



Internal Communication

Hiring Guide



Produced in partnership with VMAGROUP:
International interim and permanent recruitment
specialists for communications, digital and marketing.

Contents

This guide has been designed to be fully interactive. Use the buttons to navigate the pages. When you see this symbol  you can interact with the document and access more information.

03	Section One: Making your case
05	Section Two: Creating a talent pipeline
06	<i>Succession planning</i>
07	<i>CPD</i>
08	Section Three: The hiring process for IC
08	<i>Recruiting internally: Finding talent from within</i>
09	<i>Hiring for a permanent position</i>
17	<i>Hiring for an interim, contract or freelance position</i>
20	Section Four: Keeping in contact and onboarding
21	Job titles and salaries
23	About IoIC and VMAGROUP

Making your case



Click [here](#) to download the IoIC profession map

Internal communication is integral to any organisation which relies on people.

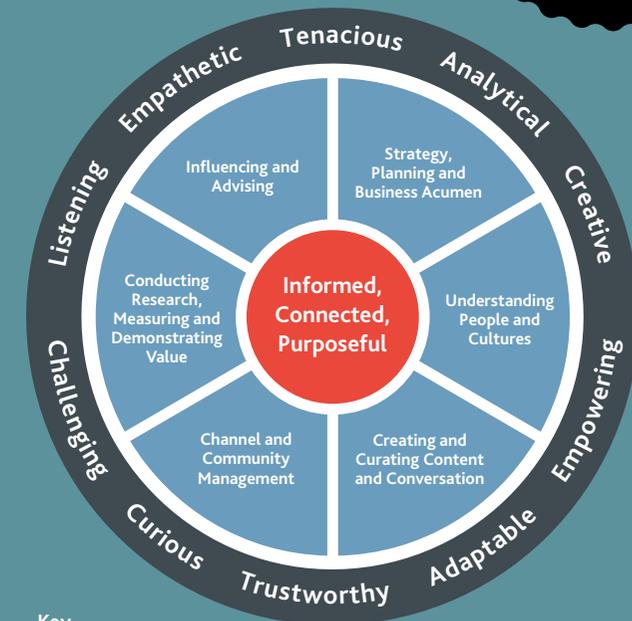
As the only professional body in the UK solely dedicated to the practice of internal communication, the IoIC firmly believes that people are at the heart of every organisation, and that good practice internal communication will ensure that those people feel informed, connected, and purposeful in their roles, thereby driving organisational performance and, ultimately, success.

The IoIC exists to help people and organisations succeed by promoting internal communication of the highest standard. To support our mission, we developed the only profession map framework for the internal communication profession.

The framework sets the benchmark for internal communication and allows individuals to articulate the role of internal communication within organisations; to map skills and knowledge, identify gaps and create personal development plans; and to establish their career trajectory.

Now, we want to increase the support that we're able to offer to organisations as they build and develop their internal communication function. The IC Hiring Guide has been produced in partnership with VMAGROUP and, using the profession map framework as an underpinning model which guides all of the advice which follows, is designed to guide anyone with responsibility for hiring for an internal communication role through the process.

IoIC Profession Map



Key

- Core – the purpose that sits at the heart of the IC profession
- ▤ Professional areas – what we need to know (knowledge) and our expertise (skills)
- Behaviours – the behaviours needed to do the job efficiently and effectively



Before starting the process of hiring for an IC position, it's important to create and understand the commercial business case underpinning the need to hire. Not only does this provide a commercial rationale for the budget expenditure, increasing the likelihood of budget approval, it also supports the process of creating a bespoke job description with clearly defined commercial objectives, benefitting the organisation, the applicant who will clearly understand the demands and objectives of the job, and their future line manager who will have a set of targets and objectives to measure their performance against.

Key considerations

- 1 Use the IoIC profession map to identify knowledge and skills gaps in the team which need to be filled
- 2 Use the business case template provided to create your case to hire
- 3 Liaise with the future hire's line manager when creating the case to ensure any targets and objectives included in the business case are relevant and realistic

“

Developing a clear business case for hiring a new employee benefits everyone involved. Not only does it provide a commercial rationale for the financial investment, it often sets out long-term, strategic objectives, that both the hiring manager and new employee can work towards achieving, with a clear sense of direction and purpose.”

