

NEED MORE HIGH QUALITY CANDIDATES FOR EVERY JOB YOU POST?

How To Write Job Postings That Magnetically Attract Your Ideal Candidates

Let's start by facing reality...

It seems like there aren't enough quality candidates available in the marketplace to fill the number of jobs available.

And... it's getting increasingly difficult to fill even previously easy to fill positions.

So, companies (probably not yours) are tempted to lower their hiring standards and fill positions with the people who are available – not necessarily someone who is a solid match for the requirements of the job, will enjoy coming to work, and become a top performer in the position.

This tendency to hire the best available person is costing these companies hundreds of thousands (or maybe even millions) of dollars in waste due to low productivity, recruiting and training costs, plus the unneeded waste of additional management time that average and poor performers require.

But...

What if while there may not be an oversupply of candidates like during the financial crisis of 2007-14, there are plenty of high quality candidates for your open positions?

If you know how to attract them.

As you read this report, you will find out how to use an assessment to identify the key motivational words and phrases that will attract the people you need, just like steel to a magnet.



You see, there are quality candidates available – you just have to make sure that your organization attracts them. Not your competitors.

It doesn't matter if other companies can't fill their positions – only that you can.

It's like the children's game of musical chairs. In that game there are always less chairs than the number of players and the object is to make sure you get a chair.

Same here – there are quality candidates available – you just need to make sure they respond to your job postings. Not your competitors.

And... I'm going to show you how to do exactly that right now.

The Problem With Job Postings

Let's start by identifying the problem.

Companies spend thousands, tens of thousands, and sometimes even hundreds of thousands of dollars on job descriptions, job postings, and recruiting.

Unfortunately, much of this is wasted – and my analysis of hundreds of postings from monster.com and indeed.com shows that most (70%+) of the listings are much less effective than they should be for two reasons:

1. They focus on the requirements of the job rather than on the candidate.

and /or

2. They focus on the company rather than the candidate.

I call this the “Self Focus Syndrome” or SFS for short.

SFS is causing millions of dollars to be wasted in less than optimal hiring because of the belief that “we have to hire the best person we can find” – instead of attracting and hiring the *perfect* person.

Let's look at some examples of SFS and then I'll give you a solution that you can implement immediately.



To find these examples I went to Monster and Indeed and searched for Sales Manager positions in the Orlando area. Feel free to replicate the experiment yourself using any job title and geographic area. The results will be the same.

In my examples, I've blocked the names of the guilty companies to keep them from being embarrassed.

Problem #1 - Focus on Job Requirements

Of course, there are requirements for the job – and they're important, but **requirements won't attract many people to your listing.**

A better approach is start your listing by using customized words and phrases to let the candidate know in a subtle way that the job is perfect for them. This will create a positive emotional environment for everything else you say.

Yes, you need to tell the applicant the requirements of the job (or do you?), but don't lead with it.

Lead with words that will speak directly to the emotions, values, and motivations of your perfect candidate.

What they are most interested in is what *they* want (even if they may not consciously know what it is) – not what you want.



Let's look at some examples from my research. Here are the first four listings on Indeed.

To their credit the first and last listings start with salary and/or benefits in an effort to attract good candidates.

This is OK, but research shows that many people will sacrifice salary for other things that are more important.

You might be interested in [this study by Deloitte](#) that reveals what millennials consider to be important when picking a job.

The second and third listings fail completely by starting with responsibilities and requirements.

The Self Focus Syndrome at its finest!

Sales Manager
CONFIDENTIAL Automotive Dealership - Orlando, FL
\$100,000 - \$150,000 a year
Recruit, train, manage, and direct Sales Managers and Sales Representatives. Collaborate with all Managers to implement dealership sales processes....
[Easily apply](#)
Sponsored - save job

New Toyota Sales Manager
★★★★☆ 9 reviews - Orlando, FL
New Toyota Sales Manager Responsibilities: We are even willing to hire you as a GENERAL SALES MANAGER if your previous experience merits the position....
[Easily apply](#)
Sponsored - save job

Director of Franchise Sales
★★★★☆ 57 reviews - Orlando, FL
Bachelor's Degree required in Sales & Marketing preferred. The Director of Franchise Sales will be responsible to drive the franchise sales growth for Earl of...
[Easily apply](#)
Sponsored - save job

Field Sales Manager
★★★★☆ 39 reviews - Orlando, FL
\$70,000 - \$150,000 a year
Field Sales Manager Benefits: Field Sales Manager Job Objective: As a Field Sales Manager, your learning will be hands-on. Driven to meet sales goals....
[Easily apply](#)
Sponsored - save job

Action Item

Review your job postings now and see if you are leading with responsibilities and requirements. In a minute I'll show you how to make a few simple changes that will supercharge your results.

Problem #2 - Focus on The Company

This is the ultimate manifestation of Self Focus Syndrome.

Here's a great example of a job listing that is focused on the company. I didn't have to look far – this was the first listing on Monster when I conducted my search.

