Appeal to the masses by using the right words

Mass communication is more effective when tailored to individuals' psychological characteristics. That applies to job postings as well. Read about it in this whitepaper.

Why does one person decide to respond to your job vacancy while another doesn't even fully read it? How come it always seems that very few people apply? And why do most of the people who do apply not even fit the job description? These are frustrations that many recruiters experience when they post a job online and wait for applications to come in. Often, they receive only a very limited number of responses from candidates who match all the criteria they're looking for. Sure, for some jobs, good people are scarce, but it also has to do with addressing the right people in the right way.

Messages aimed at a certain personality

Governments, political parties and companies all continuously try to reach their target audience using persuasive mass communication, and they all have different reasons to do so. They might want people to eat healthier, to vote for a certain political party or to apply for their jobs openings. And as you have probably already experienced, it's not easy to reach the entire target group you're aiming at. Researchers recently found that persuasive mass communication is more effective when it's tailored to individuals' unique psychological characteristics.

The researchers hypothesised that what convinces one person to behave in a desired way might not work for another. In order to investigate whether this idea held true, they conducted a number of experiments using the digital footprints that people leave online to discover specific personality profiles. The results revealed that people with an introverted personality, for example, respond differently to a message than people with an extroverted personality. Importantly, they learned that tailoring the words used in their messaging to these personality traits made all the difference.

## The implication for vacancies

The above research findings are also applicable when it comes to filling vacancies. Before you write your job descriptions, you typically have a perfect candidate in mind. You know what personality the candidate needs to have to be a good fit for the job. So, in order to reach these ideal candidates, you need to use words that appeal specifically to them. Or said differently: that appeal to the individuals' unique psychological characteristics. That's easier said than done. What we currently see is that most vacancies only appeal to 40% of the target audience, while we know that this has to be at least 80% to receive enough valuable applications. Additionally, job descriptions often appeal more to men, for example, because they tend to have a more masculine tone of voice.

The solution Textmetrics offers

At Textmetrics, we use augmented writing to help you become a better writer. It doesn't replace you as a writer, but it will help you write job descriptions that appeal specifically to your target audience. Our augmented writing tools use artificial intelligence to give you real-time suggestions as you strive to write high-quality content that matches the personality of the candidates you're looking for.

What we have seen from the research discussed above is that it is important to use the right words in your vacancies. Our augmented writing software uses algorithms based on artificial intelligence to help you do just that. There are glossaries in these algorithms that offer you suggestions for words to use to address a certain personality type. The software can also detect if you use a more masculine tone of voice -something we often see in job descriptions- and give you suggestions to write more gender-neutral job descriptions that appeal to both men and women.

In Textmetrics' augmented writing software, you can select your preferences so anyone who writes a job description using your account will automatically be guided to apply the selected settings. On top of that, you can add organisation-specific rules and guidelines. All the writer needs to do is switch on our cloud-based app and start writing. All the vacancies that you post online will appeal to your desired candidates, giving you more valuable applications to choose from.
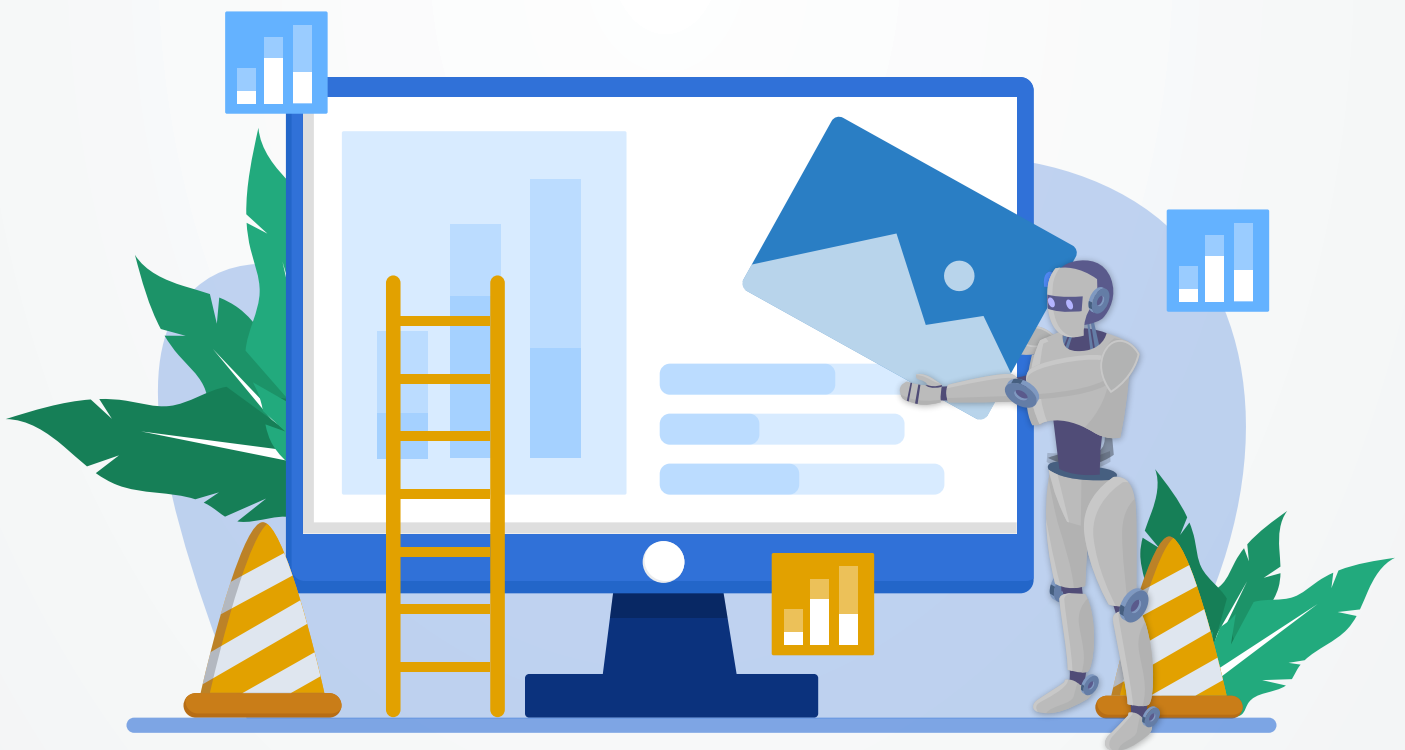
Want to know more about Textmetrics?

Curious about how Textmetrics could assist you and your organisation with recruiting the right talent and reaching D&I goals?

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