

How To Recruit

OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES

FOR YOUR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION



About:

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Responsibilities:

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Qualifications:

Hiring for a nonprofit isn't quite like hiring for any other job. Not only is your organization looking for a dedicated, charity-minded candidate, but you want to find the best person for the job.

On the other side, many candidates are frustrated by incomplete, confusing, or outright misleading job descriptions.

The charitable sector is notorious for postings that look like this:

WANTED:

Executive Director, Cat Shelter

Years Experience:

15-20

Tasks:

Manage all fundraising channels with the goal of doubling donations over the next year. Create new marketing materials including print and digital brochures. Responsible for accounting, tax receipting and payroll. Design and deploy capital campaign to raise \$10 million for new feline rescue center. Must be experienced in social media, monitoring the Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook accounts. Write and publish frequent blogs. Proven experience taking pictures of three-legged cats. Must be able to handle additional tasks as assigned.

Skills:

GiftWorks, Salesforce, QuickBooks, CFRE essential, French and Spanish speaking mandatory. Part-time, 20 hours a week.

Salary:

To be determined based on job history



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Yikes!

Hiring success starts with a good job posting – something that can be sadly overlooked when your nonprofit is looking to staff up. You need to write the best fundraising job description in order to cut through the clutter. That means no fancy buzzwords as window dressing (“ninjas” or “gurus” need not apply), muddled expectations, or confusing requirements.

This guide will show you how!

1. What your nonprofit's job posting SHOULD include:

With so much criteria that goes into a job posting, there's a ton of stuff that you could be missing – which in turn means you could be missing out on prime candidates. Here's what you should be including in your nonprofit's job posting, no matter what the position:

Stated salary range:

Too many nonprofit organization don't include the salary range, and it's misleading for candidates. **Be upfront and honest about what your NPO is offering for the position.** This one is key!

As a sidebar, many great candidates see a lack of salary range as a "red flag" indicating that the charity is less professional than other organizations.

Respect for the difference between part-time and full-time:

Have you found that the "Required Tasks" section of your posting for a part-time job is getting a bit lengthy? Reconsider whether you ought to be hiring for a full-time position instead.

Take the time to break down how many hours are actually in a task. For example, teaching an economic development workshop to young entrepreneurs may be only 1 hour a week in a computer lab, but are you taking into considering the hours required to build the course and create materials?

Respect for separate disciplines:

A fundraising skill set is different from marketing or office management. Why would your Annual Giving Officer in charge of a direct mail campaign also be responsible for doing the office payroll? It's not possible for both tasks to be completed with the same competency.

Be sure that all the skills required for the position are actually relevant to the position.

Sure, in the nonprofit sector we are often "Jack & Jill of all trades" by default,

but there's a difference between pitching in to help plan your organization's gala and managing it while also heading up monthly giving program! Too many responsibilities under one job title is a recipe for disaster and a signal to skilled practitioners to avoid your organization.

What technology skills are required:



Given how much technology is becoming integrated with digital fundraising, it's vital that you list what tech skills are needed for the job. For example, if the position requires handling donor management, you'll need someone who's familiar with a CRM (constituent relationship management).

Please note: **Having a skill is different than having experience with a particular brand of software.** For instance, if your organization uses one type of database, you don't need to insist on a candidate who has used that product before. If your candidate has used a similar type of software, they already understand the principles of a donor management platform and can be trained on a new one.

Real talk on soft skills:



Sure, we all want candidates with a great EQ (emotional quotient or emotional intelligence), but **it's important to be specific in a way that allows candidates the ability to prove their skills.** Saying you want somebody to be a "team player" is non-specific, since so many of us work in teams!

Asking for somebody who has good negotiation skills is specific. A candidate can then respond with an example of a time they managed a successful negotiation. See the difference?

Relationships:



Who does this position report to? Does it include direct reports? Where does this position fit in the staff org chart? In order to cut down on the confusion, **include an idea of where this position's relationship is in relation to others inside the organization.** This will help provide an honest picture and clear up any misconception about who this candidate will report to (or if they'll have people reporting to them).

Benefits:



Don't underestimate how important benefits are when it comes to candidates deciding on what job they'll apply for! **If you offer them, be upfront and as detailed as possible.** This isn't just the typical health coverage, either – if your organization offers great perks like childcare, free food, or a pet-friendly office, include those in the job posting as well. It's all about making your workplace look as appealing as possible.

Focus on ability, not number of years:



Insisting on somebody who has 10-20 years experience working in a discipline can stop good quality candidates from applying. After all, we all know professionals who have been doing the same thing with mediocre or stale results for 20 years, and on the flip side, we know people new to the sector who have managed amazing programs right out of college. Who do you want to join your team? **Be flexible with your experience requirements.**

What's unique about you?



Like we said in regards to benefits, if your charity has perks, work those perks! Candidates may already have a sense of your mission or cause, **but they want to know about your workplace culture too.** Do you have Puppy Fridays when pets are welcome in the office? How about Summer Days where employees can take half-days off when the weather is nice? Perhaps you offer flexible work hours or remote work options.

