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A GUIDE TO HIRING PROFESSIONAL TALENT



2023-24

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PUBLISHING AN EFFECTIVE JOB POSTING



When writing a job description, the main goal is to get the “right” job seeker to click on your posting. You may think that everyone is itching to work at your company and, in theory, that may be true. But if your job posting doesn’t provide the right candidate with the right information, you will unfortunately be missing out on talent. Here are a few tips from Planet Professional to use when writing an effective job posting.

Use Direct and Clear Language

Candidates like to know that they are the right person for the role, and it’s hard to do that without detailing exactly what you’re looking for. Clearly state the role’s responsibilities. Don’t use flowery language, and don’t copy/paste from other job descriptions. Being clear and concise helps weed out candidates who may not be a great fit.

Define Metrics for Success

It’s impossible to hit an unknown target, so lay out the hiring manager’s expectations for the role. Share what characteristics, education, and certifications will make someone successful. Most companies show these metrics in a bulleted list of “preferred skills.”

Include Company Background

The company background section is your chance to brag a little. And it’s especially important for SMBs without name recognition. Share any accolades the company has received over the past year, highlight employee achievements, and explain how your company’s product, culture, and benefits set your organization apart. Get candidates excited about working for your company.

Be Conscious of Where You Publish

It’s tempting to just post every job on the same channel — it makes everything much easier to oversee and maintain. But not all candidates will be looking for jobs on the same sites. For example, recent grads may be looking on college job boards or other recruiting platforms besides LinkedIn.

Highly skilled candidates may seek out roles in specific professional communities or LinkedIn groups. Take the extra time to cater your publishing to the candidates you want to attract. Being more specific will help maximize your chances of getting in contact with the right candidate, even with a small recruiting or TA team.

ELEVATE THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE



The candidate experience is still imperative, even in a tumultuous labor market like the one we've experience in 2023. If you decide to extend an offer to a prospective hire, their experience with your organization up to that point could influence their final decision, especially for highly qualified talent or passive candidates. Here's some best practices we at Planet Professional continuously emphasize.

Be Transparent at the Outset

Even if you aren't mandated to, it is wise to post salary ranges for all your open positions. According to analysis by SHRM, [82% of applicants](#) are more likely to apply to a role if the pay range is listed in the job posting. At Planet Professional, we have made it a consistent practice to post ranges for the various roles we fill.

Respond to What they Want

Obviously, money is important. But one of the biggest reasons job seekers [say "yes" to an offer](#) is company culture. Ensure yours is fully represented to candidates throughout the recruitment process. Employees stay with companies for different reasons – make sure everyone in the interview process can clearly articulate theirs. This could be commitments to ESG, opportunities for advancement, or creative benefits packages. Dig for their must-haves and if your company can offer this - be sure to highlight it throughout the interview process.

Be Available for Personalized Assistance

We all know a personal touch goes a long way, and this especially true in the hiring process. If a candidate makes it through the early screening stages and is viable, it is incumbent upon TA teams to provide prompt, personalized communication. This will be great asset if you decide to make your offer.

Don't Keep Them Waiting

It's a tight labor market, so be sure to let a candidate know ASAP if you decide to go into a different direction. Even if it doesn't work out, they will remember how you treated them throughout the screening process.

REIMAGINING BENEFITS

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Which benefits are most important to an individual are influenced by a myriad of factors, for example, stage of life, age, income, or family/marital status. With five generations in today's workplace – including the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z – employers need to pay closer attention to the needs of each employee. In a tight labor market, it pays to reevaluate your benefit package.

Financial Planning

Retirement is a key consideration across the workforce, even for the youngest employee cohort, Generation Z. One provision of the [SECURE Act 2.0](#), passed by the US Congress in Dec 22, enables student loan payments to be treated as retirement contributions for the purpose of qualifying for matching contributions. This means that employees who are unable to contribute to their retirement savings due to paying off student loan debt will still reap the benefit of employer matching contributions. In general, educating your staff on options available to them through financial literacy programs can be a powerful recruiting tool for employees across generations.

Flexibility

A while back Planet Professional conducted a survey of our see what motivates candidates to accept an offer. The results indicate that flexibility and working remotely, while not the most important factors, were key to attracting and retaining talent. For more information on candidate priorities, check out our [Annual Jobs Report](#).

Education, Learning and Development

Today, it is imperative that TA teams and hiring managers have clearly defined trajectories for employee growth. This can be both within your organization in terms of opportunities for promotion, or ancillary learning and development opportunities like certification programs. Employees want to know and feel supported in their career development, and will seek out companies that work to foster a culture of continuous learning that extends beyond climbing the corporate ladder.



SCREENING FOR SOFT SKILLS



All roles require soft skills, but HR and Administrative professionals need them in them spades. After all, they serve functions that are crucial to the daily operations of any organization. As such, they often have to interact with employees across departments and management structures. Here are some crucial soft skills we screen for at Planet Professional, both internally and for our clients.

