



6.0 Employing and Managing People

Drawing Up a Job Specification

Overview

1. Introduction
2. Reassessing the Role
3. Job Description
4. Person Specification
5. Pay
6. Further Information

Introduction

When you have a job vacancy in your organisation and wish to recruit someone to fill it, you will need to create a job description and person specification to help you appoint the right person for the role.

You will need to clarify the actual requirements of the job and how it fits into the rest of the organisation or department.

Writing a good job description or job specification also helps in the process of analysing the needs of the job.



Image: Writing a Job Description

Reassessing the Role

Whether the vacancy is for an existing job or a new one, it presents an opportunity to consider restructuring roles, or to reassess the requirements of the job. Ask questions such as:

- Has the function of this job changed?
- Have work patterns, new technology or new products, services or projects altered the job?
- Are there any changes anticipated which will require different, more flexible skills from the jobholder?

Exit interviews, or consultation with the current job-holder and colleagues may well produce good ideas about useful changes.

Job Description

This should detail the purpose, tasks and responsibilities of the job. A good job description should include:

- **Main purpose of the job** - try to describe this in one sentence
- **Main tasks of the job** - use active verbs, like 'writing', 'repairing', 'machining', 'calculating', instead of vaguer terms like 'dealing with', 'in charge of'
- **Scope of the job** - expanding on the main tasks and the importance of the job. Job importance can be indicated by giving information such as the number of people to be supervised, the degree of precision required, and the value of any materials and equipment used

A good job description is useful for all jobs. It can help with induction and training. It provides the basis for drawing up a person specification - a profile of the skills and aptitudes considered essential and desirable in the job-holder. It enables prospective applicants to assess themselves for the job and provides a benchmark for judging achievements.



External Link

ACAS provides free downloadable templates for generic job descriptions

[ACAS - Job Description Templates](#)

Person Specification

Drawing up the person specification allows the organisation to profile the ideal person to fill the job. It is very important that the skills, aptitudes and knowledge included in the specification are related precisely to the needs of the job; if they are inflated beyond those necessary for effective job performance, the risk is that someone will be employed on the basis of false hopes and aspirations, and both the employer and employee will end up disappointed in each other.

Another good reason not to set unnecessary requirements is to avoid any possibility of discrimination against particular groups of potential applicants. The very process of writing a job and person specification should help the employer to develop and implement a policy of equal opportunity in the recruitment and selection of employees.

Factors to consider when drawing up the person specification include:

- Skills, knowledge, aptitudes directly related to the job
- The type of experience necessary
- The competencies necessary
- Education and training but only so far as is necessary for satisfactory job performance, unless the person is being recruited on the basis of future potential (e.g. **graduate trainees**), when a higher level of education may be specified
- Any criteria relating to personal qualities or circumstances which must be essential and directly related to the job and must be applied equally to all applicants. To do otherwise is potentially discriminatory

For instance, a clause requiring the successful candidate to move their place of work should be included only when absolutely necessary, as it is likely to discourage applicants with family care commitments.

The person specification helps the selection and subsequent interview to operate in a systematic way, as bias-free as possible.



External Link

ACAS provides free downloadable templates for generic person descriptions
[ACAS - Recruitment Templates](#)

Pay

After setting the job and the person specifications, consideration should be given to pay rates. Factors such as scales, grades and negotiated agreements, as well as market rates and skills shortages, may affect the wage or salary, and organisations should be aware of the requirements of equal pay and discrimination legislation.

Unless there is a formal system for increments or length of service, paying the new employee a different rate from that paid to the preceding post holder may contravene the relevant legislation. Employers must also comply with the provisions of the **National Minimum Wage Act 1998**.

Research other organisations (**in your geographical area**) that are advertising '**similar**' vacancies to ascertain whether they are paying the '**going rate**' for the vacancy in question. Remember to compare skills required and job descriptions accordingly.

Further Information

Working

UK Government

www.gov.uk/browse/working

ACAS

Tel: 08457 474747

www.acas.org.uk

Wales TUC Cymru

Tel: 029 2034 7010

wtuc@tuc.org.uk

www.tuc.org.uk/wales

Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Tel: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

wales@equalityhumanrights.com

www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector **Cymru**

Third Sector
Support **Wales**

Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales.

It consists of the 19 local and regional support bodies across Wales, the County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) and the national support body, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

For further information contact
<https://thirdsectorsupport.wales/contact/>

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