



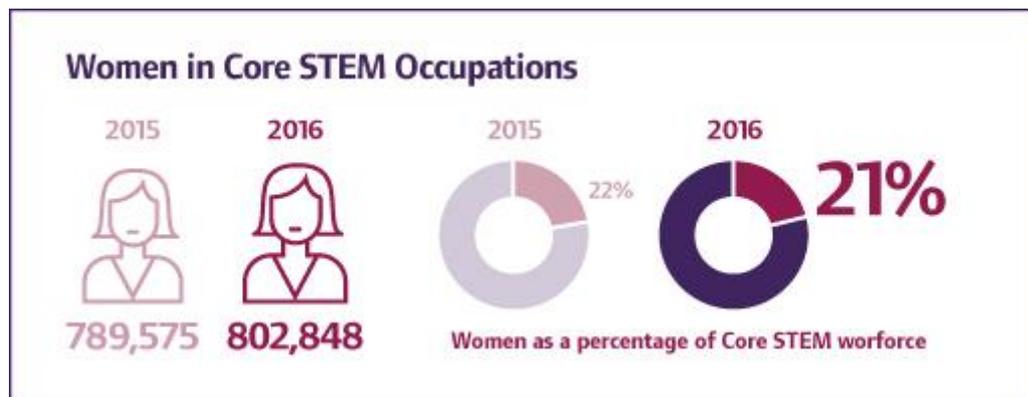
WISE

campaign for
gender balance
in science, technology
& engineering

Gender Decoding Your Job Adverts



“Girls and women want to feel they are making a contribution to something which matters to them. Describing the context of the job and the purpose of your business is more likely to attract their interest than the technical aspects of the work.” Helen Wollaston, Chief Executive, WISE



There is a mixed picture across the Core STEM workforce in 2016. Whilst it is positive to see an increase of 13,000 more women working in Core STEM occupations, the proportion of the workforce made up by women has decreased from 22% to 21% since 2015. This demonstrates that some progress is being made, but as the STEM sectors continue to grow, the rate at which women are taking up jobs does not compare to that of men.

In this information pack you will find our recommendations for improving the way your job adverts are written in order to increase the diversity pool of your applications.

For further help on improving your recruitment and retention of women in STEM job roles WISE can offer a number of different routes to improving awareness and knowledge of Unconscious Bias, for more information about our Unconscious Bias training and how it can benefit your organisation click [here](#).

Include a short and engaging overview

1-4 sentences which includes a description of the job's main function and how it contributes to the larger company objectives and society as a whole. Make your language inviting and positive "join our creative team..... dedicated to..... for our many satisfied clients"

Make Sure "Required" is really required

Check whether the 'required' criteria really are required and try and build in flexibility. If you have any 'nice to have' criteria in the required section take them out. Studies have shown that women are less likely to apply for jobs if they think they can't meet all the required criteria. The purpose of a job description is to persuade someone to apply, not to scare them off. Avoid language which describes a singular focus or narrow set of abilities, Highly qualified talent is unlikely to self-identify this way.

Shout about the great things your organisation is doing

Make it clear and explicit that attracting and retaining more women is a priority for your organisation. Include your organisations diversity statement in job adverts or offer a link to the statement on your website. If your organisation offers great staff benefits, such as flexible working or a great maternity package, make sure you mention those benefits in your job adverts. Use your company website to illustrate how you have created a happy and diverse team, and the programs you have in place that make your company a particularly nice place for women to work.

Gender Specific Pronouns

An obvious but common mistake. Sentences can be easily rephrased to avoid the need for them. If Gender Specific Pronouns are needed use a balance of male and female. Don't forget to look for more subtle errors such as chairman or manpower and use alternatives like chair and workforce

Avoid Long Bulleted Lists

Long lists on job adverts can be overwhelming and difficult to absorb. Minute details will mean little until your new employee is in the job, try to describe key functions in 5-7 bullets points. Be consistent with your formatting and try not to write your job advert as a checklist.

An effective way to include skills or requirements in the job advert is to introduce them with a common phrase. E.g. "You will be responsible for..."

If you think bullet points are the best way to get the information across think about grouping bullets under 2 or 3 headings of responsibilities to break the list up.

Ensure all images represent a diverse range of people

Using positive images, which represent the diversity of equalities communities, promotes inclusion, encourages inclusion and challenges negative assumptions and stereotypes.



Examine your adverts for subtle bias

We all use language that is subtly 'gender-coded' without realising it. Society expectations of what men and women are like, and how they differ, seeps into the language we use. Avoid gender specific pro-nouns and ensure you use balanced masculine and feminine language. An imbalance in language can deter highly qualified talent from applying. Does the description contain unnecessary superlatives? Research shows these discourage women (and many men) from applying.

Before	WISE Recommendation
Manages the successful resolution of client issues, including competing demands, sensitive situations and conflicts with other groups	Thoughtfully works things through with clients to resolve issues, including competing demands, sensitive situations and conflicts with other groups.
Mobilises the team, establishing tactical plans, projects and objectives needed to accomplish these goals and ensure their attainment.	Mobilises and encourages the team, establishing the day to day plans , projects and objectives needed.....
Proactively manages the talent in their area, establishing performance goals and objectives, providing ongoing constructive feedback and establishing and implementing development plans	Proactively nurtures the talent in their area, co-constructing performance goal, objectives and development plans and providing ongoing constructive performance feedback.
Manages and resolves the diverse perspectives of stakeholders	Is sensitive to the diverse perspectives of stakeholders and works with them to resolve differences.

Words to Avoid	Suggested Alternatives
Highly Competitive	Truly Innovative
World Class	A genuine curiosity
Unparalleled	Excellent, thoughtful and perceptive
Off the Charts	Highly respected
Dominate the field	Dedicated to finding creative solutions
Dominate	Connect

More Guidance

- <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com>
- <https://textio.com>
- Gaucher, Friesen & Kay (2011) Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, July 2011, Vol 101(1), p109-28).
- CIPD (2015) A Head for Hiring. <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/head-hiring-behavioural-science-recruitment.aspx>