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ob Descriptions

Facility managers are frequently leaders of large teams of both managers and frontline service operatives. Recruiting the right skills and good performance management are essential for ensuring an effective FM operation. The job description is one of the important tools to assist in this goal.

A job description is not a legal requirement but it can be useful for deciding the scope of the work, advertising the job, and making it clear to applicants and staff what needs to be done. Once recruitment is complete it also helps to assess performance, determine training needs and capture changes to the role.

A job description should include the job title, the position in the company, including the job title of the person to whom the employee will report and of those who will report to them, if any. It is good practice to give a summary of the general nature and objectives of the job along with a list of the main duties or tasks.

A good job description is useful for all jobs. It can help with induction and training. It provides the basis for drawing up a person specification - a profile of the skills and aptitudes considered essential and desirable in the job-holder. It enables prospective applicants to assess themselves for the job and provides a benchmark for judging achievements.

A job description should be exactly that, a written portrayal of the role and what it does. It is not a description of the person who will do the job although both Job and Person Description are often combined in one document. A person specification is not a legal requirement either but will be useful when writing a job advertisement and defining the qualities required in a candidate. It will normally include the knowledge, experience and skills desired, separating those which are essential for the job from those which are desirable. It's essential not to discriminate in a person specification.

The job description should also form part of a structured induction process which may be spread over several days or weeks, and may incorporate specific job training as well as health and safety information. Recruitment and placement procedures should ensure that employees have the necessary physical and mental abilities to do their jobs, or can acquire them through training and experience. Reviewing the job description as part of induction avoids misunderstandings that can arise through different interpretations and expectations.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service ACAS has a useful booklet on recruitment and induction which can be downloaded from their website www.acas.org.uk