

Writing a successful Job Description

Writing a good position description can be key to initiating a successful recruitment drive. It should identify the qualities required to successfully perform a role and, in doing so, set the benchmark of expectation for the job moving forward.

If nothing else, it is an opportunity for you to pinpoint the responsibilities and key performance indicators of the position; solidifying and quantifying the real need for someone within your organisation. In preparing a role description properly, hiring managers inevitably find they save a lot of time that would otherwise be spent interviewing the wrong people for the role or, perhaps worse, expressing the role incorrectly to the right people. It's clearly easier to identify the person you are looking for when you know what you are looking for...

While by no means an exhaustive list, we have compiled some pointers you might want to consider when compiling your specification:

Research the role

It's worth spending time researching the facts about the position you are describing – particularly if it is not a role you have previously had hands on experience with yourself. Speak to the current incumbent or his/her manager and team members to get an understanding of what they deem important for success in the role.

Start the job description by giving some context

Giving potential candidates an understanding for the role in its wider context will help to paint a clear picture of the opportunity and whether they will be relevant fit. Again, getting this right will avoid people applying for the role who aren't necessarily suited.

- Overview of your company, specific department/division and the team
- What is the purpose of this position?
- Who will this position report to?
- Will any people report to this position?
- What are the key challenges that currently effect the position?
- What are the future directions/objectives of the team/business?
- What impact does this role have on other positions in the team/business?
- Which clients will this position service and what are their needs?

Analyse the role (from your research) and extrapolate key tasks and responsibilities

- What does the job look like on a day to day basis?
- What is the mix of support versus project work?
- What is the amount of configuration/development as opposed to process driven or business consulting work?

- Are there any travel requirements?
- What are the day-to-day versus long-term responsibilities of the position?
- How the work is currently organised?

Given the key areas of responsibility, determine what knowledge, skills, and qualifications are deemed necessary to perform the role successfully

- What is the minimum knowledge and skills required to do the position?
- What SAP technologies does the role involve?
- What other technologies are involved? And, if not obvious, why are they involved?
- What stakeholder and interpersonal skills are necessary?
- What are “nice to have” rather than mandatory skills?

Practical requirements and other considerations

- What is the duration of the appointment? Is it a contract or permanent position?
- What working hours and days are required for this position?
- What is the primary location for this position and is any travel necessary?
- Get the balance right between asking for the criteria needed to perform the role but having enough flexibility to encourage potentially strong hires to apply if they do not quite tick all of the boxes – it is sometimes better to hire in a rising star than someone who may have all the skills but may not progress or stand out in the role.
- Think about whether you want to specify a salary range on the description or prefer to consult with your Acuity Search recruitment partner in brokering those conversations.

Make the role sound appealing

When writing a position description, think about the style of language used. Will this interest and appeal to the professionals you are seeking and in what light does it portray your own organisation? Again, this is to an extent subject to taste but – at very least – you should be thinking about who you are aiming the role at and how you want them to interpret the description.

Definitely try to use language that identifies your organisation’s brand and status however, where possible, avoid using internal jargon or abbreviations that may not make sense to the outside world. If you make the language accessible and interpretable, the chances are you will solicit more of a targeted response from the limited candidate pool you are seeking to target.

You can download a Job Description template [here](#).