Creativity

Taking stock of the resources at your disposal, leveraging the different skill sets of your team members, and collaborating with other departments can help you brainstorm creative solutions to complex problems. Being able to adapt to shifting priorities is key. Although adhering to standard processes is the ideal, sometimes new solutions are necessary to fulfill tasks.

Process-Oriented

As mentioned above, sometimes a bit of creativity is needed, but you also want to ensure your potential hires can follow defined processes. Look for candidates that are teachable. Often, a balance of flexibility and the capacity to take direction are the winning combination.

Clear Communication

The importance of communication is often bandied about. But it's often an overlooked soft skill when it comes to actual hiring. Make sure your candidate has exceptional writing and verbal skills, and is comfortable communicating via a variety of channels and platforms.

Emotional Intelligence

The five qualities of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills. Consider building an interview strategy that allows you to screen for these various attributes.

Decisiveness

Folks that work in HR are faced with decisions every day, especially managers. Make sure your hire displays effective decision-making. The best leaders will be able to take the time to do some baseline research, listen carefully to the parties involved, and think about the consequences of making one choice over another.

CHOOSING BETWEEN TWO GREAT CANDIDATES



You've gotten to the final round and now you have to choose between two great candidates. The perfect candidate possesses a combination of the right skills, experience, and personality for the job. Get any one of those components wrong, and your new hire will result in more headache than help. So, what's a hiring manager to do when faced with the tough choice of deciding between two candidates that appear to be a good fit?

Clearly Define Your Ideal Hire

The most important step in choosing between great finalists comes at the very beginning of the hiring process. When thinking through your ideal new hire, we at Planet Professional suggest you ask yourself:

- What business need are you trying to solve with this hire?
- What are the essential skills and experience necessary for this role?
- What does it take to thrive in your company culture?

By thoroughly defining all these criteria at the start of the hiring process, you'll have more clarity on which candidate is the right fit for your role.

Advance the Best Candidates

Hiring is a big investment for any company, and it's essential that you get it right the first time. Interviews are your chance to really get to know a candidate so you're only passing ideal candidates on to the final round interviews.

Having a structured plan for the interview process ensures that you gather all necessary information early in the process, address potential red flags, and don't find yourself in the situation of bringing too many people to final round interviews.

Trust Your Recruiter

Their judgement is a great thing to defer to when you find you like more than one candidate in final round interviews. Your recruiter is in the unique place of understanding what you're looking for and knowing the candidates better than you possibly can in your few interviews.

Distinguish Between Must-Haves and Preferreds

In an ideal world the candidate who gets the job offer will check off all the boxes. But more often than not, some compromises will have to be made. How quickly do I need to fill this role? Are there certain skillsets a hire can learn onsite? Asking yourself these questions will give you better insight into who's right for the job.

TIPS FOR ONBOARDING CONTRACTORS PART 1



Contract employees can be your silver bullet when it comes to filling complex hiring needs. But it's important to remember that it takes more planning than just identifying the need for and recruiting of the candidate. In order to successfully get the most out of your investment, you also need to plan for how you integrate them into your systems, processes, and culture.

The Mistake Most Companies Make

The biggest issue our team at Planet Professional sees when companies hire contractors is that they become so focused on scoping out the need and hiring the right person that they fail to plan for what happens post-selection.

Many hiring managers are familiar with HR taking care of onboarding employees, including communicating with them prior to start date, collecting documents for compliance, initiating creation of system accounts/access, just like they would for normal hires. But oftentimes these responsibilities lie in the hiring managers' hands because the contractor is not an actual employee of your company, and thus HR often legally cannot engage with them. And besides ensuring that contractors have what they need to start, hiring managers need to also provide relevant training on internal systems, communicate expected deliverables, set a work schedule, and establish communication protocols.

Execution

The good news is that these problems are easily overcome by having a proactive and holistic plan in place when bringing on a contractor. The companies we have worked with that do this exceptionally well, follow 3 main tips:

1. They involve key stakeholders: Once you have the scope of the contract need determined, ask HR, finance, IT, production, or any other relevant team for feedback. Understand what elements are needed from each department to facilitate the selection and onboarding process.
2. They create a contractor checklist: When a contractor shows up on their first day, they'll likely have little to no knowledge of how your company conducts business, what systems you use, or typical hours people work.
3. They designate a point of contact: Contractors will inevitably have questions, so preempt that by appointing a point of contact (POC). The POC should serve as a liaison between the contractor and whoever else they may need to speak to within your organization.

TIPS FOR ONBOARDING CONTRACTORS

PART 2

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Good onboarding is much more than completing paperwork and setting up email credentials. A comprehensive approach should integrate staff into your team, especially for permanent positions and long-term contracts. Here's what we recommend at Planet Professional.

Lay Out the Process

All of this begins before the employee even steps foot in the workplace. Upon hire, it's helpful to lay out the entire onboarding process for them beginning with signing the offer. Some employees may not realize that the various tasks must be completed within a certain amount of time, initiating a cascade of HR processes and technical onboarding. Explain what needs completed before the start date, and what can be left till they're onsite.

