MAXIMIZING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO INCREASE APPLICATIONS:
How you can improve your Job Postings to increase applications

careerbuilder®

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of today's economic recession, it's a buyer's market for any company that is hiring. The layoffs that have taken place as a result of budget cuts or other financial difficulties represent new opportunities for employers seeking highly skilled and hard working professionals. These opportunities, however, don't mean that employers can "slack off" on their recruiting methods.

In fact, with significantly less money budgeted toward recruiting needs, recruiters and hiring managers have an added pressure to not only find the right applicants to fill their open positions, but to do so using fewer resources than in the past. And according to the 2009 U.S. Hiring Forecast, conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of CareerBuilder, one in five employers (19 percent) reported that the quality of job applicants they are receiving from recruitment efforts is lower than one year ago. Additionally, 30 percent say that it takes them seven weeks or longer to fill open positions, representing an increase in time-to-hire from previous years that they can no longer afford.

Successful recruiting involves more than just filling your current needs. Today, the success of your recruiting and the fate of your company rely not only on who you recruit, but in your ability to retain those top candidates once you have

them on staff. With today's economic challenges, employers simply can't afford the lost production and other costs related to employee turnover, placing an even greater burden on the actions you take to get the most out of your recruiting efforts, including maximizing Expressions of Interest (EOI) or encouraging the right candidates to apply to your Job Postings.

Maximizing EOI and encouraging applications are one in the same, and are as much the responsibility of the employer as they are the responsibility of the recruiting solution. The likelihood of candidates to apply to one of your open positions is dependent upon both the quality of their user experience when searching for a job, and how well they receive your Job Posting. Meaning, where you choose to place your Job Posting is equally as important as the Job Posting itself.

This white paper explains how you can improve the clarity and appearance of your Job Posting to increase the number of resumes you receive, improve the quality of applicants, and decrease time-to-hire. You will see how CareerBuilder goes above and beyond traditional job sites to improve your desirable candidates' user experience. Throughout this white paper, you will also read about how industry-leading searching and matching technology improves the quantity and quality of the applicants responding to your Job Postings.

MAXIMIZING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO INCREASE APPLICATIONS:
How you can improve your Job Postings to increase applications.

MEASURING EOI

Expression of Interest, or EOI, is synonymous with the number of applications candidates submit. Currently, CareerBuilder has three indicators of EOI: "External Applicant", "Apply Via Email", and "Apply Now". The "External Applicant" indicator shows when a candidate has clicked on a Job Posting from CareerBuilder and is redirected to the career section page on that employer's Web site, where the candidate likely applies to the job. The second measurement of EOI, the "Apply Via Email" button, is typically for new users. "Apply Via Email" enables candidates to submit their name and email address through an online form, and upload a resume and cover letter for quick and easy job application. The last way to measure EOI is the "Apply Now" button. This feature enables users who have previously uploaded their resumes to quickly apply to Job Postings.

IMPROVING THE USER EXPERIENCE

CareerBuilder noticed early on that the easier it is for a candidate to find – and apply to – a Job Posting, the higher the rate of applications per Job Posting. Recognizing that increasing this rate would also lower a client's time-to-hire, and ultimately, its bottom line, CareerBuilder found a way to perfect candidates' user experience for the easiest and most convenient job seeker experience. By implementing focus groups, conducting user surveys, and studying candidate behavior, CareerBuilder discovered areas that slowed the application process, discouraging a candidate from applying to a job. The following changes have enhanced functionality and applications to improve the user experience:

- **Changing "Apply with Posted Resume" to "Apply Now"** – In the past, when a candidate clicked on a Job Posting they were presented with an option to "Apply with Posted Resume". Focus group feedback, however, indicated   that when new users reached this point of the application process, they became confused if they had not previously uploaded a resume to CareerBuilder. Because of this confusion, many qualified candidates were falling short of completing the application process by simply closing out the Job Posting, and leaving the site frustrated.

After replacing the "Apply with Posted Resume" with "Apply Now" new user applications increased by 70 percent. This minor change to the application process made it easier and more obvious to new users as to how to apply. "Apply Now" effectively opened the application process up to all candidates regardless of whether or not they had uploaded a resume on CareerBuilder prior to viewing the posting.

