Job description template

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A job description is the full record of the job, for you, the person in it and anybody who manages them. The advert is the short version that sells it. Write this first, agree it with whoever will manage the role, then build the advert from it. Everything in square brackets is for you to replace.

JOB TITLE

[The words a candidate would type into a search. Standard levels such as Assistant, Senior or Supervisor, no internal grades or codes, and no more than about 60 characters.]

WHERE AND WHEN

Workplace: [site address or town, or remote, or the hybrid split]

Hours: [hours a week, the days, shifts, nights or weekends]

Contract: [permanent, fixed term to (date), temporary; full or part time]

WHERE THE ROLE SITS

Reports to: [job title] Manages: [number of people, or nobody]

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

[Two or three sentences: why the job exists, and what good looks like after six months. If you cannot write this, ask the person who will manage the role before you go any further.]

MAIN DUTIES

- [The most important duty first, starting with a doing word]
- [Second duty]
- [Third duty]
- [Fourth duty]
- [Fifth duty. Five to eight is right. Add roughly how much of the week each takes if it helps.]

WHAT THE PERSON NEEDS

Essential, needed on the first day:

- [A licence, card, qualification or skill the job cannot be done without]
- [Second essential]

Desirable, can be learned in the job:

- [Something useful but trainable]

Every requirement you add removes people who could have done the job. Keep the essential list to what the job really needs.

PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay: [rate or range, and how overtime is paid]

Holiday: [days including bank holidays] Pension: [scheme]

Other: [only benefits that are real]

CHECKS AND CONDITIONS

[Right to work check for everybody. A DBS check only where the role justifies it. Physical demands, travel, uniform, anything a candidate should know before applying.]

AGREED

Written by: _____ Agreed by the line manager: _____

Date: _____ Review date: _____

Review it at least once a year and whenever the job changes. It is also the yardstick for the first appraisal, so keep it true.

Writing it well

- Present tense, plain words, no jargon or abbreviations a stranger would not know.
- Gender neutral, and no wording that points at age, such as young, energetic or recent graduate. The phrases to avoid are listed at hiringuk.co.uk/advert-wording.
- Duties describe what is done, not the kind of person who does it.