of doing job analyses. That means interviewing employees who will work directly with the role, looking on Indeed and other job sites on how similar roles are worded, observing the team that the role will sit within, and just generally getting a sense of what this person will do every day.

Oftentimes, in a rush to hire, a company will simply use the same job description they used when the position was last open — even though the role might have changed several times since then as department priorities shifted. You cannot have a job description that sells unless it is accurate about what the new hire will be doing.

A good practice for writing the best possible job description is to spend significant time with the hiring manager, peer employees, and other team members the role will work with to learn more about the role.

Ask them the following seven questions to get a clearer picture of the role.

(1)   What functional expertise does the job require?

(2)   What specific job requirements and qualifications are desired?

(3)   What are specific work assignments for this job?

(4)   Have you defined performance standards?

(5)   Have you benchmarked the job's pay internally and externally?

(6)   Why should a top candidate prefer this job or your company over other opportunities?

(7)   Have managers and staff agreed on the expectations of the job?