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## I think I have a job opening, now what?

By Gary Bozza

One of your employees has just quit, been let go, or retired. It doesn't matter why they've left, all that matters to you is that you fill that position, ASAP.

But take a minute, breathe deeply, and consider these all-important questions: Why do you think you need to fill that role? Can the position be consolidated or eliminated? Can you put a dollar figure on what the role achieves for your company? Does this newly-vacated role save or make money for your company? If your ROI is justified, then you should begin the advertising, posting, interviewing and hiring process.

Once you've justified the position, you'll need to create a detailed job description. Your job description should profile five key items: the company, hiring manager, role, background requirements, and your competitive compensation package.

### **Sell your company**

Your first task is to sell your company to job candidates. Tell them what makes your company so great and why they'd love to work for your business. Are you active in the community? Is your culture low-key, and your stock price climbing? Now's your chance to brag a little.

### **Sell your hiring manager**

The second item you need to sell candidates on is the hiring manager. Candidates want to know what kind of person they'll be working for. An amazing manager makes coming to work each day a pleasure, and likewise, a poor manager can make each workday unbearable. So show off. If your hiring manager has won any management awards, list them. If he or she has had testimonials from direct reports, incorporate them. Make the hiring manager look good and candidates will be attracted to your job posting.

### **Sell the job**

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If your candidates are still interested after learning about your hiring manager, you're doing well. This part, though many business leaders think it is most important, is listed third, in our opinion. Now that you have someone who wants to work for your company, and for your hiring manager, let them know a *bit* about what they will do in the job and how that will impact your company and their career.

### **Uh oh. I can't think of anything nice to say...**

BUT, if you can't come up with positive responses for these first three profile items, you may not be ready to hire. You may need to examine your company culture. Doing so might uncover some areas you need to shore up first. Companies that have participative and fun cultures are generally more productive. Also, having a solid website and presence on Facebook and LinkedIn will do wonders for your reputation. While an old website and rarely updated social media presence can often hurt your chances of attracting the top talent you're seeking.

### **Briefly describe the background requirements**

If your candidate is still interested after reading a little about what the job entails, it's time to tell them what you expect them to bring to the table. Most companies list 10-20 job requirements, but we recommend just 3-7. And when it's time to interview, focus the questions on those "must have" items.

If you'd like your candidates to interview with a small group of people, then those people should collaborate to create the position profile (job description) so they will embrace it. Unless your management team is engaged and invested in the early steps of this process, you run the risk of disagreeing about whom to hire and therefore your hiring team is less likely to support the new employee. If, however, your hiring team is in sync about how best to screen for and promote this role, you will have significantly higher odds of finding someone they will all agree on and stand behind.

### **Bring up the bennies**

You can be general about your salary range (it needs to be competitive), but motivating factors many candidates are interested in are the softer benefits. Do you have an attractive commission or bonus structure? Is there an annual review process that provides salary increases? Is there room for growth and career development within your company? What do you offer in PTO (paid time off)? What benefits do you offer that are most popular with your current employees like 401K match? List them!

### **The nitty gritty**

Of course, you also need to list the minutiae: Keep it simple. Ask for the resume in a pdf. If you have an online portal, have them go there and fill that out. Keep it simple so you get responses.



**Now that you've written your job description, it's time to create your job ad.**

**No, they are NOT the same thing.**

The best way to think of the difference between a job description and a job ad is to picture a jar on a shelf at the supermarket. The front of the jar -- all splashy, colorful, and brief -- is the job ad. The back of the jar -- black and white, lists of ingredients, nutrition details, and sterile language -- is the job description. Most companies write a job description and use it as a job ad, as well. That's a bad move. Have you ever been to the grocery and seen the shelves full of products with the backsides facing out? Probably not. It's been our experience that 75% of companies have their "jar" facing backward. A front label that makes candidates impulsively decide to apply, my friends, is a well-written job ad.

If you keep in mind what the front of, say, a jug of Tide looks like, compared to the back of it, you'll be able to write a compelling ad that will make candidates want to work at your company. We want people to pick up the jar, glance at the back, and put the jar in their cart. That's what your goal should be. People should be saying, *I want to work there, no matter what I have to do. And Now that's a company I want to be a part of.*

Keep this acronym in mind when writing your job ad: AIDA

- Attention
- Interest
- Desire
- Action

### **Grab their attention**

Make your job title awesome. Many candidates will filter by location, so make that clear, too. These can be bullet points. Or a title and subtitle. Give a couple key responsibilities of the role, but not all of them, and don't go into too much detail.

### **Make your company the most interesting. Ever.**

Describe your company, but keep it short and very sweet. Don't include a corporate message. This isn't the time or place for that. Tell candidates why they want to work for your company.

### **Go from sounding interesting to becoming desirable.**

Now is your chance to tell candidates (briefly) what they'll get when working for you. Mention your competitive compensation package, career advancement opportunities, and your excellent and flexible company culture. If you have a Facebook page or a LinkedIn profile, mention those so candidates can look into your company more closely -- but do not repeat all that information here.

## **Make them take action.**

At this point, you've almost sealed the deal. You've piqued their interest and desire, so encourage them to "apply now" and tell them how your application process works.

Once you've got your candidates, you can share your well-written, much more detailed job description with them.

## **How do you know if your benefits are competitive?**

There are three key ways to determine if your compensation package is on par with your competitors.

1. *Ask.* During interviews, inquire about the candidate's salary, bonus or commission schedule and how those items are figured. Create a database of this information. You'll quickly learn if you need to improve your offerings or if you're competitive with other companies.
2. *Purchase the information.* If you belong to a professional association you can usually gain access to current salary information for a few hundred dollars.
3. *Have someone else collect it for you.* If you are working with an outside recruiter, you can ask them to gather compensation information for you. They will probably talk to 5-10x the number of candidates you will and will most likely do the research for you for free, as part of their service.

## **Where should you look for candidates?**

Candidates are all over the place, but the hottest spot seems to be LinkedIn. Target companies that you've hired from in the past or companies that you respect. They will most likely have the candidates you want. You can push your job ad out to those candidates -- passive candidates, the ones not currently looking for a job -- are often the most desirable. Check their profiles and pre-screen them a bit. If you like what you see, send them an InMail or message. Be sure to appeal to them by indicating you've spent some time looking over their excellent profile, you're impressed by it, and you have a position for which you'd like them to apply. Include your brief job ad and let them know how to apply. And lastly, ask if they'd be open to a short, confidential conversation about how they can further develop their career.

I've included [a list of the top 10 job boards](#) for your reference.

Follow these steps and incorporate our advice and we're confident you'll see more interest from candidates, and a better pool from which to hire.

**This is the first in a series of articles that will help you locate, hire, and retain the top talent you need.**



*Gary Bozza, founder and managing partner of WorldBridge Partners Chicago NW, has been winning industry awards and recognitions in talent acquisition for the last 20 years. Gary's business is dedicated to helping CEOs, presidents, and owners drive revenue and maximize the effectiveness of their human capital resources. WBP's clients range from small, privately held companies to large, publicly-held, multinational corporations. Gary has the tactical expertise to help produce significant growth and profits in a variety of ways for your business.*

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