



IS YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION SUCCESSFUL?

BY TRENT RHODES

Question: Is your job description successful?

Every employer's answer should be, "absolutely." Even if you feel like your worst pitch could never grab the attention of candidates you seek, fear not because:

Every description that every employer has ever created, posted anywhere, at any point in time on the Internet or on a board, that someone applied to, is successful.

Now if we question the *kind* of success we're talking about, that brings us to another point:

The weakest job descriptions will attract the weakest match for the job. The strongest descriptions will attract the strongest match for the job.

After reviewing numerous job descriptions over the years, seeing this process from the candidate and employer's perception, I'd like to recommend some changes that could help:

Include the job's salary range. I remember in my early job search days this little piece of information was readily available. Those with the most lavish compensation numbers touched my interest first of course, and that gave me more incentive to further read the description. I then reflected on what was being requested and my abilities to see if there was a match. Then these numbers started disappearing from the common posts in sources like Monster and CareerBuilder, relatively rare on Indeed.

My recommendation is to bring it back. Not only do you fill the potential applicant with motivation for the obvious monetary value, you also indicate your level of investment for the candidate. I coach my clients to recognize the employment relationship is indeed a relationship, where both parties are trading value for value.

Unless you're a solo-preneur, no staff = no company

Unless you don't need it, no skills / experience / qualifications = no employer

When I see an extensive bullet list of roles, responsibilities, expertise needed and the critical must-haves, and I don't see what you're willing to invest in me, I click the Mozilla Firefox "X" icon.

Let's say the employer truly doesn't have specific compensation to share, using "TBA" functions similar to having no range at all. For the sharp professional, it indicates there's still decision-making to be done on the nature of the role, the role is still too early in its

infancy, or the position is a test pilot. These are all experimental scenarios that a candidate of top quality, if you're seeking that quality, will perceive and say, "Next."

Range Examples:

\$35,000 – \$55,000

\$65,000 – \$75,000

\$18 / hour

\$500 per project

Whatever the range is for the role, providing one will enable the savvy candidate to weigh what's required with what's offered. The uninitiated professional will likely fall into the trap of applying for positions and accepting them without the employer's cards on the table. This creates a recipe for the newcomer to be potentially overloaded with responsibilities while compensated below the market research range.

Professionals, do your research. Employers, be willing to risk as your candidates are risking. **Show what you offer more than what you want.** Unless you're looking for an average employee who just fulfills tasks instead of creating value, it will work to your advantage to include more of your perks, benefits and what value the professional will receive by working with you.

Perks: Do you take company trips or have fun holiday activities? Do you provide a special discount card that gives access to movies, plays or gym memberships in your area? Perks are the "extras" that may not immediately result in financial profit, but you will see plenty of profit in stronger human resources if you expand the "gains" profit report to include more satisfied professionals, a greater appreciation for your brand. It sounds like common sense, but how often do we casually click on a job profile or website and see how much the staff loves what they do? If you were the CEO of a proud company culture, wouldn't you be proud to show it?

The perks connect to intangibles called purple cows, a name I first learned about in my undergrad marketing class; our challenge was to create as many ways (purple cows) as possible to give value to potential customers and clients **that didn't result in direct sales**. It required a different mindset that may seem counter-intuitive to boiler room-style business models: *give something now for the potential that something greater might return to you in the long term.*

When students, clients and even friends connect with me, they tend to receive a whole lot more value than what they anticipated. Literally resource-full by the time they leave.

Give greater emphasis on your growth opportunities. From conversing with many employers at their leadership levels, I'm aware of how geo-political changes and healthcare policies impact business efficiency and expansion. But if you're going after the best match for your job description, it will still be to your benefit to discover resourceful ways to help your professionals grow.

We're in Millennial Land right now with Generations X, Y, Z, 9, G, XY and every other variable after. What defines these mindsets isn't solely age, but the kind of work environment and learning style we have today, as well as their upcoming transformations. I encourage reading Future Smart for a deeper handle on how technology is influencing everything from robots doing inventory jobs to drone deliveries to kiosks at banks that can take care of more client services. People growing up in this

time period don't necessarily **need** your job opportunity if they're sharp enough to create an app that can wipe you out of the market from their living room: Reference the book End of Power (*being a big company doesn't mean being powerful anymore*). Rather than fight these times, I believe it's best to recognize the patterns and display ways you can help the people who work with you advance.

- **Online Training**
- **Workshops**
- **Company Trips**
- **Certifications**
- **Professional Development Credits**
- **Fund Advanced Education**

And if these are too resource-taxing as a smaller company:

- **Designate rising employees as leaders in the group and allow them to document their progress in a leadership journal**
- **Encourage professionals to take on new tasks because that success can be added to their credentials**
- **Create an in-house development program**
- **Charge professionals with the responsibility of designing their own leadership path**
- **Emphasize in your organizational culture that you don't expect professionals to stay in the same position for too long**
- **Have a professional development evaluation each month / quarter / year that analyzes and prioritizes current and new skills**
- **Write your employees letters of recommendations when they accomplish something or leave you on positive terms**

And icing on the cake for your job description: deliberately make it known that you don't want your employees to work for you forever. This isn't reverse-psychology; you're showing that you do have their best interests at heart, willing to invest in them for their time with you, and you're not insecure as to show your brand cannot attract more great talent. What you receive as the employer is a group of top professionals who can take your brands to new levels while they're there, and who will likely move on (because they're growth-oriented, and if you can't provide the growth, they're going), leaving you in a better state than previous. It's then up to you to locate the next round of talent. We already know gone are the days when an employee finds a great job, works there until retirement and settles down at age 65. Why set up your organizational culture with this ancient value system?

With our society already in heightened states of caution, security and anxiety, trust levels are low, and I believe those organizations capable of connecting with candidates through job transparency and trust will have an upper hand and attract the quality expected.