10 steps to master the art of writing a great job advert
Helping schools recruit better, smarter, faster

In today’s competitive education market, to secure the right candidate you need a strategic recruitment solution that seamlessly combines expert knowledge, cutting edge technology and world class customer service.

As leading innovators in education recruitment for 15 years we understand the challenges you face.

With value for money at the heart of everything we do and an honest and consultative approach we work in partnership with you to find the right solution better, smarter and faster.
Stop thinking like a recruiter and start behaving like a candidate….

• Writing a job advert is one of the most powerful weapons you have in your school’s candidate attraction armoury.

• A properly thought through advert has the ability to attract more candidates to your vacancy and increase the number of relevant applications.

• Every year we help schools advertise 45,000 vacancies around the world and regularly encounter problems with job adverts.

• The importance of which sometimes seem to be overlooked. Recruiters simply don’t put enough effort into writing great copy for their advert.

• We want to put an end to the poorly written job advert.

• This guide will help your school stand out from the crowd, improve the performance of your campaigns and teach you how to become a candidate attraction superstar.
Step #1

Remember you’re advertising

- The purpose of any job advert is to encourage the right candidates to apply to your vacancy. Remember, you’re competing for the same talent with thousands of other schools who are also looking for new staff.

- The best job adverts will always attract the best candidates.

- Your sole aim is to sell your vacancy and position your school as a great place to work.

- A successful advert will follow the advertising acronym **AIDA**, which describes a list of events that need to occur.

What does AIDA stand for?

- **Attention** – you need to attract and grab their attention
- **Interest** – keep their focus by describing the benefits of your school/role
- **Desire** – convince candidates they want your job
- **Action** – persuade candidates to actually apply to your role
Step #2
Choose the job title carefully

• Arise, Sir Lancelot……

• There’s something emotionally very powerful about a clear and compelling title.

• A candidates’ first visual interaction with a vacancy is often the job title. Whether this is through a search they carried out on Google, the position they aspire to having or when scanning through a page full of job listings.

• A great job title has the power to jump off the page and grab their attention. Enticing them to click through to and read your job advert.

• Make sure your job title is clear, descriptive and concise. This is arguably the most important element to get right.

• Avoid unnecessary jargon, acronyms or ambiguous terms. This scares people away!

• For example, Maths Teacher is 3 times more popular than Mathematics Teacher.

• Use the Google Trends Tool to see the difference a few words can make.
Step #3
Think about your layout

- Writing job adverts can be difficult. The words are only part of the challenge.
- Never underestimate the importance of great formatting. This will help to make the ad easier to read, digest and lead to more applications.
- Large blocks of text and long adverts will force candidates to lose interest.
- The first thing candidates expect to see are the job title, salary and location.
- Then a brief overview of the actual role, school and any person specifications.
- Resist the urge to write too much, as the best adverts use less than 500 words.

Layout suggestions

- Think about what a candidate wants to know and their motivations
- Put the most important facts and benefits first
- Break the advert up with clear headings and bullet points
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short
- Use active language wherever possible
- Speak to the candidate directly e.g ‘you will’ instead of ‘we need’
Step #4
Include the salary & benefits

• We know education professionals are motivated by improving the life chances of their students. However everyone has bills to pay and wants a comfortable working environment.

• A vacancy usually receives 20% more applications when a salary is stated. That’s the potential to miss out on 1 in 5 candidates, if you fail to provide this information!

• Feel free to include a salary range to attract a wider pool of candidates.

• Putting money aside. Think about, what makes your school unique and the role so special. Emphasise these benefits to grab the attention and entice candidates.

• Has your school just received a great Ofsted report? Is it oversubscribed? Has a new sports hall recently been built? Is your school famous for something?

• Don’t be afraid to shout and tell the world!
Step #5
Don’t take the easy route

• Avoid the urge to simply copy and paste your job description. This just isn’t acceptable. There’s a major difference between a job advert and description.

• An advert needs to sell the opportunity and encourage the candidate to apply. Whereas a job description provides finer details of the actual role.

• To land their dream job, candidates are advised to tailor every application to each role. The same goes for writing the job advert. So please, take your time.