Not only do they start by talking about the company, the next paragraph talks about the requirements.



If they're wondering why they don't have enough applicants, this probably has something to do with it.

██████████, a leading manufacturer of ██████████, seeks a **Southeast Regional Sales Manager**. Candidate must reside within easy access to an airport.

Are you a highly motivated, outgoing and dynamic territory/account sales professional with the technical aptitude, to discuss fiber optic applications and solutions to meet our customer's needs in the following markets: Medical, Industrial, Energy, Military, and Aerospace?

Successful candidate will be responsible for **expanding** our customer base as well as maintaining existing customers. This successful candidate will evaluate customer's applications, recommend solutions, conduct demonstrations/presentations to end users, and close the sale.

I'm sure that this is a great company, but I'm also pretty sure that candidates don't care that they are a leading manufacturer of widgets or whatever they make.

The candidate cares about themselves, just like we all do.

Just human nature.

This is why the *Self Focus Syndrome* in companies is so dangerous.

Prospective employees who might be a perfect fit never consider applying because they don't get past the headline, or at most the first sentence or two.

Self Focus Syndrome causes the candidate to respond with a bored "whatever..."

The cure for the *Self Focus Syndrome* is to **switch the focus to the candidate** and create Magnetic Ads that draw in the perfect applicants like a high-powered electro magnet when you flip the switch.

Yes, you still need to mention your basic requirements, your company, and probably the salary and benefits, but don't lead with them.

By the way... I wonder why the word "expanding" is in bold in the last paragraph of the ad? This might be important to the company (SFS), but **what's important to the candidate is what they will get, not what the company wants.**

Ok... now that you know what's wrong, here's the solution.

Here's How To Attract Your Ideal Candidates

Solution Step 1 - Identify What Is Really Important

A blue graphic element consisting of a triangle that tapers to the right, with a lighter blue gradient on its left side.

WE CAN CHANGE SKILL LEVELS
THROUGH TRAINING, BUT WE
CAN'T CHANGE ATTITUDE.”

Herb Kelleher, Founder / CEO Southwest Airlines

Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines has created the most successful airline in an industry that is known for bad service and profit destroying price competition by hiring people with the right behaviors.

Of course, job descriptions are a foundation of modern business and for legal reasons you need to have one for every job, but I want to encourage you to think carefully about reducing the job requirements as much as possible.

Sometimes it's difficult to know exactly what is required for someone to be successful in a position. Some requirements are at best an educated guess. How can you be sure that five years' experience is required?

What if three or four years is enough and you are turning away good candidates by requiring five? The same is true with education. Many jobs that used to require a high school diploma [now require a college degree](#).

It's called “requirements creep” and it might be unnecessarily reducing your pool of candidates.

And it gets worse.

Most job descriptions and postings don't even mention cognitive ability and behavioral traits – the two things that according to research by [Hunter & Schmidt](#) have the highest correlation with predicting success on the job.

There's a good reason for not mentioning these things: most companies have no way of accurately knowing what behaviors will make someone



successful or cause them to fail - and most candidates are not self-aware enough to accurately report on their own behaviors.

It's even more difficult to create interview questions that will uncover cognitive ability. Fortunately, a good assessment will give you an accurate measure of cognitive ability which will reflect overall learning, reasoning, and problem solving potential.

Solution Step 2 – Use This Information To Attract Candidates

Solution

Use the position Performance Model created by a quality assessment to accurately identify the cognitive abilities and behaviors required for the job, then use this information to attract the right candidates when you write your job posting.

Use a properly validated assessment to identify the key behaviors of the position and then make sure that your posting leads with emotional keywords that will appeal to these behaviors.

When you do this, the right candidates will think “wow... that’s me!”

Even if they don’t consciously know it, they will be unconsciously attracted to your listing.

Here’s an example.

One of the behaviors that can be measured is Direction.





So, if the Performance Model for the position shows that high performers in the position tend toward the Macro end of the scale, start your listing with something like:

Set Your Own Direction

OR

Do you prefer to work without much direct supervision?

OR

Tired of being micromanaged?

The ideal candidates you are looking for will be attracted to this and answer “yes” at an unconscious level. Candidates who are highly reliant and prefer more support and instruction will answer “no” and disqualify themselves. Perfect!

Now that you’ve got their attention, you can go on to tell them about the other benefits of the job, then how great the company is, and finally the absolute minimum requirements you are looking for.

Solution

Make your first sentence simple and easy to understand.

If you use a question instead of a statement it forces them to answer using the word “yes” which subtly moves them forward in your process.

Here’s an important distinction that will make a big difference in the results you get: **don’t guess about what to put in your question.**

For example, if you are hiring for a customer service position you might guess that a question like:

Do you enjoy helping people?

is a good opening statement, but this would only be a guess.

It seems like a reasonable assumption to me, but it is still only a subjective guess.



Just because a person likes helping people, it won't necessarily make them a good customer service rep – in fact wanting to help people might actually be counterproductive in some customer service positions because reps who are motivated by helping people might give in to customer demands too easily.

