

Job description feedback

Question: I would like to get feedback about a job description. The job is for a secretary at a real estate office. The job has been open for several months.

A portion of it states: "You need to be okay with being micromanaged and prepared to continuously check in. You need to be "thick skinned."

I showed this job description to a friend who wanted to apply. When she asked if I had considered it, because the salary is about \$10,000 more than I make now, I said that I wouldn't apply because it sounds as though you'd have to put up with a lot. She said that she didn't get that impression from the job description and that maybe "thick skinned" means you need to be versatile. I disagree. Just interested in what everyone else thinks. - *Anonymous*

Comments

I have had many jobs where I was micromanaged and had to check in and IT IS NO FUN!!! In fact, it is very stressful on a daily basis!!! I think this is what thick skinned means. Apparently the boss has no respect for trust or what that implies!!!

Posted by: Sylvia Williamson | July 15, 2005 at 09:31 AM

First of all, I can't believe that a job description says that but I'm glad that it does. At least they are being honest. I'm in that type of position now. I can't make a move without my boss' okay. If I were to leave, I think its only fair to tell the applicants how he is.

I disagree that it means "versatile." Take it at face value and if you don't think you can handle it - don't apply.

Posted by: Sandy | July 15, 2005 at 09:32 AM

If you don't like to think and have input, it sounds like this job is for you. "Thick skinned" to me means that most likely there will be a lot of criticism and maybe sarcastic comments on a routine basis. I think this could be a very demoralizing position.

Posted by: Vicky | July 15, 2005 at 09:34 AM

Anyone considering this position should be prepared to handle exactly what is written. Expect a boss who wants things done their way and done quickly, and could easily be frustrated with you if you don't, thus, be "thick-skinned" to handle the hollering. I would not want this type of boss.

Posted by: Dan | July 15, 2005 at 09:35 AM

How fast can you run? If this isn't a warning, I don't know what is. Micromanaged? Continuously check it? Think skinned? It sounds like the boss from hell! Why anyone would want this job is beyond me - and - no wonder it's been open for several months. My guess is that this is one of those positions that has a "revolving chair." If your friend decides to apply and take the job, she is a braver person than I or most professional admins that I know.

Posted by: ejm | July 15, 2005 at 09:35 AM

Some day I will learn to type! "Thick skinned" is what I meant to say!

Posted by: ejm | July 15, 2005 at 09:37 AM

That job description sounds very overwhelming to me. I don't think anyone likes to "check in constantly," or feel like they are perpetually being watched. Doesn't sound like a relaxing or fun environment. I also don't think "thick skinned" sounds like versatility. Sounds like it is an aggressive environment that you have to be willing to accept, quite possible it includes a lot to handle and much criticism. Sometimes things are surely not worth the money...

Posted by: Colby | July 15, 2005 at 09:41 AM

I agree with you. Its does sound like the boss is very untrusting. This could be a personality trait or from inefficient previous employees. Some people do not want any individual responsibility and this is the type of position they would like. As long as it is micromanaging and not insulting it might be okay for some. I think an interview with this person would let you know that.

Posted by: | July 15, 2005 at 09:42 AM

I agree, It probably means just what it says. Sounds like a very bitter person wrote the description.

Posted by: | July 15, 2005 at 09:52 AM

Job ads are usually crammed with the most important info the company wants to get across so to have had those as necessary skills is unbelievable. Micromanaging and always having to check in makes for very unhappy staff. So not only would you be miserable working there-everyone around you will be miserable. That sounds like a very angry place to work and \$10k is not worth your quality of life. If you are interested you could call and ask exactly what was meant by those words.

Posted by: Jocelyn | July 15, 2005 at 09:52 AM

I agree you should stay away...especially if you are in a job right now that you have more decision-making power over your day. It would be tough to change spectrums. Does not sound like an uplifting and positive

environment to me. But, if you or your friend are curious, I feel it wouldn't hurt to apply and see what this boss is like during the interview (although he/she will probably put up a great front) and then, if it's offered, turn the job down if you don't want it. Doesn't hurt to get yourself "out there" and feel new things out...it's a tool you can use for growth, if nothing else. Another thought, maybe they are looking for a really hard working person and don't want just anyone applying.

Posted by: | July 15, 2005 at 09:54 AM

If we all posted ads like this we would be ahead of the game! First do you mind being micro managed? and is it worth 10k/yr? Tough skinned to me means the boss is a hothead, and not to take it personally. Is this worth 10k/yr? Can you brush off his/her insensitivity? We all have our own quirks and for the company to give you a heads up may mean they're just more honest than most!

Good Luck!

