

Why it's important to get your job ad right!

By **Pam McKeen** Director, A.B. Dental Employment Agency



Pam McKeen

No matter what is happening in the economy, quality candidates are always hard to find. To compete in the market place, you need to design your ad in such a way that you are selling your practice to the candidate you wish to secure. The best techniques for writing effective job advertisements are the same as other forms of advertising. The readers are your customers, and your available position is your product. The aim of the ad is attract interest in your business and provide an easy response process that is clear and easy to follow.

Get it wrong and you'll be sifting through multitudes of applications, but write it well and you'll be interviewing the finest jobseekers around. So how do you write the perfect job ad? Believe it or not, it's easier than you may think.

Job advert writing tips.

Before you start writing your ad think about who you would like to read it. You're your practice has a target audience, and so should your ad. Are you more interested in work experience than qualifications? Are you looking for a more junior candidate? Do you require a specific skill set or are you looking to bring skills into your practice? You may want to convey a serious approach for a senior or role or a fun light hearted working environment for a more junior role. Set the tone and be as specific as you can, and while you want a good response, you don't want candidate responding who are totally unsuitable for the position.

To make sure your ad isn't scanned over or even completely ignored, you should think about how people read on the internet; quite simply, nobody wants to read blocks of information. By breaking up the ad you'll not only stand out among the pages of other advertisers, but you'll get your point across much faster. Even if readers scan over your paragraphs, their eyes will fall on bullet points, so

that's where you need to put your most important information, including job responsibilities and candidate specifications. Putting the job duties and your candidate specifications into a bullet point or list form is important because it:

- ◆ Attracts and keeps attention
- ◆ Becomes easier to read
- ◆ Gives the candidate a handy checklist so they can see if it's for them before they apply
- ◆ Makes it stand out amongst the other job ads
- ◆ Allows you to elaborate on parts of the role without confusing the job seeker

Keep your paragraphs short, sweet and to the point so your reader does not switch off. Using big words or over-explaining the role can be off putting and you will fail to engage your reader. If you have a lot of technical information use bullet points to break up the text.

State the salary...

There are times when it is just not possible to put a salary on your ad. But every time you post a job, you should be asking yourself if you can state the salary – or at the very least, state a meaningful range the role would pay. Stating a salary helps candidates to self-select whether the role is appropriate for them or not. Plus it can solidify a candidate's decision to want to apply for the role. I mean how many successful are really going to want to craft tailored applications for roles if they don't even know that the pay on offer will be acceptable? Omitting the salary just encourages applications from the more desperate job seekers and fails to solidify the decision of strong candidates to apply.

Make it easy to read..

You can instantly make your ad easy to read but by adding some of these simple touches;

- ◆ Lists and bullet points
- ◆ Sub headings to separate intro to company, job duties and candidate specifications
- ◆ Important points in bold

In addition, explain the job in the simplest terms possible; using big words or over-explaining the role might scare candidates off. Remember, you'll have plenty of time to elaborate in the interview stages. Think of your ad as a covering letter; you want detail, but not pages and pages of it. You'll have plenty of time to elaborate during the interview stages. ◆

Pam McKeen is a Director of AB Dental Employment Agency. The company has been in operation for over 15 years. Over the last 10 years AB Dental has grown into one the country's leading recruitment agencies for the dental industry, servicing all sectors from government, corporate and private practice.

Currently, AB Dental services over 1,200 businesses with recruiting services including supply of temporary, contract and permanent employees. As professional recruiters, AB Dental can manage as much as little of the recruitment process as required, even if only providing advice.

Dentists are more fortunate than the above car assembly or fruit processing workers because they have far greater ability and capacity to control their own destiny, and up-skill themselves to help stay ahead of the pitfalls.

There are a myriad of options available for ongoing clinical development, either for personal interest or to allow the dentist to pursue more profitable forms of dentistry. Although this benefit is negated if fundamental problems exist within the practice which manifests itself in terms of insufficient patient numbers, or a dysfunctional operation with high staff turnover, to name just two.

In recent times, options for non-clinical development have also grown, mostly via private industry consultants, who teach various methods for improving practice harmony, profitability and so on.

Depending on the specific need, these often provide benefits, particularly when it involves implementation of better internal processes and systems in the practice. On the other hand, some programs can be expensive and often they can provide a form of 'sugar hit' without delivering permanent benefit.

An alternative is for practitioners to fundamentally improve their personal



knowledge via concentrated, ongoing study. This way the dentist isn't reliant on a program which requires successful implementation using all practice staff, but instead is focusing time and resource on in-depth learning which will stay with them forever, and provide them personally with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop and operate their practice as a successful business.

Post-graduate study, particularly in business has been commonplace for people in other disciplines and professions – the number of MBA programs available in Australia is testament to this. Yet the number of dentists in private practice, who are running businesses or intend to do

so, who undertake post-graduate business study, is remarkably low.

It defies logic to suggest that dentists would not derive enormous benefit from pursuing such study and by doing so, taking self-responsibility for staying ahead of the game and avoiding some of the negative outcomes discussed above.

Going back to school is an excellent business strategy, but what is more, it is also a lot of fun and deeply personally rewarding. ♦

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