What you really want to know is how assertive they are compared to how assertive they need to be to be successful in your company position.

Fortunately, a good assessment will give you objective insights into exactly what behaviors you are looking for so you can use this information to write the perfect job posting.

Putting It All Together

Here's the step by step process for the Magnetic Ad Formula™.

1. Use the assessment to create a *Performance Model* for the position. If you are client of mine, I'll do this for you.
2. Create a question based upon one or two of the most distinct characteristics in the Model and start the posting with this question.
3. Give other benefits of the position. This could be salary, working conditions, or benefits. Go all out to make it as good as possible. In this portion of the listing your purpose is to attract them by talking about what they get, not what you want.
4. Tell a little about your company and be specific about what it will be like to work there.
5. Finish with a short list of requirements.
6. Make it easy to apply. Can they send a resume? Yes, it's more work for you, but it reduces friction in the process that might discourage a quality candidate from applying.



Here are some examples:

Customer Service Representative	Sales Manager
<p>Are you well-spoken and get along easily with a wide variety of people?</p> <p>If so, this is what you are looking for. Above average salary and benefits in a fun environment working with people who are just like you.</p> <p>Some previous experience and college degree preferred, but not necessary.</p> <p>Acme company is the number one provider of widgets in the world. Join our team and be part of our success.</p>	<p>Are you a results driven person with the ability to juggle the demands of several tasks at once?</p> <p>If so, this is what you are looking for. Above average salary and benefits in a fun environment working with people who are just like you.</p> <p>Some previous experience and college degree preferred, but not necessary.</p> <p>Acme company is the number one provider of widgets in the world. Join our team and be part of our success.</p>

Or you could do it the traditional way:

Customer Service Representative	Sales Manager
<p>Acme company is the number one provider of widgets in the world and we are hiring a customer service representative with at least three years' experience working in a high volume call center.</p> <p>We offer salary commensurate with experience and benefits including 401(k) and generous paid time off.</p> <p>Blah... blah... blah...</p>	<p>Acme company, the number one provider of widgets in the world, is seeking an experienced widget sales person to add to our growing sales team. You will have at least three years' experience selling widgets a have a track record of accomplishment.</p> <p>We offer commission + salary commensurate with experience and benefits including 401(k) and generous paid time off.</p>

Which of these approaches is more likely to attract quality candidates?



How To Get Your Job Offers Accepted

As they say on TV... “but wait, there’s more!”

Let’s face it – now that you’ve attracted and selected a top quality candidate, it’s very likely that they will have multiple job offers to choose from.

It’s not like the old days when people were begging for jobs – in many situations the candidate now has the advantage.

So... how can you make it more likely that that your perfect person will accept your job offer and not one from a competitor?

Glad you asked!

You can use the assessment to not only attract the candidates you need and select the best of the best – you can also use it to formulate and deliver an offer they will accept.

Even when they have multiple offers to choose from.

You might even might consider this strategy to be an unfair advantage over other companies who are competing to hire them.

A high quality hiring assessment gives you the edge. Here’s how to use it:

Advanced Strategy

An assessment can give you valuable information about how the candidate makes decisions. Use this objective information to present your offer in a way that will make it easy for them to accept. One size doesn't fit all!

Not Using an Assessment Yet?

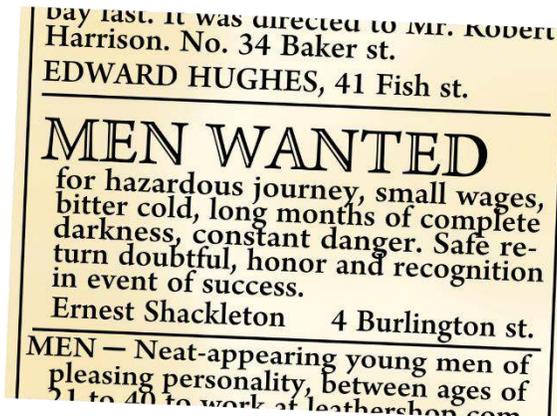
If you are thinking about which assessment might be right for you, I can help. Let me know your thoughts and questions.

Paul Endress

paul@hrstrategiestoday.com

717-307-5523

The Best Employment Ad of All Time?



This wonderful employment ad is attributed to Earnest Shackleton as the ad he used to recruit men for his 1908 Nimrod expedition to the South Pole.

How would you respond to the ad?

It doesn't appeal to me, but apparently it appealed to hundreds of men who applied for the adventure.

I suspect that it was successful as a recruiting tool because **it spoke directly to the candidates he was looking for** – men who were attracted to a “hazardous journey” – and I'm also sure it scared everyone else away.

When you read it, you can see that there is no mention of the company, boats, or equipment and only one small mention of any reward or benefit.

Shackleton did not have Self Focus Syndrome.

Of course, I'm not recommending you use something this direct in today's employment market.

But... if you do, please let me know how it turns out!