Posted by: Amy | July 15, 2005 at 09:57 AM

Talk to the hiring manager and ask for clarification. Since he/she is being so straightforward in the job description (what a nice change!), it is likely that he/she will be able to explain and also indicate if the boss would become LESS controlling after the new AA demonstrates responsibility and quality work.

Posted by: Lisa | July 15, 2005 at 09:58 AM

Micromanage means everybody is in charge except you and you are responsible for all that goes wrong and none for going right. It also means that you report to everyone and you are at their beck and call regardless of actual priorities. While it is easier to say there are good jobs out there, meeting your priorities are hard to come by - but, keep looking and get out while you can, while you still have your sanity and brains to prove to others, elsewhere what you're really worth.

Posted by: Proby | July 15, 2005 at 10:13 AM

I would have to agree with you. "Thick skinned" means that you have to be able to take criticism without being offended. Micromanagement means that your decisions and actions will be constantly scrutinized. If you are the type of person who can work under these conditions, then go for it. Otherwise remember, money isn't everything.

Posted by: Kristy | July 15, 2005 at 10:13 AM

RUN RUN RUN FAR FAR AWAY!!!! I worked for someone that was a micro manager and if you have not worked with someone like that it would be difficult. Your supervisor is always looking over your shoulder, timing your activities, and constantly 'nagging' you about what you are doing and how you are doing it and the way they think you should do it. I QUIT that job and informed the individual that she needed to sit at that desk instead of her assistant! It was not fun. As far as "thick skinned", it in no way implies versatility by any means. I sounds as if you will be taking a lot of their 'crap', for lack of a better word. If you care about your dignity and your self

esteem, don't take a job that will demeanor you because I don't feel your self respect and dignity is worth someone else's 'crap' no matter how much more you will make!

Posted by: Valarie | July 15, 2005 at 10:20 AM

Usually an Admin in a Real Estate Office juggles appointments and showings for a number of realtors, as well as directs new calls to realtors on "op time". This Admin would need to be thick skinned because first, it is expected that she not only report to the office manager, but also "works for each realtor on the team". Second, she may be accused of showing favoritism in directing new callers, arranging showings of properties, etc, because the realtors are paid on commission, and they will likely blame her if they feel she cost them a sale or listing. This is particularly bad if the sale was lost to another realtor in the same office. Third, she will have to set up appointments and listings a.s.a.p., because time is money out of a realtors pocket. If it is perceived that she wasted time setting something up, and it may have cost a realtor a sale, she will hear about it. Basically, she needs to do her very best to be completely efficient and fair, and then let criticism run like water off a duck's back. It takes a special kind of person to fill those shoes, and it's not me.

Posted by: Corinne | July 15, 2005 at 10:32 AM

It's no wonder the job listing has been posted for several months. It sounds like the job from hell. An extra \$10,000 will not be enough compensation if you are miserable with your job. Asking for someone who will be micro-managed and needs to be thick-skinned is a red flag that tells me the boss will be hammering on you daily.

Posted by: Jacquelyn | July 15, 2005 at 10:43 AM

I would NOT apply for this job. The message I get is that this boss will be constantly on your back looking over your shoulder, asking you how this is going, how that is going, is this done yet?, etc. I HAD a boss like that ONCE. Never again. Yet, they didn't want me to take it personally. He would yell, was unorganized, and very very difficult to work for. It lasted maybe 3 months and I got out!!! They fired that manager shortly thereafter after he went through 5 secretaries in 15 months.

Posted by: anonymous | July 15, 2005 at 10:50 AM

I tend to be skeptically of the vague description. Words like thick skinned and micromanaged are open to individual interpretations. You don't want to assume anything. It depends on who wrote the job description in the first place as to the way they interpret the position. It could be the person writing it currently has the job and is not happy about the posting or a number of other reasons. Don't be afraid to ask for a list of duties that should accompany the job description along with the chain of command policy.

Posted by: Christi | July 15, 2005 at 11:07 AM

Usually a company will post a job description that puts their best foot forward to appeal to applicants. Since they have given you this description up front, it first sounds to me that they are "blasting" or maybe criticizing the last one who held that position. It also sounds like an area where there will be a lot of frustrations. I don't

think anyone should "knowingly" get into a position like this when it's spelled out so clearly that you may wind up being unappreciated.

Posted by: Marketer | July 15, 2005 at 11:34 AM

I think the ad is rude. I don't know why anymore would want to apply for the job.

Posted by: Kenda | July 15, 2005 at 11:36 AM

I mean anyone not anymore. Sorry. Maybe I should have previewed it.

Posted by: Kenda | July 15, 2005 at 11:38 AM

Sounds like who you'd be working for is obnoxious, knows it and enjoys it...those type of supervisors are "toxic" to work for.