- **Improving "Apply Via Email"** – Previously, when a candidate applied to Job Postings using "Apply Via Email" the candidate's email application opened automatically. Many candidates, however, did not use their default email applications (Microsoft Outlook for Windows, Mail Center for Apple), choosing instead to use email applications such as AOL, Yahoo!, Gmail and Hotmail to send and receive email. The feature also proved to be confusing to many and a distraction that resulted in candidates closing their email applications and choosing not to apply to the job at all.

CareerBuilder simplified this process by bringing the process internal. Candidates no longer have to wait for their default email applications to launch to apply to Job Postings. Their messages are sent automatically and the candidates get confirmations that they applied to the Job Posting and that their resume was received.

The improved process increased the conversion of candidates who reach this part of the application process and continue to apply from 55 percent to 67 percent - a 12 percent increase in EOI. In addition to improving the application process, CareerBuilder made it easier and more convenient for candidates to find and apply to relevant Job Postings – and increase the quantity and quality of applications clients receive – by delivering Job Postings that match a specific candidate's qualifications and experience directly to them.

RECOMMENDED JOBS AFTER APPLICATION

Recommended Jobs serves up Job Postings to a candidate that most closely match postings to which he or she previously applied. These matches are based on keywords within the previous Job Posting that are also featured in the postings being recommended. This technology increases the odds that your Job Posting reaches the right candidate, and that this candidate is interested in your posting, prompting him or her to follow through with an "apply".

RECOMMENDED JOBS ON HOME PAGE

One of the easiest ways to reach job candidates is also one of the most effective – and it happens the moment they log on to CareerBuilder's home page. After a candidate signs in to CareerBuilder, a dedicated "Recommended Jobs" area appears on the home page. These jobs are based on the candidate's past job search history and are displayed based on the date that the Job Posting first appeared on CareerBuilder. The Recommended Jobs feature is an excellent way to capture those candidates who most closely match your specifications, before they even begin searching through the hundreds or thousands of jobs that are retrieved in a standard search.

careerbuilder®

EOI IN RELATION TO BETTER JOB POSTINGS

Online recruiting began with the intention of simplifying the hiring process. But many times, companies get off on the wrong foot by placing a Job Posting that fails to attract candidates and encourage them to apply. An online Job Posting enables you to showcase your company and provide a detailed description of your open position.

With sufficient space available, you can effectively outline enough information for the candidate to fully understand the requirements and expectations needed to decide whether or not to apply. There are several ways to ensure that every Job Posting you place appeals to the ideal candidates, and drives them to apply for a position with your company:

JOB DETAILS

One of the most successful ways to encourage qualified candidates to apply is to write a strong Job Details page. As the landing page for your Job Posting, the Job Details page is the first thing a candidate sees after clicking on the Job Posting and is ultimately where he or she decides whether or not to apply for a job. The most effective Job Details pages tend to be a 50/50 mix between the requirements for the opening and information about the company itself.

The Job Details page is where you outline the skills necessary for the position, while providing candidates with all the details they need to know about what the position entails. Make sure to distinguish between the "must have" skills and the "plus" skills for the job. Also, make sure the requirements and job duties are easy to understand by someone who does not already work for your company. Some items that should be addressed on the Job Details page are requirements for the minimum number of years of experience, education level, and any certificates needed. You should also list any soft skills that are needed for the position, such as communication skills, willingness to travel, ability to work in a team environment, and organizational skills.

Never write a Job Details page to appeal to a broad range of candidates. Have your specific, ideal candidate in mind and write the Job Posting to match his or her attributes, skills and experience. If you are looking for a CPA with five plus years of experience, an MBA in Finance, and a willingness to travel 50 percent of the time, state it on the Job Details page. This specificity effectively attracts the candidates who make a better match for your company, while weeding out the ones who do not meet your needs.

Discourage potential job seekers from speculative applications by adding a statement explaining that your requirements are firm. For example: "Please read the qualifications for this position carefully. The successful applicant must get up to speed quickly and therefore, we only consider those who meet all the criteria listed above." This kind of statement deters people who are unsure whether you are serious about your stated requirements as well as those looking to "spam" out their resumes to a variety of Job Postings.