Andrew Harvey, Chief Executive,
VMAGROUP



[Click here to download a business case template](#)



Creating a talent pipeline

Succession Planning



Working within organisations, two things become important: getting things done and minimising stress. Good planning supports both and when managing teams, succession planning is key.

As a leader of a small team, it's essential - without it you're often only a promotion, an illness or a headhunt away from a looming capacity crisis. Identifying potential internal hires, giving people with communication skills elsewhere in the business opportunities for secondment, shadowing or participation in sprint assignments can all help team leaders build and maintain a reservoir of potential succession talent, plan for work continuity and keep stress levels down."

Steve Doswell,
Internal Communication Consultant

When a vacancy within a team arises, one of the best places to look for someone to fill that vacant position may be internally – either within the communications team or the wider organisation.

Often, however, organisations seek internal hires for vacant positions but realise they cannot find anyone suitable for the role internally.

Finding suitable internal candidates should not be left to chance. The development of agreed succession plans for key IC positions is not common amongst IC teams and organisations, but if it were, it would be possible to hire internally on a more regular basis.

Having a developed succession plan for key roles would ensure these important positions can be filled more easily, especially if potential candidates have been developed internally over previous months and years.

The internal succession plan provides a number of benefits:

- 1** It provides an often seamless transfer from one person to the next;
- 2** It reassures management teams that they won't be left without support in key roles and at key times;
- 3** And it ensures that, when key people leave the organisation, important knowledge and experience is retained by other members of the team as well as the business.



Succession planning also provides career development opportunities for other people in the business – they can see where their future opportunities might exist and the path they need to follow to get there, allowing for increased motivation and commitment amongst the broader team.

This aids IC staff retention – if team members feel there is a potential future opportunity for them in the business, they are less likely to look elsewhere for the next step in their career. It also increases the likelihood that members of the IC team will recommend the business as a positive employer which proactively supports the career development of its people.

Promoting people from within offers many benefits over the challenge of hiring externally. However, it is crucial that the person hired or promoted has the right skills, knowledge and personal attributes to do the job well.

Hiring someone internally because it's easy or quick is not the right thing to do. Hire someone internally if they have the right skills, ambition and aspiration to develop the requisite skills and knowledge for the role – if the right person cannot be found internally, external candidates should be sought out.

A helpful way to decide if someone internally is suitable for a vacant position is to review their knowledge, skills and experience against the IoIC profession map using the self-assessment guide. The IoIC profession map and self-assessment guide are helpful tools in determining the skills and experience required at different levels within an IC team and, in turn, assessing the suitability of internal candidates. This will help clarify if the internal candidate has the skills and knowledge required to do the job well, or where they will need support in developing specific knowledge and skills.

A number of different people within the team or organisation should be used to consider the suitability of internal candidates to overcome any bias that may exist.

“

The IC team at Sellafield is using the IoIC profession map so that we can set our personal development objectives for this year and beyond. It's very useful in helping us to gauge our skills and experience and identify where we'd like to put some focus as individuals and as a team. That will help us grow as professionals, support our workforce, and help our internal customers understand better what we do.”

Helen Connolly, Head of Employee Communications, Sellafield

IoIC members can download the self-assessment handbook, underpinned by the IoIC profession map, [here](#)



CPD

Continuous professional development (CPD) is an investment which individuals can make in themselves and employers can make in their people. Engaging in CPD, or encouraging teams to engage in CPD, helps to ensure knowledge and skills are up to date, prepares individuals and teams to take on fresh challenges, and can easily be embedded into the routine of professional life.

