

Writing a great graduate job advert

Unlike with recruitment for senior roles, graduates don't need tonnes of information in a job advert. A short advert that gives them a flavour of the culture of the organisation is more likely to catch their attention than a long advert.

Attracting diverse candidates in a job advert

When advertising a graduate role, writing as inclusively as possible can help to attract a wider pool of talent to your organisation. From a quick glance at a job advert, a graduate can perceive an image of the 'ideal candidate' just from the language and statements used throughout. Potential candidates from diverse backgrounds might be put off applying for a role they are suitable for if they feel they won't fit in at an organisation. We've pulled together some simple changes you can make to your adverts to increase applications from candidates of all backgrounds.

What do we mean by diverse candidates?

In this instance, we mean these potential candidates:

- Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals
- Disabled people (with visible or invisible disabilities)
- People from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Those with mental health conditions
- Care leavers
- Carers
- Individuals with refugee status

What can you do to make your advert and organisation more attractive to diverse candidates?

- ✓ You can emphasise your commitment to diversity and inclusion by including a short statement to let potential candidates know that you welcome applications from all backgrounds. This will help graduates to feel confident that they will fit into the culture of the organisation. You could use statements such as these on your job adverts:

"We are passionate about creating a diverse workforce and positively encourage applications from under-represented communities."

"We particularly encourage applications Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and disabled candidates. We are committed to equality and diversity within our workforce."

- ✓ You could also make a positive commitment towards employing graduates from under-represented groups (BAME, disability etc.) by **guaranteeing** an interview for all candidates from these groups who meet the minimum essential criteria for the role as set out in the person specification. From the interview stage, you can then recruit based on merit and individual interview performance.
- ✓ You could join over 20,000 UK employers signed up to the government's free [Disability Confident](#) scheme, which supports employers of all size in attracting talented disabled individuals into your workplace. You can display that you are a Disability Confident employer on any job advert you post online which will instil disabled graduates with confidence applying for a role at your organisation.

- ✓ If you use any imagery on your job advert or on your company website, choose pictures that showcase a diverse range of employees if possible. Candidates will get a sense of the organisation from seeing the types of people they have already hired.
- ✓ You could also consider flexible working patterns which can be largely beneficial for some individuals (e.g., carers, disabled individuals). Stating on your job advert that you can offer flexible working patterns will ensure that you attract a wider pool of candidates that might not typically consider roles just advertised as full-time with core hours.

Things to avoid in a graduate job advert:

Job adverts are covered by the [Equality Act 2010](#). This means that you cannot write an advert that discriminates against candidates based on any of the following criteria:

Age	Sex	Race	Religion	Disability
	Gender Reassignment	Sexual Orientation	Marriage/Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity

- Be aware of any language you use and ensure that you do not put off candidates who meet these criteria from applying. Some things to avoid include statements like “We are looking for **young**, dynamic graduates to join our team” (this could put off mature students from applying) or “Face to face **verbal** communication and **eye contact** are a must”.
- Whilst not against the law, be aware of certain language that could unconsciously put candidates off from applying. One example is *gendered language* – words like ‘dominant’, ‘superior’ and ‘rock-star’ have been shown to deter female applicants. [‘Gender de-coder’ tools](#) can help to avoid this.
- Avoid jargon or industry terms that graduates may not be familiar with – many graduates don’t apply for a job they are perfectly capable of doing, simply because there are one or two acronyms they don’t understand.

TOP TIP: Ask a recent graduate to read your advert and tell you what they think - they are your target market and will be the best barometer of whether your advert really makes sense and says what it needs to.

The structure below gives a good framework you can follow to write your own job advert.

1. Job title	Choose something that explains the role accurately, without any jargon. Graduates are sceptical of terms like “Manager” and “Executive” – particularly when the salary is not representative of that level of responsibility – so avoid these. Including the word “graduate” in the job title increases application numbers 6-fold, but “Sales” or “Administrator” decreases the number.
2. Summary	Start your advert with a brief summary of the role (1 paragraph or so), including brief details about what the candidate would be up to. This paragraph should outline the key features of the person you are looking for and the main selling points of the role. It should act as a “hook” to get graduates to continue reading.
3. About the business	<p>Use this section to briefly share what makes your SME a great place to work. You could talk about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work that you do and what makes it an interesting field to work in • The company culture, including any team activities or social events • Your company values and any charity work or CSR • Any awards you have won or mentions in the press • Case studies or quotes from graduates • Your clients – you can use their brands to sell your business e.g. ‘Do you want to work with Rolls-Royce and Jaguar Land Rover?’. It grabs their attention and gives them confidence in the credibility of your business. <p>To really make your job stand out, why not include pictures or videos of your team/office?</p>
4. About the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use bullet points to give a flavour of the role – you do not need to give an exhaustive list of everything they might get up to • Graduates are typically attracted to roles that give them a breadth of experience, so consider including tasks that will show them the broad range of things that they will experience. •
5. About the person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullet point list of skills and competencies that you are looking for in the candidate, separated into essentials and desirables. • Keep the number of skills to just those that are really required for the job, as candidates are less likely to apply if they don’t feel that they tick enough boxes.
6. Practical details	<p>This section should contain all the practical information that candidates need to know, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The salary and any other benefits – avoid “competitive” and huge salary brackets. A neat salary range like £18-20,000pa is fine, but large salary ranges like £14,500-£26,000 makes graduates highly suspicious • The contract type and length. Permanent roles are typically more appealing than temporary contracts • Expected interview date and start date

