



'Simon Says'

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Edward George

Did you know...

When you post an advertisement on SEEK you have approximately 60 words to convince a potential candidate to click through to find out more information. A successful 'click through' rate sits at between 4 and 5% but in a tough market it can average as low as 1.5%.

Online job advertising needs a facelift if we are to attract the best candidates and not just the unemployed.

A fabulous job deserves to get noticed. As recruiters, the challenge we face when we draft an advertisement for a new position is how to attract the cream of the crop; those passive job seekers camouflaged in the masses that half-heartedly scan online ads with general interest rather than with dedicated commitment.

Statistically around 66% of people at any one time are not actively looking for a new job. That's not to say many suitably qualified candidates would not dive in head first if the right career move unexpectedly presented itself; the possibility of a new set of challenges, working with a reputable company and potentially earning more money. The question is; how do we grab their attention and why is it that a recruitment process sometimes produces a wishy-washy applicant pool, resulting in hours of thankless shortlisting to no positive end?

Some of the common mistakes we find in recruitment advertising are:

- Over-defining the 'must haves' in the advertisement or simply cutting and pasting from the job description. Dull advertising which lacks innovation attracts dull candidates of the same calibre. Independent thinkers don't want the same role they are doing now, or the disappointment of having their future pathway pre-navigated for them. Where is the personal growth benefit?
- Bypassing the job description altogether. This is possibly worse. How many times have you started a new role and your first task has been to write your own JD? So glad everyone knows why they hired me!
- Not using action words (descriptors) that resonate with the target demographic. Appeal to your perfect candidate by getting inside their head and igniting the fire in their belly. Understand the personal qualities and skills that will add value to the role, and make sure you ask for them. Sell the actual job and not just the company benefits.
- Creating too many barriers to applying. High potential passive candidates will turn off if they feel it will require a lot of time to submit an application and 79% of candidates are turned off by a lengthy recruitment process. Once you have captured their attention, the right candidate will jump through hoops to get the role.

Recruitment advertising is just one of many online stimuli competing for a portion of our precious time and attention. To attract an exceptional candidate shortlist first time round, here are some tips to make front of mind:

- Choose words that draw ambitious high achievers into the recruitment pipeline, such as challenge, diversification and expansion. If the job warrants a go-getter, then flexible working hours and a corporate healthy lifestyle program may not match the lure of a cool project with tight timelines and the sweet taste of a successfully achieved milestone.



- Encourage enquiries. In being accessible to discuss the role over the phone with potential applicants, you are injecting a human element into what can largely be an impersonal and faceless recruitment process. There is also added value in being able to pre-screen for the truly passionate candidates.
- Focus on the challenge of the work that needs to be done and don't be frightened to point to the potential issues facing the position. High achievers are going to be more excited about what they will be doing rather than the rewards they will be offered.
- Promote your brand. While you can't rely too heavily on your company profile, a respected organisation does carry some weight. Equally, motivated people want the freedom to put their own stamp on things and a perception of big business and the bureaucracy is not always the carrot you think it is.

Finally, successfully shortlisting a great pool of applicants relies on an informed recruitment team with a strong understanding of the goals for the role. This way, during the final interview you can adjust your approach to selling the role to ensure the very best choose to rule themselves in and not out.

"The secret of my success is that we have gone to exceptional lengths to hire the best people in the world."
– Steve Jobs

Edward George provides comprehensive Human Resource Solutions specialising in recruitment and retention strategies, team building and training, exit interviews and outplacement services. If you would like further information about any of our services, email us at perth@edwardgeorge.com.au or phone us on **9457 4566**.

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