Live Your Dreams:
Learn How to Read Job Descriptions

by Victor-Andreas März

Are you about to apply for an internship or entry-level job? You can literally find thousands of opportunities on the internet; just have a look at some of the more popular job websites that offer you these jobs:

∗ http://www.stepstone.com/ - international
∗ http://www.iagora.com/ - international
∗ http://www.jobpilot.com/ - international
∗ http://www.monster.com/ - international

∗ http://www.jobstairs.com/ - focused on Germany
∗ http://www.reed.co.uk/ - focused on the UK

A good job description provides you with basic information about the company, a short description of the role in this job, what the academic requirements are towards it and any other experience that is required to qualify for the job. If you are a successful applicant, you will typically be invited to a first interview or some kind of assessment centre. I personally know of examples where the first step

in the qualifications process – your job application: CV + Cover Letter - required a relatively small effort compared to the work that followed throughout the rest of the application process (multiple rounds of interviews, assessment workshops, psychological assessments, background checks (incl. friends and family). Hence, try to be as selective with which job offer you respond to as possible. You don't want to waste your time on opportunities where you will have little chances of success and require a lot of effort on your part.

The way you can be selective is first by

Note the obvious spelling error – do you want to work for a company that doesn't value quality?
– Just kidding: UBS is actually a great employer.

High level Job Description: Reporting to Senior Management

"Agreed timelines" = this can become hectic and stressful

Do you like number crunching and financial data modeling?

You need to know something about the internal finance processes
Fluent English in speech and writing
You must show experience with Financial Metrics (previous job potentially, or through a university assignment/ graduate

Need to know how to handle complex formulas, extraction and analysis tool both Excel and Access
If you haven't had exposure to SAP you might be disadvantaged compared to other applicants and might drop out early in the race for the job
Need to feel good working with people and make other like working with you
You must have worked for a multinational company before
It's best if you're already living in Krakow, or don't have a problem moving there

Job Description

Title Internal Bussiness Analyst

About UBS UBS is one of the world's leading financial services firms. In Krakow we work exclusively with other teams within UBS in a challenging, open-minded and attractive working environment. We invest in our employees' long-term development and reward high performance.

The role We are now looking for a metrics specialist for our finance department. Finance plays a key role at UBS in Krakow - it provides high quality information and analysis to senior management, and exercises strict cost control.

Responsibilities
• Provide relevant and accurate metrics reporting to users within agreed timelines.
• Collect accurate data and timely source data capture, including:
 • Identifying ways that data collection can be automated
 • Designing and operate controls to ensure data integrity
 • Working with team members in Finance and other departments to continuously improve the usefulness of the metrics
 • Assisting with identifying cost or process areas needing to be reviewed by management

Requirements
• University degree: financial background preferred
• Very good English language skills
• Practical understanding of metrics
• Strong analytical skills and attention to detail
• Ability to work with large volumes of data, including maintaining its integrity
• High knowledge level of MS Excel and MS Access
• Experience with SAP desirable, but not essential
• Good interpersonal skills
• Experience of working in an international organization

The position is based in Krakow.

Job permanent

To apply for this or other positions at UBS, please submit your CV online at www.ubs.com/polandcareers

It starts with you.

setting yourself some realistic criteria on the job you want to apply for, such as picking the industry and functional area that interests you, i.e. being a business analyst in the financial services sector.

Typically, a large international company gets hundreds of job applicants on a single position in the junior categories. This means that you need to get through the "filters" that are set by the Human Resource Department to qualify potential candidates for an interview. Obviously they don't want to invite everybody, even if they have exactly the right qualifications. My most successful applications were generally when I over-performed in the categories that were required to do the job. I typically would not hear back from a company in the event that I missed just one job requirement.

For example, during the last two job applications that I took part in, I made it to the final round in both cases. The reason for this is that I was very selective. The first potential employer selected me and 13 others from over 600 applicants. The second employer selected a group of 35 out of over 950 applicants. Again, make sure you know your strengths and overachieve in the requirements for the job – this is the easiest way to make it through. On top of this it gets even harder for graduates as boarders disappear and access to talent for companies is increased.

Okay enough stats - Let's get practical and analyze a potential job offer together.

Before I start reading about the company or the job, I typically start from the bottom – looking precisely through what is required from me to perform this job. This is the most important section, because it either qualifies you for it or not. If I think I perform well across all requirements I continue reading from the top.

If you don't know the company, go research it out on the Internet. You need a high level understanding of what it is the company does and if your personal values align with that company – i.e. if you don't like companies that exploit developing countries then it might not be such a good idea to work for a company that mainly uses sweatshops to produce their products. Also, have a look at their financial performance (if data is publicly available) and assess in what situation they are in. It's much less stressful and typically more fun if you work for a company that is in growth mode. You don't want to start working for a company that is cutting costs

at any possible corner (and potentially your job, just after you started!).

Now, have a read through the high level role description and make sure you fully understand what you would be required to do in this job. If you are unsure, again, use the Internet or ask friends what this job is all about. A good source are blogs and job testimonials. Some people also reach out directly to people that are doing the job – utilizing Internet platforms such as www.xing.com, or www.linkedin.com.

If you still feel that you qualify for the job 100-110% and you are happy with the company, their values, strategies, situation, it is a good time to prepare a customized cover letter (CL) and a curriculum vitae (CV). In my case, I strongly believe that it has helped to customize both the CL and CV to each job application, and I have followed this method frequently in the past. It has also helped me to improve it over time as I gained feedback from many potential employers.

In the next article we will have a look at how to line up the "right jobs". Hopefully by the time you graduate you will have gained a diverse selection of jobs across your favorite industries. Your final task during your studies will not be defending your thesis but rather lining up some job offers. How to do that is going to be the discussion in the next issue of Ampersand.

In the upcoming two articles we will together discuss the following topics:

Line up the Right Jobs – Prepare your choices sooner rather than later

Develop a Transition Strategy – Moving from university into the "real world"