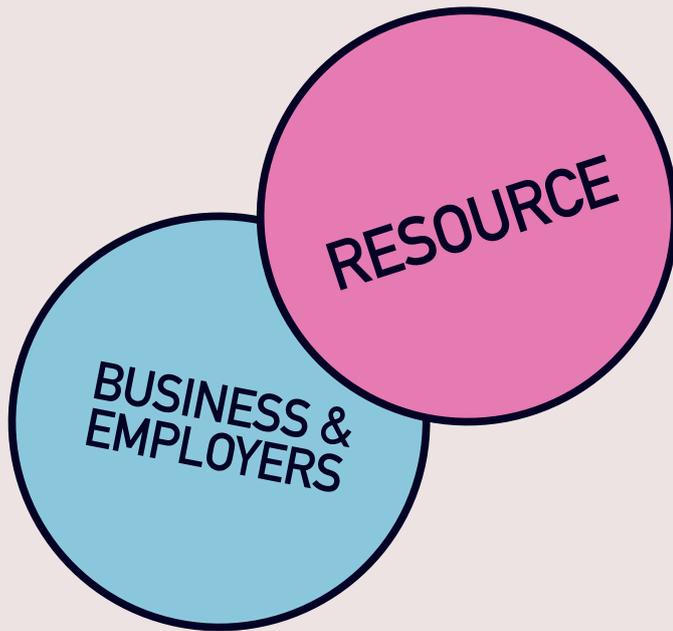


# Good Growth Hub's Guide to Writing Job Descriptions



This document brings together the Good Growth Hub team's advice and guidance on creating accessible and inclusive job descriptions for internships, traineeships and entry-level roles.

The guide is designed to be applicable across the creative, cultural and digital sectors and draws upon research, reports and our direct experience of supporting employers and employees.

We know that success lies in diversity - in moral, social and legal terms. Often our recruitments attract lots of similar candidates, from similar educational backgrounds and comparable life experiences. It's a tendency of our sectors to replicate and hire in the same way, meaning we end up with teams, skillsets and approaches that look all- too familiar.

The aim of the game is to celebrate and seek difference. Talent is everywhere and it is transferrable. Your next employee could currently be in another sector, studying an un-related subject, or developing skills and experience in the community. Think creatively and embrace an open mindset with your recruitment processes. We're here to help you actively seek out, invite and celebrate this, starting with your recruitment practices and job descriptions.

 [www.goodgrowthhub.org.uk](http://www.goodgrowthhub.org.uk)

 [@goodgrowthhub](https://www.instagram.com/goodgrowthhub)

 [www.anewdirection.org.uk](http://www.anewdirection.org.uk)

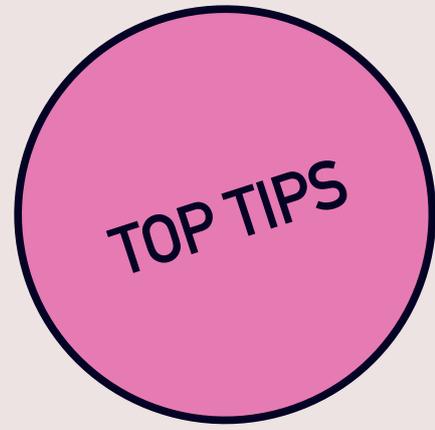
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# 1. Be honest about your needs.

Start with an honest conversation about what you and your team really need in terms of skills, competencies and mindsets.

Also look at where you're not reflecting the diversity of your city, county or country. Invest time in this process, look at the evidence & data, the gaps and the opportunities. This helps not only with your job description, but throughout recruitment and becoming a more inclusive workplace.



# 2. Resist the copy & paste.

A great job description is one that has been initiated, developed and planned for in response to your current work and team needs. When introducing new entry-level roles to your team, and particularly when you're looking to change your approach & tackle under-representation, really stop and think about what you want to achieve. How could you set this role up differently so that it both develops and platforms new perspectives within your company or organisation?

# 3. Put all of your cards on the table.

Be upfront with the salary, hours, type and length of contract - no surprises. Omitting, or being vague, about salaries discourages many applicants from applying. Being transparent on pay eliminates the opportunity for bias or bargaining power to influence someone's access to a role, or fair salary. Find out about the #ShowTheSalary campaign.