• An NQT has different aspirations, motivations and requirements to a seasoned School Leader.

• Think about the role you’re recruiting. Visualise your ideal candidate and tailor your advert to attract this individual.

• This approach will improve your chances of finding the right candidate.
Step #6
First impressions count

- Let’s face the facts. Teachers and education professionals are busy people.
- Searching for a new job takes time and can feel like a full time activity in its own right.
- Your advert needs to convince enough suitable candidates to read, digest and apply to your vacancy. You won’t have their attention for long.
- On average candidates spend less than 30 seconds scanning a job advert.
- The first paragraph of your advert is critical.
- You may have the best job in the world, have attracted the perfect candidate but if your advert fails to capture their imagination they’ll go elsewhere.
- You only have one chance to make a great first impression.
Step #7
Location, location, location

• Candidates use a lot of criteria when evaluating the merits of a new vacancy.
• A key motivational factor, often overlooked by recruiters, is location.
• Your job advert is a great opportunity to sell location of your school and the surrounding area.
• If your school is located in a small village with stunning scenery, quiet roads and less than an hour away from a major tourist attraction.
• Try and paint a visual picture of where you are.
• You’d be surprised the positive difference this will make!

One of the major salient benefits a school has is their location. I oversee Wales, which has some of the best scenery and beaches in the world! You’d be surprised by the value candidates attach to these facts.
Step #8
Ignore SPaG at your peril

- There’s nothing more off putting to jobseekers than poorly written job adverts. It is inexcusable to run a campaign with spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.
- You’d be surprised by how many adverts our Account Managers end up having to correct.
- Some do slip though the net and this has a major impact on applications.
- Think about this for a minute. If you saw an application form littered with errors, would you rather see it nearer the bin or the interview room?
- Spelling catches recruiters out too.
- Ask a colleague to read your advert just to be on the safe side!
Step #9
Don’t forget to ask!

• The sole aim of any recruitment campaign is to attract a pool of suitable candidates to interview. You’re looking for that special person to help improve your school.

• You’ve done all the hard work by creating a great job advert that has captured the attention and imagination of potential candidates.

• They’ve reached the end of your advert. What would you like them to do next? Yes, but you have to encourage them to apply.

• Don’t let them slip away, create a sense of urgency and have a clear call to action.

• Simply by asking candidates to apply will lead to more applications!

Try the following

- Apply today/ now
- Don’t miss this incredible opportunity
- Hurry, as our vacancy expires soon
Step #10
Dot the i’s and cross the t’s

- Attention to detail is a vital element of any successful recruitment campaign.
- There’s no boilerplate example of what a perfect job advert looks like.
- Just as well because every school is different.

Remember to include the following:

- **School name** – yes, sometimes missing.
- **Searchable job title** – clear, descriptive and without any jargon.
- **Describe your school** – be passionate and tailor this to the role.
- **Person specification** – Don’t be shy. Describe your ideal candidate.
- **Main duties of the role** – an attractive summary not the job description.
- **Sell the location** – be specific and mention any nearby landmarks.
- **Salary & benefits** – include a salary range & any additional perks.
- **How to apply** – don’t forget to ask them to do so. Keep the process simple.
Step #11— a bonus!

Simplify the application process

• Ok. We’ll admit it, we’re stretching the boundaries here. Strictly not part of the job advert, but a fundamental part of the journey a candidate takes in expressing an interest in your school.

• Be careful. A long complicated process does more harm than good. Every additional step or question requires more time to complete. Faced with two similar roles, a candidate will choose the easiest application route.

• Research shows that 60% of candidates have not finished an online application due its length.

• How many great candidates has your process inadvertently turned away?

I’ve been involved with thousands of recruitment campaigns. The biggest barrier to attracting candidates is having a long application form that takes hours to complete. The best candidates tend to be the busiest and they don’t have the time or tenacity to entertain these arduous processes.

Bob Linnell
Leadership Consultant & former Head Teacher
7,500+ Schools and colleges work with us

45,000+ Vacancies advertised last year

1M+ Monthly website traffic

1.2M+ Registered candidates

Contact

www.eteachgroup.com | info@eteach.com | 0845 226 1906