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How a **realistic job preview** will help you recruit the right people

To recruit better-fit candidates, be honest and show them what it's really like to work with you, says Howard Grosvenor



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If you fancy going to the cinema on a certain night, you might be tempted to watch the 'trailers' of the available films beforehand, to see what they're about and which of them most appeals to you. After all, you'll probably be investing two hours or more of your time for the experience, so understandably you want to ensure that you'll enjoy it. Now, imagine you're applying for a new job with a new organisation. Wouldn't you want some insight beforehand of what you'd be doing or what it would be like to work there? After all, that's where you'll be spending every working day, potentially for many years to come. What if there was an honest 'trailer' available that could help you to understand whether or not you'd enjoy your work?

Today's job candidates want to know more about the culture and values of your organisation and whether the roles that you have available are right for them. They're thirsty for information about what's on offer because making applications can be time-consuming. It's a major frustration for candidates to invest time and effort on a lengthy application, only to find later on in the selection process that the available role is very different to what they thought it would be.

What if there was an honest 'trailer' available that could help you to understand whether or not you'd enjoy your work?

Employers are sometimes guilty of 'overselling' a job, to make it attractive to candidates. They'll describe their available roles in well-chosen, favourable words and they'll even feature videos of enthusiastic employees talking excitedly about their work. But this strategy can backfire if it doesn't reflect the reality in your organisation. Candidates will either drop out of your selection process when they realise they've been fooled or, worse still, they'll join and then find out that the job doesn't meet their expectations – and then they'll leave. If they're not suited to the required tasks, you may even end up asking them to leave! 'Bad attrition' hurts because it damages the morale of the remaining staff and it also disrupts the performance of your business.

A crucially important aspect of recruitment is to be honest about what the job entails. It's counterproductive to exaggerate the positive aspects of a role and to understate the downside. The ideal situation is to create a 'Realistic Job Preview' (RJP) on your careers site. This is an interactive questionnaire that acts as a 'trailer' for your workplace by showcasing some of the day-to-day challenges and tasks of the role. It gives browsing candidates an insight into what it's really like to work in your organisation and a very clear indication of what the job actually involves.

This has three key benefits. **Firstly, it allows you to engage with potential applicants early in the recruitment process** and it creates a very positive impression.

Secondly, it encourages applicants to make an informed choice. In other words, they'll 'self-select' whether or not they should apply for the role. If the job isn't right for them – or if they don't align with your culture and values – they won't apply. The great advantage of this is that it means your applicant pool gets filled with candidates who think you're right for them and that they're a good fit for you. This saves you the time and effort of screening out so many unsuitable applicants in your selection process. Ultimately, it saves you money as you'll have fewer inappropriate candidates in your later and more expensive selection stages, such as interviews or an assessment centre.

The third key benefit of a Realistic Job Preview is that candidates will join your organisation with the right expectations. Consequently, they'll be better prepared for any 'negative' aspects of the role when they occur. This means that your new starters are more likely to be engaged by the job and they're more likely to stay with you.

Creating a Realistic Job Preview

According to an international study that we conducted across 14 countries, 22% of employers now use a Realistic Job Preview to engage and attract more suitable applicants.

The first step in creating an effective RJP is to conduct a thorough job analysis, in order to identify the ability, behaviour, character traits and competencies that will bring success in the role. This involves working with current job holders, interviewing managers about performance ratings and talking with other stakeholders to determine typical scenarios that arise in the role and the personal qualities required. These insights will help you to run a targeted attraction campaign and a focused selection process.

Using the information and scenarios from your job analysis, you can design and develop an engaging RJP. These range in scope from text-only questions to interactive, multimedia experiences where candidates are asked to respond and make decisions in a 'real' environment that closely resembles the workplace they'll be entering.

It's important to test and retest the content of your RJP and to ensure you have the technology and processes in place to keep it accessible at all times via smartphones, tablets and desktops.

Get this right and you'll showcase your culture, highlight the reality of your roles, reinforce your employer brand and provide a positive candidate experience. What's more, you'll recruit more engaged, better-fit employees who'll join with realistic expectations about their job.

A fact sheet with case examples showing how employers such as easyJet, Flydubai, Lidl and Sunglass Hut have successfully created realistic job previews is available at www.cut-e.com/online-assessment/realistic-job-previews



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cut-e is a world leader in the design and implementation of innovative online tests and questionnaires for recruitment, selection and development. *cut-e* helps companies identify people with the right capabilities and cultural fit to deliver optimal business results. *cut-e* carries out over 7 million assessments per year in over 70 countries and 40 languages.