Many companies have implemented branding products, including CareerBuilder's BrandBuilder, into their recruiting. These products effectively inform candidates of a company's culture, industry, benefits, and other key information that is valuable to interested candidates. Candidates can come across these features either by clicking on a link on the actual Job Posting, or when searching a company's career site or a job site by company.

If you do not have a BrandBuilder or a career site where a candidate can find more information on your company, it is imperative that all of this relevant information be supplied in the job description. The job description is a very crucial component to the recruiting process because job seekers need to know exactly what they will be doing on the job.

One of the main reasons employees leave new jobs is a miscommunication or lack of understanding over what the job actually entails. Try to include the following information in every Job Posting you create to get the best possible results. As mentioned above, the goal is to be as descriptive as possible so job seekers can visualize what day-to-day life on the job is like.

- Detailed overview of the responsibilities for the position
- Time commitments, salary and travel expectations
- Interesting challenges of the job and desirable aspects of the job
- Role the position and department has within the company
- Potential for growth within the company

JOB TITLE

The job title is what draws the candidate in; thus, it should be clear cut and to the point. An effective job title should be targeted to the main responsibility of the job, relating specifically to the type of candidate you would like to hire. For example, hiring for an IT position, using "Internet Guru" as the job title would be a poor choice. Instead, a job title of "IT Systems Coordinator" or "IT Software Designer" clarifies what the position is and who should apply to this job.

KEYWORDS

Candidates primarily search for jobs by keywords. Be sure to include several keywords related to your Job Posting

to make it easier for candidates to find your posting. It is helpful to list common words that candidates might use when searching for jobs.

Not only do keywords help to determine which candidate searches your Job Posting appears in, but they are the basis of search alerts and agents that help you reach both active and passive candidates. Use words that ideal candidates use to search for your job. Include alternate job titles, responsibilities, and skills needed for the position. For example, if you are searching for a nurse, you should make sure to include keywords nurses use, such as registered nurse, RN, and BSN.

JOB CATEGORIES

When it comes time to place your Job Posting into a category or categories, you want to include only the categories that are relevant to the position. For example, if you need a CPA, place the posting in both Finance and Accounting. Placing your Job Posting in Marketing might attract some candidates who are intrigued by the unusual placement of the posting, but these candidates probably lack the qualifications and experience needed to perform the job. Do not over post with the sole purpose of receiving the most applications. This only decreases the percentage of qualified applicants responding to your Job Posting.

APPEARANCE

Besides providing detailed information about the requirements for the job and about your company itself, another important aspect of the Job Posting is the way it appears online. A well-polished Job Posting encourages candidates to read all the way through and proceed to the application process. Use bullet points to separate key ideas and avoid a "cluttered" appearance. Including HTML within your Job Posting enables you to bold certain keywords and ensure that your posting displays correctly – regardless of the candidate's email application.

SALARY INFORMATION

If you want to encourage interested candidates to apply to your position, include salary information in the Job Posting whenever possible. If an actual numerical range is not available, candidates will also appreciate seeing information about benefits. Also, if the salary or hourly figure is higher than the industry average, be sure to indicate that on the Job Posting to pique the interest of candidates who may be on the fence about applying to your posting.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The majority of candidates have a version of their resume available electronically, so requiring that they submit it when applying to your Job Posting is the most effective way to manage your recruiting. Receiving resumes

electronically enables you to sort and track which resumes were received through CareerBuilder. You can easily determine how many candidates are applying online, and of those candidates, which ones are the most qualified.

Also, asking the candidate to apply through email or through an online application saves you time throughout the entire recruitment process. When you provide a telephone number, candidates are likely to call for more information on the position. Providing the phone number in a Job Posting limits your power in the recruiting process, and in today's competitive market, you must remain in control at all times.

MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL

When you take it upon yourself to help simplify the candidate user experience by creating a strong Job Posting, you place yourself in a position to achieve the maximum recruiting has to offer. Attracting and recruiting skilled applicants is increasingly more challenging, and you must constantly evaluate the effectiveness of your recruiting methods and the quality of the candidates it yields. What remains the ultimate measure of successful recruiting is what effect it has on your company's bottom line. Reducing your time-to-hire and increasing the quality of your hires positively affect your bottom line – all of which is achievable through better recruiting practices.

ABOUT CAREERBUILDER

careerbuilder®