# 4. Keep it realistic.

Women in particular are more likely to apply only if they meet all the essential criteria, so packing too much into a job description can limit your talent pool. Ask yourself if some aspects of a role could be developed once the person is in the post? Take out the 'nice-to-haves' and limit the job description to key responsibilities and make sure the scope is achievable.

Especially when setting-up entry-level roles, do not expect employees to hit the ground running. Consider the process of inductions and what a new starter needs to learn before they can work effectively and confidently.

# 5. Describe a role, not a person.

Try to focus on describing what the person will be doing and the particular related skills, to avoid enforcing stereotypes.

Consider whether direct previous experience, or a degree, is inherently necessary, or whether demonstrable transferrable skills would meet your needs. Young people may lack paid experience or access to higher education, but can often evidence the right skillset developed through volunteering, education or work in their community.



## 6. Language matters.

Don't make reading your job description a challenge or a chore. Keep sentences short and ensure you've got lots of white space! Hemingway Editor or Grammarly can help with readability scores.

Take out jargon or abbreviations. Insider language is a sure way to make someone feel like an outsider. Any new starter can pick up on the job-speak through a solid induction process, so start with more universal language to keep that door open.

Also consider whether your phrases are biased and how this might impact who identifies with the role you're describing. More on language below.

## 7. Show that you're invested.

Give the bigger picture and demonstrate how the role will feed into your organisation's strategic aims and ambitions, and why this is valuable. Also give examples of what you put in place to support the development and progression of employees. Particularly at entry-level this could include training budgets, industry memberships, mentoring & shadowing opportunities, invites to join internal networks or working groups.

## 8. Offer agency and flexibility.

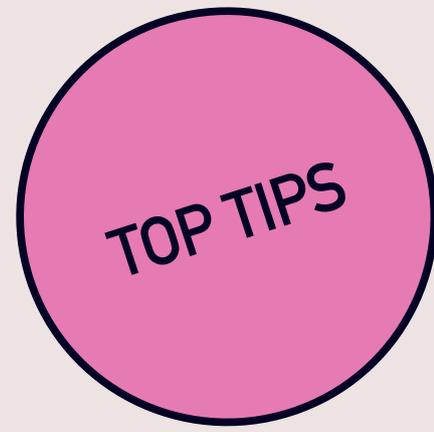
Employees do best when they can take agency over aspects of their work, discover particular interests and skills and develop in line with these. Where possible, touch on opportunities for employees to steer or develop the role.

Think about how flexible working hours, blended or remote working could open up the opportunity for those with caring responsibilities or access needs.

## 9. Actively address your commitment to inclusivity.

Provide a statement that tells people your organisation welcomes applications from people of all backgrounds. Because of the way a role is advertised, someone may be led to feel a role isn't for them because of things like their gender, disability, ethnicity or age.

Where you are offering a role through a positive action scheme, for example for young people or another under-represented group, you should address this in your statement.



When writing out inclusion statements, be specific.

Do not group all 'other' ethnicities into acronyms like BAME or BME as this flattens the experiences of a very diverse group of ethnicities. Consider other ways of representing this information. For example: "We are particularly keen to encourage applications from people from groups that are currently underrepresented, including people from the Global Majority"

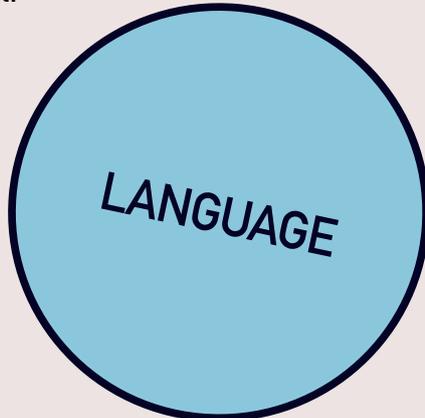


\*Global Majority is a collective term that refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or, have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'.

#### FURTHER READING:

Please, don't call me BAME or BME by Zamila Bunglawala, Deputy Head of Unit & Deputy Director Policy and Strategy, Race Disparity Unit, Cabinet Office gives more guidance on this topic. The BAMEover statement from Inc Arts also gives some useful advice. Consult your own organisation on use of language and come to collective agreement on terms and accepted use.

