



Tips for Writing Job Descriptions and Job Announcements

This document explains the difference between a job description and a job announcement (posting) and covers the key features that should be included in both.

If you need help with writing these, contact the program you are enrolled in to see if they have someone who can help you.

What's the Difference?

Imagine you're planning a party. You put together a detailed plan so that everything goes smoothly. You also need to send out invitations.

Similarly, when hiring a new worker, you want things to go well. You should clearly outline your expectations. The job description is like your detailed plan, while the job announcement is like the invitation.

Both documents are about the job, but their purposes are very different. The job announcement grabs an applicant's attention, while the job description gives them the information they need to decide if the job is a good fit.

Let's start by looking at the job description, which you should write first.

Job Description

The job description gives applicants a clear understanding of what you expect from them. It should be detailed and organized into sections to make it easy to read. Using bulleted lists instead of full paragraphs can also help.

Include the following sections in your job description:

Job Title

Options include: Direct Care Worker, Caregiver, Personal Assistant, Helper, Home Care Provider, Direct Support Professional, and Personal Care Provider.

These job titles describe someone who will help you with personal hygiene, household chores, and errands. People with these job titles do not do medical-related tasks that require training and/or certification.

Summary

Briefly explain the position. You might also include a bit about yourself to help applicants connect with you.

Responsibilities

Detail what you need the worker to do. This section can be called Responsibilities, Duties, Tasks, or Activities.

To help organize your thoughts:

1. Make a list of the roles you want the caregiver to fill (e.g., cook, shopper, housekeeper, driver, personal care assistant, gardener).
2. For each role, list the specific tasks you need help with. For example:
 - For “cook”, do you need your worker to plan meals, prepare the meals, and/or feed you?
 - For “shopper”, do you need your worker to run errands alone, or with you?
 - For “personal care assistant”, do you need your worker nearby if you need help bathing or using the toilet? Or do you need their assistance?

Requirements or Qualifications

- List your “must-have” requirements. If an applicant doesn’t have these things, you won’t hire them. For example, you might insist that they have caregiving experience—in general, or with someone whose needs are similar to yours. Other examples include CPR and first-aid training, being a non-smoker, or having a driver’s license.
- You might want to include what you think of as “nice-to-have” (or preferred) qualities or skills. It’s a bonus if an applicant has them, but they’re not required. Examples might include having similar interests or certain personality traits.

Reports To

Specify who the worker will report to—whether it’s you, a family member, or a friend.

Hours and Pay

Clearly state the daily and weekly schedule and the hourly pay rate. Mention any benefits like sick days, vacation days, or mileage reimbursement.

How To Apply

Provide details on how applicants should apply—whether by contacting you directly or someone assisting you with the hiring process. Indicate if you prefer calls, resumes by mail, or email.

Once your detailed job description is written, you’re ready to put together the job announcement.

Job Announcement

The job announcement is designed to spark interest and attract applicants. Think of it as an advertisement (or invitation) for potential candidates to learn more.

Essential Information

Include the following basic information in your job announcement:

- **Job Title**

- **Summary**

A short paragraph that gives the applicant a general idea of what the job is like.

- **Schedule and Wages**

List the days of the week with the start and end times. Indicate if the hours are flexible or not (that's very appealing to some applicants).

- **Responsibilities**

Highlight the three to five most important responsibilities using a bulleted list.

- **Requirements**

This section will let people know whether they are qualified to apply or not. List the "must-have" qualifications from your job description. Use bullet points to make this section easy to read.

- **How To Apply**

Provide details on who to contact and how to apply.

General Advice

- Keep the job announcement brief. Provide just enough of the basic information so that applicants can quickly decide if they're interested.
- Write as if you're speaking directly to the applicant. For example, instead of referring to "the right applicant," say "you." Instead of referring to yourself as "the employer," say "me." This wording helps applicants imagine themselves in the job.
- Think of ways to make your announcement stand out.
 - Consider including a picture of yourself, or a short video for online postings.

- Draw readers in with engaging questions like, “Do you want a rewarding job?” or “Do you like helping people?”
- Let your personality come through in your writing. Write as if you were speaking to the applicant in person.
- Consider including a brief statement about what their help means to you—whether it’s improving your quality of life, supporting your independence, or enabling you to pursue personal goals. This can remind applicants of the higher purpose of their work.

Where to Post Your Job Announcement

- **Print**

Post printed copies on public bulletin boards.

- **Online**

Share on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Other online options include sites like Indeed, Craigslist, Care.com, or Nextdoor.