Designing a Person Specification

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

✔ Include reference to equalities e.g. 'ability to work with diverse customers'.

✔ Has 10 or less criteria

✔ Clear on why particular knowledge and/or qualifications are being sought e.g. "must have GCSE math" could mean "ability to operate a till and enter book keeping data accurately".

✔ Relate the specification to 'essential' and not 'desirable requirements' – desirable requirements may exclude candidates who do not fit a post's traditional profile.

✔ Distinguish between skill (proven ability to do something) and ability (having the capacity to do something) to include people with less formal work experience.

✔ Criteria to be precise and explicit.

✔ Describe what is meant by experience. Do not ask for a number of years' experience. Experience can include that gained outside of work.

✔ Be clear about the level of skill or experience needed. Candidates may under-estimate the level required unless you state it.

✔ Show candidates how each criteria will be assessed e.g. at interview, practical exercise. Make sure you say whether they are weighted differently at different stages.

✖ Do not use personality traits e.g. 'bubbly personality'

✖ Do not unnecessarily exclude disabled people

✖ Do not ask for criteria which cannot be assessed/measured.

All posts must have a person specification, created with reference to the job description.

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☑ **Ability to design information materials such pamphlets and draft press briefings**

☒ **Excellent communication skills**

→
☑ **Ability to travel to various locations**

☒ **Holds a driving licence**

Summary

Job description = list of tasks and activities involved in the job

Person specification = list of qualities, skills, abilities, qualifications, knowledge or experiences that are needed to do the job

You must be able to measure the list of criteria at the point of selection.

Key categories for person specifications:

Qualifications / training

Experience

Knowledge, skills and competencies

General attributes (avoid stereotyping)

Other (for any criteria not