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# How to write an effective job description



**To really understand the scope of a job, it helps to have it defined in writing. During the recruitment process, you have a better chance of attracting top talent if there is a well-documented account of the role. Wouldn't you be more inclined to interview with an organisation that had taken the time to define who they wanted to hire?**

While particularly useful in recruiting new staff, a job description has an

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## Three main purposes of a job des

## Candidate attraction

To describe the role and required track record, with the aim of attracting a response from an internal or external applicant for the job.

## Role definition

For the individual performing the role to have a reference point for their responsibilities and required level of performance, especially at appraisal time or when a promotion is being considered.

## Management reference

Particularly for a new manager, to understand the scope and level of responsibility expected of the role.

## What it's all about

A comprehensive job description comprises the following areas.

- Title of the job.
- Where the role sits within the team, department and wider business.
- Who the role reports to, and other key interactions.
- Key areas of responsibility and the deliverables expected.
- Short, medium and long-term objectives.
- Scope for progression and promotion.
- Required education and training.
- Soft skills and personality traits necessary to excel.
- Location and travel requirements.
- Remuneration range and benefits available.
- Convey the organisation's culture and identity.

## Five mistakes to avoid when creating an effective job description

### Using internal terminology

Many job descriptions are written in internal terminology, which can be confusing for external applicants.

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A job description with excessive internal terminology and requirements to appeal to the widest possible audience will exclude most external candidates.

## Not involving all stakeholders

The most accurate specifications are produced with the involvement of several different business areas. When defining or refining what a role entails, do so with the input of HR, line management and employees in a similar function.

## Being unrealistic

A job description should be an accurate representation of the track record required to perform the role, not an impossible wish list of every skill that may be useful.

## Using discriminatory language

Although frequently inadvertent, the use of certain words and phrases in a job description can be construed as discriminatory and limit the diverse applicant group that organisations strive for. Be sure to check out the legal requirements on the [Business Link website](#).

## Not regularly reviewing

Organisations are constantly evolving, so for job descriptions to reflect changing requirements they should be reviewed, ideally annually, and amended as appropriate.

Taking the time to craft an accurate job description can be invaluable to the ongoing attraction, hiring and retention of employees.



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