

Job descriptions.

Job descriptions come in all shapes and sizes. They can be as brief or detailed as your needs.

Generally, they should include these components:

- » employer name
- » job title – some think we should be democratic and creatives don't need titles but titles do give help everyone understand where they (and others) sit in the hierarchy of a studio. They:
 - reflect the job and duties being performed
 - rank a job with other jobs in the company
 - are free of gender or age implications
 - benchmark employees against similar roles in the industry (handy for the purposes of equity in pay and conditions)
 - are self-explanatory for recruitment purposes.
- » hours of work
- » purpose
- » responsibilities, including a breakdown of skills and necessary competencies
- » salary – rather than assign a particular salary to a position, work out a salary range that is competitive with similar positions in other organisations and allows for variations in education and experience
- » a breakdown of key tasks (using a percentage of time)
- » KPIs for the position
- » an organisation chart.

An annotated example of a job description is on the following page.

Responsibilities.

The crux of the job description is a list of responsibilities, along with the amount of time expected to be dedicated to each task represented as a percentage.

Descriptions of responsibilities should be no more than two or three sentences in length and should be outcome-based, containing an action, an object and a purpose (for example *compiles monthly reports to allow monitoring of the department's budget*).

The list of responsibilities will vary in length, but as short as possible, otherwise the document becomes an operational manual rather than a job description.

Roles in smaller companies may have more tasks due to designers needing to be 'all rounders' but aim to keep your list to less than 15 tasks.

Skills and competencies.

Skills and competencies should be listed separately from each other, as they are two quite separate things. Skills are activities a candidate can perform based on what they have learned through study and practice. They are often vocational. Competencies are the traits or attributes you expect the candidate to display in the role.

An example of a *skill* is the ability to give effective presentations. It is a skill that can be learned through study and practice.

An example of a *competency* is strong communication which is an innate characteristic displayed by a person.

Relationships.

It is important to include reporting lines and working relationships in your job description, and an organisational chart is the perfect way to do it.

Reporting lines clarify the responsibilities of the position by showing who the candidate reports to and who reports to them. This is important, not only for compliance, but to show the structure of a studio and how your position fits into it.

Design the document to align with studio brand and values.

Who we are and what we do - the elevator spiel about the studio.

A summary of the position.

KPIs are a useful measurement tool that takes assessing the performance of a staff member from a subjective view to an objective view. KPIs can be a vital reference in the event of disputes or disciplinary issues. An example for a design studio manager may be a meeting a specific profit margin.

