Inclusive Job Description checklist

Research including McKinsey's Diversity Wins highlights the benefits of inclusive and diverse organisations which includes many including greater success, increased financial and business outcomes.

Having an inclusive workplace benefits everyone, as well as being great for your organisation Evidence has shown that inclusive workforces:

- It produces higher job satisfaction
- It lowers staff turnover
- Enables higher employee productivity
- Boosts employee morale
- Increases creativity and innovation among staff
- Increases problem-solving capacity throughout your whole organisation

Organisations should ensure they are removing any barriers to employment including ensuring job descriptions are inclusive to the widest number of applicants.

Creating an effective job description is not easy. In fact, while 72% of managers believe they create effective job descriptions, only 36% of candidates agree. Not only that, but most job seekers will spend a mere 14 seconds deciding whether to apply to a role based on the job description (Source:Lever)

Job descriptions should include:

- Title of the job/job summary
- 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.
- Salary

Remember to:

Open with a strong, attention-grabbing summary. Your summary should provide an overview of your company and expectations for the position.

Hook your reader with details about what makes your company unique. Your job description is an introduction to your company and your employer brand. Include details about your company culture to sum up why a candidate would love to work for you.

Break the information into clear sections so it is easy to read and navigate through the information.

The below checklist is to help you to consider if your job descriptions are inclusive.

		YES	NO
1	Have you ensured that the job description has included job criteria outlining what is essential and desirable to carry out the role, and the key competencies/behaviours for each role. Job descriptions can be off putting to applicants if the job/role description is too long, doesn't get t the point. Limit required skills to those that are "must haves" eg do not state 'must have excellent writing skills' if this isn't a core/key part of their role. To support accessibility – • Keeping sentences short • Keeping paragraphs short Are you writing in plain English? Check the length of your sentences to make sure they are not too long or overly complex. Is the language accessible and inclusive? Explain or remove any technical terms if they are not accessible to your audience.		
2	Have you assessed if the job title is appropriate? The titles you use is important to attract the right person to the roles. Having a clear, simple job title that matches job board searches is the key to assisting candidates determine whether they qualify. Also ensure the job title is gender neutral.		
3	Have you ensured you have not excluded anyone with qualifications required? Could someone do the role who has the relevant experience instead? Or could they carry out the qualification once in the job? Consider recruiting for skills rather than 'education/HE attended' and 'years of experience'.		
4	Have Job descriptions been regularly reviewed to ensure they are not gender specific/ there is no gender bias? Organisations can do this internally or use gender decoders. For example - Female-Coded Words: agree, empath, sensitive, affectionate, feel, support, collaborate, honest, trust, commit, interpersonal, understand, compassion, nurture, and share. Male-Coded Words: aggressive, confident, fearless, ambitious, decisive, head-strong, assertive, defend, independent, battle, dominant, outspoken, challenge, driven and superior.		
5	Have you checked to ensure there is no biased language regarding race bias, LGBT+ bias, disability bias, faith bias, elitism bias, mental health bias.		

		YES	NO
6	Have you ensured that the job description does not unfairly state a specific number of years' experience required? as it may inadvertently disadvantage some groups. In some roles several years' experience may not be required and they may have transferable skills. This will also help to mitigate age and experience bias.		
7	Have you reviewed the wording on adverts to ensure they do not unintentionally exclude. For example: phrases like 'strong English-language skills" may deter qualified non-native English speakers from applying. For example, 'brilliant communication skills' or 'excellent team player' may be off-putting for some neurodiverse people. Whilst these skills may be essential for some roles, they aren't necessary for all.		
8	Have you implemented a process for agreeing the content of the specification documents and the organisational rationale for each role?		
9	Have you ensured the language is inclusive/non-discriminatory to any group? For example, avoid terms including - Digital native, "Junior" or "Senior" except as part of a job title, "work hard/play hard", "Young and energetic", 'enthusiastic', 'go-getter', 'eager to learn' 'rockstar'. Research by the Centre for Ageing Better in 2021 found that older participants rated jobs that included words or phrases like 'technologically savvy', 'fun', 'recent graduate', 'rockstar' and 'dynamic' as off-putting. They were also associated with a lower perceived likelihood of getting an interview or a job offer.		
10	Have you ensured role descriptions include a commitment to Equity, Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion? This ensures the message from the outset from your organisation is that EEDI is important to the organisation/to its culture.		
11	Have you ensured you have removed any acronyms/language which could be explained or stated in a different way? Not using corporate jargon.		
12	Have you ensured that any information regarding work attire/dress is not exclusive for employees from different cultural backgrounds, gender fluidity?		
13	Have you assessed if the job can be part time/job share and noted this in the job description/job pack? This may widen opportunities for talented applicants who require shorter hours/part time working.		

		YES	NO
14	Have you ensured you have attracted candidates and referenced all the key policies and benefits available within your organisation? In particular benefits that demonstrate you are committed to diversity and inclusion eg family/parental leave, childcare support/vouchers, wellbeing support, flexible working opportunities.		
15	Have you ensured you ensured the role description makes it clear that you would like to recruit candidates with inclusive values? Avoid 'culture fit' as this could be subjective. Culture fit for some organisations could mean exclusive or discriminatory behaviour. It could also mean 'a gut feeling' (that may be biased) and hard to describe. 'Value fit' is more inclusive – this could be defined by the values/mission statement of the organisation, can be linked more explicitly to the role/organisation, you can provide clear feedback relating to the organisation's values.		
16	Have you ensured you have used an accessible font? Use sans serif fonts like Arial, Verdana, Trebuchet, Calibri or Open Sans. Use a minimum font size of 12 point in any written communication. Crowded written text is more difficult to process. Use bold for emphasis. Underlining and italics cause crowding. Ensure the writing is not too small and there is sufficient spacing. The nature of this format can be inaccessible for neurodivergent people. Also make sure any text is left aligned.		
17	Have you included the salary on the job pack/job description? When you have the salary stated in your job description, you draw in underrepresented job seekers because your organisation puts importance on pay equity. Transparency is especially beneficial when hiring women and people from Black and racially minoritised communities/underrepresented communities.		
18	Have you ensured the job description is not exclusive for disabled people? See below – re: inclusive language.		

Inclusive language and disability

Seeking able-bodied individual	No replacement. Avoid completely.
This role requires visually inspecting sites for safety.	This role requires inspection of sites to detect safety concerns.
Need to be able to talks to employees about financial concerns	Communicates with employees about their financial concerns

Source of table: adapted from Monster recruitment

Actions

Any actions identified should then be incorporated into the recruitment process.