Posted by: Allayne | July 15, 2005 at 11:42 AM

Reread Corrine's comments. She hit the nail right on the head. The Office Administrator in reality has as many bosses as there are Associates and Brokers in the office. You are their personal Secretary. Not to mention the sounding board of disgruntled clients, who feel free to vent when their agent isn't available.

Posted by: Annette | July 15, 2005 at 11:59 AM

Run Forest Run, been there, done that, got that tee shirt, and it was no fun.

Posted by: Courtney L | July 15, 2005 at 01:03 PM

If you are a functioning adult with a working brain, you do not want to even consider this job. Thick skinned means taking verbal abuse with a smile & nothing is worth it. Why do you think the job has been unfilled for so long?

Posted by: Anonymous | July 15, 2005 at 01:08 PM

Run, unless you enjoy all of the negative items in the job description. This does not sound like a job for anyone with self-esteem or intelligence.

Posted by: | July 15, 2005 at 03:01 PM

The job could be quite challenging and if it has been posted for some time, you could even negotiate for more

money. Being micromanaged is okay for me in the beginning, while learning the job, but during your interview process you should be able to tell if it will stop there.
Thick skinned defined means impervious to criticism.

Posted by: Lena | July 15, 2005 at 03:49 PM

Trust your instincts on this one.

Posted by: Susan | July 15, 2005 at 05:20 PM

I have worked for a corporate real estate office and the only thing that I could tell you is that they were all full of themselves, and needed someone to make them feel important, the pay was great, but the pressure was way too much!

Posted by: Sherry | July 15, 2005 at 05:54 PM

Sometimes a boss wants a secretary who will stand up to him and not take his BS without a fight. And when you stand up for yourself, sometimes he backs down. \$10,000 is not a lot if you can't handle this type of boss. But, if you can, draw the boundary lines of what you will tolerate and what you won't. That's being thick-skinned. Micro-managed? I bet he's looking for someone who is smart and can learn. Once you learn it though, you will own that boss!!! Take it if you dare!

Posted by: Norma | July 16, 2005 at 09:22 PM

Thick skinned means being able to take abuse. Micromanaged means having someone look over your shoulder all day long. Money isn't everything and being abused at work day in and day out is not worth it. Been there, done that, not going back.

Posted by: Elizabeth | July 17, 2005 at 04:19 PM

Thick skinned may mean not to take any attitudes of the employees or demands personally. However, the money isn't worth it if it is a stressful position and the boss sounds like he/she is already on guard for failure. If you have the kind of personality that can handle this, then go for it. Otherwise NOT WORTH THE EXTRA MONEY! You'd be paying doctor bills with it!

Posted by: Nita | July 18, 2005 at 11:28 AM

I think if you mean one should be flexible and versatile you say that and "thick skinned". I feel the phrase "thick skinned" is inappropriate for a job description. As far as being micromanaged (who really wants that/), it sounds to me that they do not need to hire a secretary, just let whomever is micromanaging do the job. Micromanaging does not build trust. How many people wanted a job where they can't be trusted.

Posted by: anonymous | July 19, 2005 at 10:05 AM

After all this honest advise from folks that know what they are talking about - I'm interested to know if your friend takes the job.

Posted by: Angie | July 20, 2005 at 04:05 PM

I second Angie's request. I keep coming back here to read the new comments!

Posted by: ejm | July 21, 2005 at 11:39 AM

Run as fast as you can the other way! Micromanagement means "in-your-face, over-your-shoulder, don't make a move without me manager". Thickskinned means "nasty, overbearing manager." I've been there, done that and I can tell you it is not fun. Besides that, it should never be part of a job description. Lucky for you it was!!! RUN lady RUN! DO NOT APPLY!!!

Posted by: | July 22, 2005 at 11:48 AM

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Posted by: Rhonda | July 22, 2005 at 11:49 AM

Are you serious??? That is in the job description? Stay away from that place!! They are covering their behinds against practically everything with a statement like that. For a manager to put that in the job description...that is scary. To scary to even think about.

Posted by: Andrew Pruett | July 29, 2005 at 02:22 PM

To answer your questions:

1. Did my friend apply for the job? No, but another friend did and it was as bad as it seemed. She said that the real estate attorney (who she would be reporting to) said she would need to be available 24/7 and that she needed someone who wasn't overly sensitive. She also stated that at times things would get stressful and she needed someone who would not take this personally. No, my other friend did not take the job.
2. Was this really part of the job description. I copied and pasted that portion of the job description. Their first description included comments like, can't be overly sensitive or take things personally. I didn't include that because I couldn't find my email with the job description on it.

Posted by: | August 01, 2005 at 12:43 PM