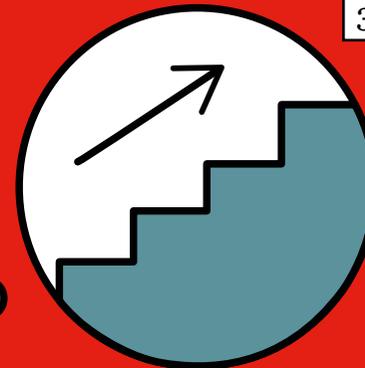
The IoIC offers a wide range of CPD opportunities which both members and non-members can benefit from – from training courses; qualifications and mentoring programmes, to webinars; networking sessions and both print and digital content.

It is crucial that employers encourage and enable internal communication professionals to engage with CPD to ensure they continue to develop the knowledge and skills required to meet the communication needs of people across the organisation. To find out more about how the IoIC can support individuals and teams, visit ioic.org.uk/professional-development or email prodev@ioic.org.uk.



Key considerations

- 1 Proactively succession plan for internal communication roles to avoid reducing capacity and losing key knowledge and skills
- 2 Encourage and advocate for regular engagement with CPD activities to keep the knowledge and skills of the IC team up to date
- 3 Contact the IoIC professional development team to find out how we can best support the team, email prodev@ioic.org.uk



The IC hiring process

Recruiting internally: Finding talent from within

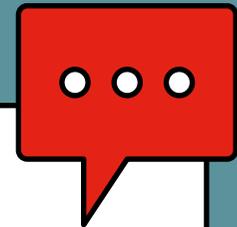
If an internal candidate who does not already meet all of the criteria for the role is hired, it's important to recognise the development, training and support they may require to build their skills and knowledge, and gain meaningful experience.

A specific personal development plan which recognises these relevant gaps and ensures they are addressed should be put in place, making use of any internal learning and development programmes available or those offered by organisations such as the IoIC which are specifically designed to develop the knowledge and skills of IC professionals. The IoIC profession map can be used to support the process of putting such a development plan in place.

“

The IoIC profession map has a multitude of purposes. It enables internal communication professionals to demonstrate and articulate the role and remit of internal communication to their stakeholders; it sets the benchmark for good practice; and, perhaps most importantly, it provides practitioners with a framework which they can use to assess their own skills and knowledge as well as those of their team and any potential members of the team. Equipping internal hires with the language to discuss both their existing skills and knowledge as well as their gaps via the profession map will mean they can start to fill those gaps as quickly as possible.”

Sarah Magee,
Professional Development Manager, IoIC



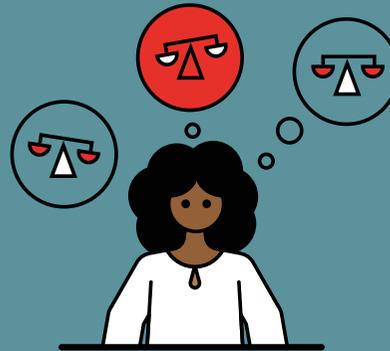
Hiring for a permanent position: Job description

The hiring process to recruit a permanent member of staff for an IC team should be different to the hiring process to recruit a professional interim or fixed term contractor (FTC) to support the IC team. For guidance on recruiting an interim or FTC, see page 17.

A key difference between these two processes is the job description for [permanent IC roles](#) compared to the briefing document required to engage an [interim](#)

When developing a job description for a permanent IC role, it's important to remember that:

The IC recruitment market is highly competitive and there are a number of organisations seeking to hire experienced IC professionals.



Due to the competitive nature of the market, it's highly likely that the profile of IC professional you wish to hire is also considering many other job opportunities with different organisations.

Many IC professionals are not just looking for a job, they are seeking the next step in their career and the opportunity to work for a socially responsible employer with a collaborative culture and values which align with their own. They are looking to work for an organisation that inspires them and excites them in equal measure and one that cares for the environment and is diverse and inclusive.

We're Hiring!

“

A good job description is incredibly important when you're looking for a role. It helps you determine whether the role is in line with your skill set and whether it is a job you actually want to do. A well-written job description will establish a solid set of expectations, so you know what you're signing up for when you apply to join an organisation. It's a great way of making an organisation stand out from the beginning - in a world where businesses are competing for top talent, that is a really important foundation.”

