CHECKLIST FOR WRITING ONLINE JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

- ☐ **Browse for ideas:** Research is the best way to start the writing process. Click on Company Profiles and have a look at the way other advertisers have written their ads. This will hopefully get the creative juices flowing.

- ☐ **Title:** Most advertisers use the actual job title as the heading of their ad. This works well except in instances where the job title is ambiguous.

- ☐ **Describe the role in detail**: Enabling a candidate to conjure up an image of himself or herself doing the role that you are advertising increases the likelihood that he or she will actually apply for the job. Job highlights to mention in the ad include to whom the candidate will be reporting, the importance of the work being carried out by the team the successful candidate will join, the responsibilities attached to the role and expected outcomes. If the role has been "newly" created say so and explain why.

- ☐ **Sell yourself**: Include as many of your company's positive points in the ad as you can. If your company is a market leader or your firm has just won an award, say so. To come up with the best descriptions, just ask yourself why you like working for the company. Then go and ask a couple of colleagues. This applies to recruiters too but consultants are usually well versed in selling their client's good points.

- ☐ **Key words:** Put yourself in the job seeker's shoes and imagine the key words he or she will probably use to find the job they are after. Use these key words - in the right context of course - in the main text of the job ad. As a general guide, make sure you have included every variation of the role title you can think of as well as industry descriptions and the location. For example, you may have a role for an accountant so you could include the words "accountant", "finance", "CPA/CA", "Certified Public Accountant/Chartered Accountant and Accounting" in the main text of the ad.

- ☐ **Be bold, not busy**: Huge slabs of text are a turn off for job seekers. To ensure your ad is easy to read, use dot points in various areas of the main text. Many advertisers use dot points to highlight the skills/training/qualifications suitable candidates must have to apply for the role or to communicate the key responsibilities involved in the role. HTML (mark up language for web sites) can also be used to create color and other touches. Do not use a color that is near-impossible to read or so brightly colored it hurts to look at it. The overall rule here is, "keep it simple".

What to include in your online job description:

☐ *Company name and description.* You'll elicit more interest if you tell applicants a bit about the company and its culture, including a brief company history, benefits offered, description of the work environment, etc.

☐ *Relocation policy.* Since people from all over the country — and the world — may see your ad, explain your company's policy on providing relocation assistance. It may be a deciding factor for some.

☐ *Employment status required.* Let applicants know whether you'll assist them in applying for visas.

☐ *Contact information.* Give applicants the information they need to ensure their résumés reach the right person, whether it's you or the HR department. Offer as many reply options as possible, including e-mail, fax, and postal mail.

☐ *Location.* Since many people who see your ad will not be local, include city and state, plus the closest well-known city. For example: Jersey City, NJ, near New York City.

☐ *Detailed job description.* Remember, online job postings aren't as limited as newspaper ads. Give as much information about the job as possible, so applicants will be better able to decide if they're truly qualified *before* they send their résumés.

☐ *Job title(s).* Job titles are often company-specific. For example, a secretary at one company may be called an administrative assistant at another. To cast the widest hiring net, use multiple words in the title of your posting, if possible.

☐ *Required skills, experience, and education.* Use specific action words, computer programs, licenses, and certifications, etc. Be sure to distinguish between "must have" requirements and those that are "nice to have," and make sure the skills, education, and experience you specify are truly job-related.

☐ *Essential duties.* Describe what you expect the employee to do. List the job's responsibilities, scope, and relationships within the company. Don't forget to distinguish between the mental functions of the job (i.e., inspecting, cataloging, researching) and the physical requirements (i.e., lifting, packing, sorting). *Remember:* The more accurately you describe the position, the more likely it will be that truly qualified candidates will find your ad and apply.

☐ *Other information that can help weed out unqualified applicants.* In addition to the information above, you should include any factors that tell applicants why they should — or shouldn't — send you their résumés. Here are some examples.

- You must have clearance to work in the United States to be considered for this position.

- Background checks are performed as part of the hiring process.
- As a condition of employment, all new hires will be expected to pass a drug test (or skills test, physical agility test, etc.).
- Résumés without a salary requirement will not be considered for employment.
- The starting salary (or salary range) for this position is...
- This position is full-time (part-time, temporary, etc.).