- Details of how to apply
- Contact details for the person responsible for the recruitment
- The working location – graduates are not as mobile as we might think and are typically reluctant to move to places that they have no ties to. As a local SME you can use this to your advantage and give graduates an exact working location, something that many corporates are unable to do.

Advert template

Feel free to use the template below to begin your graduate job advert.

Role title, Organisation
Salary, location

Summary

Insert a brief summary of the position and company allows candidates to quickly assess whether the position is for them or not.

About the business

Insert a brief description of the business, with some information that helps candidates understand what makes it a good organisation to work for. Consider including quotes or pictures to bring your words to life. Include a website or social media channels so applicants can do their own research.

About the role

- Include bullet points that give candidates a flavour of the scope and day-to-day activities in the role.
- You don't need to include every possible task they may be asked to do but graduates often cite a lack of available information on the role itself as a large reason for not applying, so this is a good opportunity to make this information easy to access.

About the person

- Include your essential and desirable criteria here, in bullet points
- Remember to keep this list relatively short so as to not put candidates off applying

What are all the practical details?

Starting salary:

Location:

Start date:

Length of role:

How to apply:

Who to contact for more information:

Job advert – good example**International Support Coordinator
Lincoln, £18,000 - £20,000pa****How would we sum it up?**

This is an interesting role for a graduate of any degree discipline that will allow you to have a positive impact on the lives of children with special postural needs across the world. You will support international sales teams through assisting with the efficient processing of orders, generating research reports, acting as a brand ambassador and assisting with sales and marketing. Your role is both technical (making sure the export book is up to date, monitoring export prices, writing reports) and personal (building relationships, responding to enquiries, supporting colleagues) so you must be equally analytical, organised and personable.

What's the business all about?

We are a family run company that aims to enrich lives and change perceptions of disability. Established by a paediatric physiotherapist and a product designer, we design and manufacture innovative products that a) provide the physical support that disabled children need to have a functional, pain-free future, and b) children will enjoy using (see images below). Charity and social activities play an active part in our employees' working lives and they we are proud of our friendly and supportive working environment. Check out our Instagram page to find out what the team have been up to recently or visit our website to learn more.



What would you be doing?

You will be part of the team that distributes our products to our international suppliers, and makes sure all customers, from individuals to big organisations, get a great service. Typical activities might include:

- Supporting non-UK Distributors and customers on a day-to-day basis
- Building relationships with customers and engaging with them to increase sales
- Taking responsibility for the Export order book, managing customer deliveries and generating delivery reports
- Liaise with planning and production to support customer requirements
- Monitoring export prices and making changes when needed
- Generating reports and calculating statistics to show trends in the market or with customers
- Working with the marketing team to support promotional activity
- Actively promoting the brand and being an effective brand ambassador
- Assisting at exhibitions, both within the UK and overseas
- To think constantly of ways to prevent mistakes, improve things and make the company more efficient

What type of person are we looking for?

The ideal candidate will:

- Be a graduate of any degree discipline
- Have an interest in international trade
- Preferably speak another European language, ideally German
- Be an excellent communicator, with exceptional written and verbal communication skills
- Be meticulously organised, with excellent attention to detail
- Possess solid time management skills and the ability to manage multiple deadlines/priorities

What are all the practical details?

Starting salary: from £18,000pa - £20,000pa depending on skills and experience

Location: Lincoln city centre

Start date: September 2021

Length of role: Permanent, with six months probationary period

Benefits: 28 days holiday, performance related bonus, opportunities for rapid progression including salary reviews, free parking and the opportunity to study for Chartered Management Institute accreditations.

Sound good to you? Then we'd love to hear from you!

If you love the sound of this role, please send us your CV and covering letter, telling us more about yourself and why you're interested in the role. If you'd simply like to know more or have an informal chat with us, please just drop us an email on jane@tigersupport.madeup.uk. We are also passionate about creating a diverse workplace and positively encourage applications from under-represented communities. And if the role's not for you – can you think of someone this job could be perfect for? If so, please do forward the details on to them!