Relevant keywords:



If you want to find the most candidates online – the job title itself is the most attractive to search engines. For instance: Fundraising or Development Officer would be more frequently searched than "Resource Allocation Officer".

Creative job titles are super fun, but a Chief Joy Captain is not going to catch the eye of an experienced candidate looking for a Volunteer Manager position.

2. Where to place your job posting

You're likely familiar with online job posting websites like Workopolis or Monster, and you've probably submitted to those sites before. However, the issue is that those sites get such a high volume of job postings that they can be difficult for job-seekers to navigate.

Fortunately, there are websites that are geared towards charities and nonprofits that also include job boards! Sites like Idealist.org (and CharityVillage in Canada) focus specifically on the nonprofit sector, and are more likely to attract candidates who are best suited for charity and nonprofit work.



It's critical to talk about the power of LinkedIn – it's quickly become a favorite for job seekers, and with good reason. The site has huge reach, and plenty of candidates stop by LinkedIn daily to see what's new on their job listings. LinkedIn also allows you to vet applicants ahead of time by checking out their feedback from past colleagues and getting a quick overview of their employment history. Plus, there's the added networking factor that LinkedIn can provide.

To go even further, LinkedIn has a targeting system that allows you to target current job titles, education levels, various work sectors, and so on. This means you can promote your job posting to exactly the right people at the right time, which cuts down on wasted time!

Speaking of social networking as a job hunting tool, consider Facebook groups for nonprofit professionals. They're a great place to post jobs and encourage your posting to be shared! For example, there are groups like the popular

Nonprofit Happy Hour for discussion and discourse, or the **DIY Nonprofit Visionaries**, who offer advice. One caveat: Make sure you check the Facebook group's rules before you post. Some of them have strict rules about what your job postings must include, like salary range.

Lastly, offering a referral bonus to staff can also help widen the net and potentially bring in recruits that you wouldn't have access to otherwise! Make sure to publicize the referral bonus internally so there's extra motivation to suggest new employees. Don't have the extra cash? Get creative. Give extra PTO or vacation days to staff who bring in great new hires.

3. Sample skill requirements

We asked nonprofit professionals what skills are most important for these jobs and here's what they said – be sure to include these requirements in your job postings for these positions!

Fundraising Officer	Marketing Manager	Executive Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proven growth of revenue line ✓ Networking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ability to persuade others to take action ✓ Report on results by marketing channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ability to lead and inspire ✓ Proven track record for measurable results
Volunteer Manager	Database Officer	Advocacy Or Community Outreach Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conflict resolution ✓ Organization skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Flexibility using multiple products ✓ Reporting skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Customer or client service skills ✓ Communication skills

4. What shouldn't you put in a job description?

So now you've got a general idea of what you should put in your nonprofit job description – but what about what wording you should avoid? For one, anything that implies gender or age requirements. For example: "Young women wanted for front desk work."

And those aren't the only things you should avoid referencing: The US Equal Opportunity Commission states that it is illegal for an employer to publish a job advertisement that shows a preference for or discourages someone from applying for a job because of his or her race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.

Each province and territory in Canada has separate legislation; however, the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.



5. Internal promotion – don't forget about it!

Promoting from within is seen as a sign of a healthy organization that cares about how their employees develop. Millennials say they want to see a clear career progress when they join an organization.

Do you know how to answer the question: **"Where will I be in 5 years if I join your team?"**

Many organizations only think about bringing in new talent for a position, rather than looking carefully at their current employees to see their potential to shine in a new role.

Don't be the type of NPO that is worried about losing a great employee if you promote them out of their current position. It costs a lot less for you to onboard someone who already works at your organization. And, if you don't respect their desire to improve their career, you run the major risk of losing them to another organization.



6. If a job description doesn't include these things, is it a red flag?

Let's see what candidates have to say themselves:

“

It's frustrating when job descriptions use vague charitable sector language that is different than wording commonly used in other industries. Doing this can create confusion around what the role actually requires, making it sound like the company hasn't thought this role through and may add additional responsibilities later.

– Laura, Event Manager

“

The vast majority of nonprofit job descriptions do not contain any information on compensation. You often don't find out the salary, or even a range, until you've gone through the interview process and been made an offer. This needs to change so we're at least on par with other industries.

– Alix, Fundraiser

“

We are looking for a stellar copywriter who is also an award-winning designer and developer with a proven track record in corporate giving for a part-time entry level position of communications co-coordinator' make it seem like the organization doesn't know what it needs.

– Cynthia, Writer

7. In conclusion – get those candidates!

When it comes to putting together a clear, concise, successful job posting in the nonprofit sector, it's not quite as easy as writing out a few lines and submitting it to a couple places online. Sure, you may get a few inquiries, but they definitely won't be the same quality you'd get if you put a solid effort into your posting. Save time – both that of your own and your potential candidates – and make sure you follow our do's and don'ts above! You'll be on the fast track to top-notch staffing in no time. ■

WANTED:

Executive Director,
Cat Shelter



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