Writing a job advert

The aim of the job advert is to attract interest, communicate quickly and clearly the essential (engaging and relevant) points, and to provide a clear response process and mechanism.

Don’t:

- Use too many words - keep it simple.
- Have uninspiring, boring descriptions of roles and ideal candidates.
- Have too much emphasis on the job and not enough on the person.

Do:

- Make the advert easy to read. Use language that your reader uses.
- Use short sentences. More than fifteen words in a sentence reduces the clarity of the meaning.
- Get the reader involved. Refer to the reader as ‘you’ and use the second person (‘you’, ‘your’ and ‘yours’ etc) in the description of the requirements and expectations of the candidate and the job role. This helps people to visualise themselves in the role.
- Stress what is unique. Try to emphasise what makes your job and your setting / company special.

An appealing job title
The most obvious way to increase the number of people who view your job advert is to make the job title clear and appealing. If you have access to a CV database, find some CVs of the kind of people you would like to invite for an interview and use the ‘Desired Job Title’ field as the basis for your advert. Choose a title that includes key terms that qualified candidates may include in their job search.

Note: Childcare employers are strongly advised to ask applicants to apply for the role in writing by completing an application form in relation to the person specification

Choosing your advertising channel
Select a market appropriate to your field. It’s important to do a few searches in order to determine the best market for your ad. These searches can be performed online, in the local paper, in the classifieds, or in any other markets in which you are considering advertising. By acting as a job-hunter, you’ll be able to determine the most popular markets for your advertisement. Of course, the cost may also be a factor – see the ‘Recruitment Sites Table’ (charges correct at time of compiling).
Introduce your setting

This should include key words and phrases that give a concise summary. Aim to keep this to around 40 words and talk about how the job fits in with the setting structure. This will help the reader quickly assess if it's an appropriate environment for them, enticing them to keep on reading.

Role responsibilities

Remember your advert is not a full job description and therefore doesn't need to include every element of the role, just enough to get the right people to send their application. List between three and seven main tasks the successful applicant will be expected to undertake.

Person Specification

What skills, qualifications or attributes are you looking for in your ideal applicant? Try and divide these up between what is necessary and what would be an advantage (these must be used to shortlist applicants). If you are hoping to obtain a high level of applications you can afford to be less specific with your requirements, whereas if you just want a couple of high quality applicants then be very clear about the strict criteria they will have to meet. Job seekers take literal notice of this area and you can affect your response rate dramatically with just a few carefully chosen words.

Rewards

As well as information on the salary candidates can expect to receive you should also look to point out some of the key benefits and perks they can look forward to. What would make them want to apply for your role rather than a similar position with a competitor? Rewards don't have to be financial so think about what flexible working programmes, team outings etc. your setting offers as well as opportunities for career progression. You may also like to include advantages such as good transport links.

Next steps

If the reader is interested in your vacancy what are the next steps you want them to take? There is often an ‘Apply Now’ button with on-line job adverts but you should also add a contact email or phone number for the job description, person specification and application form. Include a clear statement in line with safe recruitment requirements ‘The setting has a duty to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfill the requirements for their role. The setting will follow safer recruitment practices including verifying qualifications and ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken’.

To book onto a ‘Safer Recruitment Training’ course, use ‘Learn Together’ link:
http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/learntogether/homepage/66/ey_development

See also the guidelines on ‘avoiding discrimination when advertising job vacancies’ and ‘safe and effective recruitment guidance’.