

# WRITING THE JOB POSTING

A job description and job posting carries a lot of weight in the search and hiring process! It is one of the most important factors in whether someone decides to apply or not apply for a job. The wording of the job post has the potential to attract people to Whitworth, but also to needlessly make people unwilling to apply. Prior to posting the position description, consider the following questions and suggestions about the role of language in attracting and recruiting a diverse range of candidates. Think of the position posting as an opportunity to highlight institutional strengths and promote the welcoming community that Whitworth fosters.

## Essential Questions

Before writing the job description, the hiring manager, their supervisor/dean/provost, and/or VP of DEI (or EA) should have a conversation about the following questions:

- What qualifications/skills/competencies must the person have to succeed in this role?
- What qualifications/skills/competencies might enhance their success and impact? Can some of these be learned on the job?
- What rank will the department be searching for? Can we broaden the pool by searching for a more junior position?
- Are there people who could succeed in this role but who wouldn't meet every one of our qualifications and have other assets to offer?
- What is the capacity of our unit to develop or mentor a new hire so that they gain the necessary or preferred skills or competencies?
- How do the qualifications that were identified address the needs of the department articulated in the department's planning and recruitment strategy?
- How do we best reflect a range of interests, backgrounds and experiences in our description of the position, unit and institution?
- How can we best describe the position's role, its impact, and how it contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion? (Gillies, 2016)

## Best Practices

1. Scrutinize the "requirements"!
  - a. Be careful that we are paying close attention to how many requirements we have in our description and whether they really are individually necessary for success in the role. Thoughtfully clarify what competencies are "required" and what competencies are "preferred." Not meeting the stated requirements or feeling unqualified is often the main reason why someone chooses to not apply for a job. Some studies have shown that having unnecessary requirements has a disparate impact on female candidates as they are less likely to apply to a job for which they don't meet all the requirements than male candidates (Desvaux, Devillard-Hoellinger, & Meaney, 2008).

- b. Consider whether the requirements can be listed as skills or competencies rather than an achievement, accomplishment or attainment. For example, do candidates need a specific number of years of experience (or a certain degree), or is there a skill that is needed for the role that we are assuming will likely be developed within a certain time frame or with a specific educational degree?
2. Discuss impact!
  - a. Develop a description that goes beyond just what tasks the candidates will be doing but also the sort of impact that they can expect to have in the role. Help candidates see the goals of the role, and how they fit into the larger organizational priorities. Describe the challenges that candidates will likely be facing and overcoming in the role.
3. Words matter!
  - a. Read over the job description carefully and identify words that are associated with stereotypically masculine attributes, or a specific cultural norm. Work to substitute these words (e.g., “competitive,” “dominant,” “independent”) with language that is gender-neutral and that will attract people from a wider range of cultural backgrounds and identities (e.g., “takes initiative,” “persevering,” “team-oriented.”) Also, try to avoid unnecessary technical jargon that will only be known to people who have some experience in the field.
4. Highlight Whitworth’s and your department’s/unit’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusivity.
  - a. Develop a job description that explicitly conveys Whitworth’s and the department’s commitment to our Christ-centered mission, educational excellence, and diversity, equity and inclusion. Consider citing or referencing Whitworth University’s [Christ-centered rationale](#) in the position description.
  - b. Demonstrate in your description of the responsibilities, qualifications and impact that we are looking for someone who has intercultural competency. Embed the values and commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion in these descriptions rather than simply as an add-on. Include aptitudes such as “demonstrated cultural competency,” “experience working with diverse teams” or “demonstrated ability to foster diversity, equity and inclusion within the campus environment” as requirements or essential qualifications in the position description. It is essential that cultural competence and multicultural experience are included and evaluated in the selection criteria for all candidates.
    - i. For example: “The school/department seeks candidates whose research, teaching, or service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and inclusion in higher education.” (Columbia University, 2016)
  - c. Describe Whitworth’s broader efforts to foster and support a diverse community. This will help candidates from diverse backgrounds see that they can succeed and flourish at Whitworth.
    - i. See **Appendix A** to consider the **Welcoming Environment Questions**. Be prepared to answer these types of questions from applicants and organizations you may want to build relationships with for future hiring.
    - ii. See **Appendix B** for an Equity-Minded Template for Whitworth’s Job Descriptions.