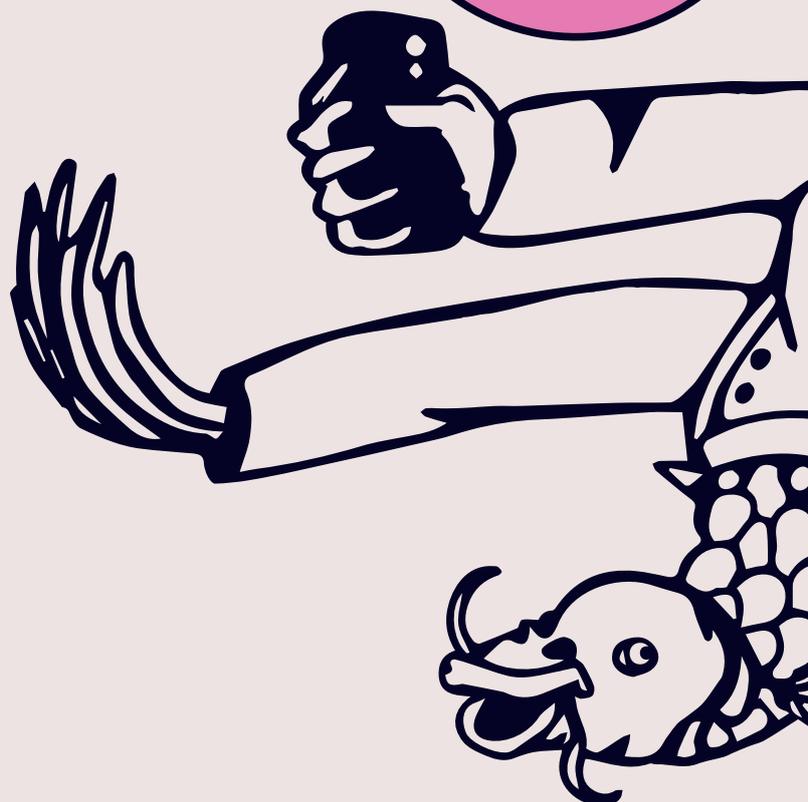
Many organisations have undertaken a process of organisational learning in response to Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. Whilst we discourage performative signalling, if you do have meaningful outcomes from your anti-racist work you think are important to share, consider highlighting this as part of your job advert or your inclusion statement.



There are lots of things to consider when using unbiased language. It can be overwhelming at first, but the most important thing is to commit to being mindful of who you are writing for, listening to feedback and making time to adapt and learn.

"Using gender-neutral and anti-ableist language isn't about just being politically correct. It's about allowing yourself to broaden your perspective. Language is powerful and ... doesn't only affect the listener, but also the user. By taking the extra energy to be more mindful of the language we use, we're training new circuits in our brains and becoming more aware of how certain language can create a more supportive work environment." - Sayume Romero

Try out Be Applied's language checker which suggest alternatives to gendered language, tests the reading level of your job descriptions and detects problematic phrases.





Be aware of any ableist language that might be in your description or ads and replace with alternatives. Read the UK Government's guide to writing about disability and read about ableist language in job descriptions.

Consider signing up to the Disability Confident scheme as an employer, meaning that all those applicants identifying as disabled on the application form, and that meet the job specification, are guaranteed an interview.

We advise you follow the social model of disability, and to use the phrase "disabled people" in place of "people with disabilities". Some people who are neuro-divergent or D/deaf do not identify as disabled, and so we include this separately in our inclusion statements.

If you are creating supported internships for people with learning disabilities or autism, you can find out more here and here. Easy read is another alternative format you should consider when providing accessible information for people with learning disabilities, find out more here.

- ACAS – How to advertise a job
- Be Applied – The Ultimate Job Description Template: How to maximise applications according behavioural science
- Sutton Trust – Social Mobility in the Workplace: An employer's guide
- Social Mobility Commission – Hiring Toolkit
- Creative and Cultural Skills – Best Practice Recruitment Guide for Creative Leaders
- Jerwood Arts and the Bridge Group – Socio-Economic Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts: A Toolkit for Employers
- Mya – Bias in Job Descriptions: Your First Step to Creating a More Diverse Workforce



Got any more questions? Or you'll like to see how the Good Growth Hub can support you further, contact us at [goodgrowthhub@anewdirection.org.uk](mailto:goodgrowthhub@anewdirection.org.uk).



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