Lucy Aaron,
Communications Manager, Marstons



The perfect job description might include:



Company name

Company website and social channels

Include details of any social channels with links so potential candidates can understand the personality of the organisation beyond a job description.



Company history/story

Tell the story of the business – where did it come from? Where is it going? What makes it successful?’

Overview of the current team

People want to know about the shape and size of the team they could be joining – how will this vacant position fit into the current team? What is the reporting line and what are the skills and experience of potential colleagues?

Team org chart

It can be helpful to include an org chart of the team or business to bring the role to life. Let the applicant visualise their position in the team and the colleagues/ functions they will work alongside.

Context

Why is there a vacancy? This is one of the first questions applicants will ask, so take the initiative and explain why.

Job title

Is it clear? Is it relevant? Is it appropriate? Is it reflective of the knowledge and skills required?

The sell

Why is this a great opportunity for the applicant?

Responsibilities of the position

It's important to be clear about the responsibilities of the position. Use the [IoIC profession map](#) for guidance.

Experience: Essential vs desirable

Be clear about the experience you absolutely need and the experience which is only preferred. You don't want to attract unsuitable candidate or put off suitable candidates from applying or registering their interest.

Skills: Essential vs desirable

Being clear about the 'must have' skills and the 'nice to have' skills is also important. Hiring the wrong person for any role should be avoided at all costs, but so should alienating potentially brilliant applicants because they don't feel they meet every single one of your criteria.

[Click here to download a free, editable job description template](#)



Qualifications

As the internal communication profession evolves, so does the prevalence of available training and qualifications. Hiring an IC professional who understands the theory behind the practice and is able to base their professional decisions on such theory can mean the difference between good and great. But it's importance to recognise that such qualifications are not accessible to all due to potential financial barriers.

Professional membership/CPD

Professional membership is often an indicator of active engagement with CPD. Whilst membership of a professional body such as the IoIC may not be considered essential, it's certainly worth considering as a preferred attribute.

Specific detail on future opportunities for personal development and training

Candidates are attracted to organisations that offer formal training, support and development – especially those people in the early stages of their communications career.

If financial support for training and development is available, it should be listed as a benefit in the job description.

Remuneration package – industry benchmarked?

Before a vacancy goes out to the market, it's important to establish a competitive remuneration package for the position to ensure the role attracts the best talent in the market for the available budget. One of the best ways to do this is to seek the advice and guidance of a specialist recruitment business that can provide detailed advice on market rates and competitive benefits packages.

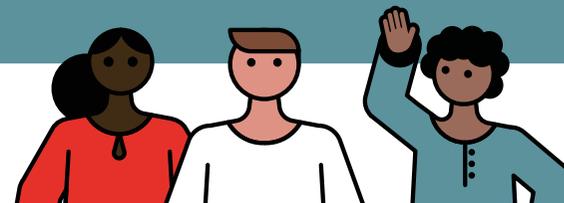
Interview process

Although information about the interview process is not something which would typically be included on a job description, it is important to be clear to potential candidates about the structure and timing of the interview process. The most professional interview processes will provide clear insight into the structure of each interview and the number of interviews involved in the process.

This information should be shared with relevant applicants at the very start of the application process along with the job description. You should also consider the diverse needs of people who may be applying to your vacancy and highlight the support you can provide, such as making adjustments to the interview process to support applicants with disabilities or caring needs.

Key considerations

- 1 Be clear about the remit and responsibilities of the role and ensure the job title is reflective of both in order to attract the right level of candidate
- 2 Consider whether the different elements of experience and education credentials are essential or desirable to reduce the risk of attracting unsuitable candidates and/or alienating potentially brilliant candidates
- 3 Use inclusive, non-gendered language and avoid jargon or phrases which might deter applicants from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds (such as 'Russell group university')



Interview process

Each organisation may have their own preferred approach to the structure of the interview process.

