

## Communication Message

### Types of Messages

Recruiting experts have studied the ways in which the content of the recruiting message can influence potential applicants' thinking about the position. The communication message to applicants can focus on conveying realistic, employment brand, or targeted information. Each method involves different content and tone, and these differences can affect the eventual applicant pool.

**Realistic Recruitment Message.** A realistic recruitment message portrays the organization and the job as they really are, rather than describing what the organization thinks job applicants want to hear. Organizations continue to describe themselves to applicants in overly positive terms, overstating desired values such as risk taking and understating undesirable values such as rules orientation. Some would argue that this is not the best message to send applicants on moral or practical grounds. While hyping the benefits of joining up may work for the army, where recruits are obligated to remain for three to five years, this is not the best approach for the organization.

A very well-researched recruitment message is known as a realistic job preview (RJP).<sup>23</sup> According to this practice, job applicants are given a "vaccination" by being told verbally, in writing, or on videotape what the actual job is like.<sup>24</sup> An example of the numerous attributes in an RJP for the job of elementary school teacher is shown in Exhibit 5.5. Note that the attributes are quite specific and that they are both positive and negative. Information like this "tells it like it is" to job applicants.

After receiving the vaccination, job applicants decide whether they want to work for the organization. The hope with the RJP is that job applicants will

### EXHIBIT 5.5 Example of Job Attributes in an RJP for Elementary School Teachers

#### Positive Job Attributes

- Dental insurance is provided
- Innovative teaching strategies are encouraged
- University nearby for taking classes
- Large support staff for teachers

#### Negative Job Attributes

- Salary growth has averaged only 2% in past three years
- Classes are large
- The school day is long
- Interactions with community have not been favorable