## Appendix A

*Welcoming Environment Questions (Turner, 2002).*

- Does our mission statement clearly articulate the educational value and societal obligations of diversity?
- Do the community members know, understand, and support the Christ-centered rationale for diversity?
- Do we have a vibrant ethnic studies program, a well-thought-out diversity requirement, and multiple opportunities for students to be introduced to diversity throughout the curriculum?
- Does our campus have research centers that focus on issues of race? Are there faculty members whose scholarly agenda focuses on diversity issues?
- How structurally diverse is our faculty, staff, and student body? What is the retention rate for people of color in these various groups? What is the tenure rate? Do we have people of color serving in leadership positions?
- Do we offer college-wide academic, cultural, and other events that include people of color as speakers and key participants?
- Have there been racial incidents on campus recently, and if so, how have we handled them?
- How do our residential programs take advantage of the diversity within the student body?
- Is there evidence that our institution has made steady progress in addressing diversity issues over time?
- What is the nature of our relationship to our local communities of color nearby? Do we have a history of partnerships with these communities?

Language	Examples
Mention Whitworth's diversity, equity and inclusion goals.	Whitworth University is committed to fostering a diverse faculty and staff that represents and meets the needs of our diverse student body. Our commitment to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff is identified as a key objective in Whitworth's 2023 five-year strategic plan.
<p>Connect these goals with the values and mission of Whitworth.</p> <p>Mention the importance of attracting candidates from diverse backgrounds and identities and the assets that they bring to our community.</p>	Whitworth recognizes that a community built from diverse backgrounds, identities, cultures and experiences will allow us to best fulfill our educational and Christian mission. Fostering a diverse community is essential to understanding and solving the complex and evolving issues of our day. We believe only by drawing from the wealth of resources of a diverse community will we be best positioned to understand God, follow Christ and serve humanity.
Mention the characteristics, skills and competencies that are related to our diversity goals that Whitworth is seeking in a successful candidate.	<p>We are looking for candidates whose backgrounds, experiences and/or education prepare them to contribute to Whitworth's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. [For faculty] We are particularly interested in candidates whose research engages issues pertaining to those of underrepresented or marginalized backgrounds and identities. We are also interested in candidates whose experiences (personal and/or professional), or training, show promise to successfully advise and mentor students from underrepresented and marginalized backgrounds and identities.</p> <p>[For staff and faculty] We are seeking candidates who are committed to working in a diverse environment and who demonstrate intercultural competence, and an understanding of the experiences of those from underrepresented and marginalized backgrounds and identities. We strongly encourage applications from women, those from minoritized racial and ethnic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and those from other marginalized identities.</p>
Describe the position with language that includes a commitment to diversity and inclusion.	This will be position specific.
Describe the department/unit as a place that values diversity on many levels (e.g., curriculum, pedagogy, in advising and mentorship)	The [name of department] is strongly committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion and is excited to consider candidates from underrepresented backgrounds and identities. We are constantly seeking to diversify our curriculum and promote inclusive pedagogy in our courses. Given our diverse students, we are

	<p>looking for candidates who are strongly positioned to advise and mentor those from underrepresented and marginalized backgrounds.</p> <p>We welcome applications from individuals who may have had nontraditional career paths, or who have experienced gaps in their educational or professional journeys.</p>
<p>Describe Whitworth’s broader efforts to foster and support a diverse community</p>	<p>Whitworth University’s Center for Community Engagement offers great opportunities for faculty to partner with local and regional partners working to serve Spokane’s and Eastern Washington’s diverse communities.</p> <p>Whitworth’s Office of Student Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion offers great resources and programs for our diverse student body.</p> <p>Whitworth University is committed to the overall flourishing of our faculty and staff, is supportive of a healthy work-life balance, and provides competitive medical and dental packages.</p>
<p>Describe potential sources of faculty support</p>	<p>Whitworth’s Office of Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion offers a variety of support for faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. These include but are not limited to yearly DEI professional development workshops that foster the development of “DEI competencies,” faculty funding for projects that seek to develop and implement inclusive pedagogy, DEI grants for faculty and staff initiatives to support diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace, intergroup dialogue training, and equity advocate training for all search committees.</p> <p>The Office of DEI also supports employee resource groups for faculty and staff.</p>
<p>Describe the materials that candidates should submit for review (e.g., statements that describe the candidate’s experiences and commitments to diversity).</p>	