Review Expectations

Ideally, you've discussed job responsibilities in the interview process but upon hire is the best time to clarify and set expectations for the work. Now their focus is truly on the job, not just acing the job interview. Again, we sometimes gloss over details. For example, an accountant who has been in the industry for 10 years knows what to expect, but for a recent grad, they may not understand what the day-to-day job will be like. Share expectations around start/end times, dress, taking breaks, meetings, use of technology, etc. Assume nothing.

Beyond Training: Mentorship and the Buddy System

Most organizations have a training program for new hires, but the depth and length vary greatly. Having a clear and concise plan of training and getting your new hire acclimated is essential. Working with the hiring manager, define what the new hire needs to know to be successful in the first week, second week, first month and first six months. Set goals and weave this learning into the on-the-job training. Assign the new hire a buddy (colleague) or mentor.

Discuss Career and Development Goals

For long term contracts and perm roles, it's valuable to sit down and discuss development goals with the new hire. [Research](#) suggests that failure to discuss career goals can lead to higher rates of turnover. So do yourself a favor, and make a discussion of development goals a part of your onboarding.

STAYING COMPLIANT WHEN HIRING OUT OF STATE

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Since 2020, Planet Professional has seen a drastic change in the workforce leading to a significant increase in remote employees. Some of our clients have begun to expand their operations and set up offices in new geographies. If you're expanding your presence, or looking to bring on remote employees, it's important to understand and HR compliance with state and federal requirements.

Register in States

Be sure to research the correct application process, as each state's process can differ. Usually, the registration process will start with the Secretary of State. Look into applying for permits, filings for taxes in a timely manner, registering as an employer, etc.

Research Labor Laws

It's important to be mindful of federal compliance as well as state labor laws when hiring employees in different states as they can be widely different. For example, some states require employers to provide state sponsored benefits coverage. Start by doing your research and visit the state's Department of Labor website or the [SHRM website](#).

Unemployment Taxes

Unemployment taxes are usually withheld at two levels – federal and state. Federal unemployment tax or FUTA is a federal payroll tax imposed on employers who pay wages to employees. It does not vary across different states. State unemployment tax or SUTA is a state-imposed payroll tax. SUTA can vary wildly across different states.

Each state has their own sets of tax rates and taxable wage base.

Based on the workforce information you provide to the state, it is up to the state's labor department to evaluate and provide the rate at which SUTA is imposed.

Compensation Package

Paid time off is usually seen as a perk or benefit provided by employers to attract talent, but some states require employers to offer mandatory paid sick leave (ex: California and Colorado).

Different Onboarding Processes

In recent years, the pre-employment screening process has become more complex to navigate when it comes to drug tests because of our geographically diverse workforce. This has led some employers to eliminate the pre-employment screening process all together from the onboarding process.

If you do choose to run a drug screen and background check, it's important to do your research on the vendor that you will use to provide you with the screening service.

UTILIZE A STAFFING PROVIDER



Being in the recruiting business, our team talks to a lot of clients about what they're looking for in a staffing provider. Most want things like industry expertise and geographic coverage. Some want their staffing provider to be involved in the community and to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. But, in our experience, all of them want a robust and efficient delivery model. After all, little else matters if your recruiting partner can't deliver on talent.

It's All in the Delivery

Delivery—AKA recruitment—is a critical way a staffing partner can add value to your recruiting process. Without an effective model, a firm won't be able to fill your requisitions. So, if you're in the market for a staffing provider, make sure they're an organization that can put more than one set of eyes on an open position to ensure you find the right candidate for the job. But be on the lookout. Some staffing firms are only focused on their time-to-fill rate, and will throw any ole consultant at you in hopes of securing a placement. This isn't a good approach for anybody.

The Differentiators

An experienced staffing provider, however, can deliver quality talent in a timely fashion, already having several recruitment funnels and pipelines in place before setting out to fill a req. At Planet Professional, for instance, we have networks of recruiters dedicated to forging relationships with highly skilled and experienced candidates across the country. Proficient recruiting teams will not only spend the day responding to job orders and client requests, but are also actively building out their pipelines in multiple geographies with candidates of varying expertise and backgrounds:

The best staffing organizations will have a depth of recruiting resources coupled with a nuanced understanding of the market. When we are engaged for staffing services, we can seamlessly allocate resources to find qualified candidates on your behalf. This process only becomes more efficient over time, as we deepen our understanding of your particular organizational needs. We've done the work to build relationships within HR, Admin and Finance and Accounting spaces, helping us capitalize on referrals and fill positions even faster.

READY TO HIRE TOP TALENT?



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Planet Professional is a national staffing provider for Accounting and Finance, Human Resources, and Administrative positions across industries. Our mission is to build genuine relationships with both our clients and candidates that go beyond simple transactions. We go to great lengths to faithfully articulate and represent our client's needs to help ensure they find the right candidate quickly and efficiently.

Our extensive database of talented individuals makes this possible. Our team of experienced recruiters maintain strong a strong network of the most qualified, credible, and reliable talent throughout the nation.



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