'How-to' Guide

WRITING GOOD JOB DESCRIPTIONS

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A well-written job description **improves an organisation's ability to attract and select the most suitable person for the role.** You are selling your job to the best candidates just as much as they are selling themselves to you.

In brief, job descriptions should be **easy to understand** and should provide a **clear picture of the specific role and how it fits within the wider organisation**. Complicated wording or fussy presentation may discourage the right people from applying and can reflect poorly on your organisation.

It is essential to **invest the necessary time and effort from the outset** in consulting all relevant stakeholders. This prevents unnecessary changes to the job description further down the line which may negatively impact the hiring process.

Key points

- **Be clear on what the role is and what type of person is needed to fill it,** using the job's history as well as the organisation's current needs and long-term objectives.
- **Cluster responsibilities** into key categories to avoid unnecessary detail.
- **Use specific rather than general language but avoid using jargon**.
- **Make sure the job** described is realistic.
- **Keep the presentation simple.**

Remember, it is not just a 'laundry list' of tasks but a reflection of priorities.

Job description template

- **Job title:** Should be clear and representative of the role.
- **Organisation:** Provide a brief introduction.
- **Department:** Where the role fits within the organisation.
- **Direct reports:** Staff who report directly to the post you are recruiting to.
- **Term of employment:** Permanent, fixed-term, maternity cover etc.
- **Salary and benefits:** Specify currency.
- **Location:** Role location.
- **Job summary:** Short description of the overall purpose of the job.
- **Department purpose:** Short description of the overall purpose of the department.
- **Main responsibilities:** No more than 10 essential objectives, tasks and responsibilities.
- **Person specification:** Specify broadly the nature of skills, experience, core competencies, educational and professional qualifications and languages required to do the job.