However, industry best practice suggests a minimum three stage process for permanent hires. Almost all interview processes consist of at least two stages, which is sensible and beneficial for both the organisation and the applicant as it should allow for sufficient time for both parties to understand suitability.

If you are receiving support from an internal HR colleague or recruitment consultancy, you may decide to request that CVs are submitted with any names and dates removed to reduce the risk of unconscious bias impacting your decisions.

First stage interview

The first stage of the process should be a face-to-face (or video call) interview to discuss the applicant's general experience, interest in the position and their suitability for the role.

The applicant is likely to have their own questions about the position and they should be given time and encouragement to ask those questions. Where relevant, this stage may also involve a writing test – a process which many IC teams include as part of their interview process. If a writing test is included as part of the process, it should be held during or immediately after interview one, and the applicant should be given sufficient time, under suitable conditions relevant to their specific requirements, to complete the test. If the applicant was great in interview but performed poorly in the writing test, and the role specifically requires a certain standard of writing, time can be saved by not holding a second and third stage interview. If an applicant is rejected at this stage due to their writing test performance, they should be given detailed and personal feedback related to this.

Second stage interview

The second stage interview is a great opportunity to ask applicants to conduct a presentation.



This could be on a variety of topics, dependant on the nature of the vacancy. For a senior IC position, consider asking applicants to give a presentation on their approach to leadership communications or how they might design a leadership comms approach for the business. For an IC channels manager position, applicants might be asked to present a channels strategy or plan for the business, incorporating both existing channels and any new channels they may wish to recommend.

Asking applicants to present in person to the hiring manager and other members of the interview panel is often a helpful tool in determining which of the second stage applicants are the best fit with the vacancy.



Third stage interview

Third stage interviews often provide a final opportunity to decide between the leading two or three applicants. A three-stage interview process also provides applicants with plenty of time and opportunity to decide if the role is right for them, ensuring a good fit for both parties.

The third stage is a great opportunity to introduce applicants to other members of the internal comms team and senior stakeholders who they may support on a day-to-day basis in the role. On average, most interview processes can take between 6 – 12 weeks to complete. Interview processes which take longer than this can be off putting for applicants and suitable candidates may be lost to other hiring organisations.

Feedback

One of the biggest grievances of IC professionals attending interviews is limited, or a complete lack of, feedback regarding their performance. If a candidate has taken the time to apply for a job vacancy, and prepared for and attended three interviews, including a presentation, they should receive appropriate feedback,

irrespective of whether or not they were offered the role. Feedback should be constructed thoughtfully and based on specific points relevant to the individual applicant, rather than broad generalisations. Not only is this the morally responsible thing to do, it also ensures the company brand is not negatively impacted by shared criticism from a candidate who did not receive adequate feedback or communication.

Key considerations

- 1** Base the details of the interview process on the specific requirements of the role, for example, including a writing test if a certain standard of writing is required
- 2** Consider how individual needs can be catered to in order to ensure an inclusive interview process – pre-empt needs regarding accessibility, for example, and ensure you know how candidates with disabilities will be able to access the building
- 3** Always provide applicants with detailed and relevant feedback, regardless of whether or not their application was successful



How a company approaches recruitment gives prospective candidates an insight into how they treat their people and how they operate as a business. Capgemini took me through several interviews with leaders from around the business. The interviews were challenging, but the way they acted after each meeting gave me a sense of why I wanted to join them. They made decisions quickly, often communicating the same day. Each time they set the context for the next interview. They moved diaries to make interviews happen with the people I would be directly working for and several other senior leaders I would be working alongside. This demonstrated that they thought seriously about the role I was applying for and how it would partner with other business areas. The time, effort, and energy that Capgemini invested meant that I was a fan before I even joined!"

Chloe Maple, Global Head of Change & Communications, Capgemini



External recruitment: Advertising and recruitment agency support



Direct hiring

Vacancies can be advertised directly, with hiring managers writing the job advert, posting it on a website or websites of their choice (as well as the organisation's own vacancies page) and hoping the best candidates in the market see the advert and apply.

Some organisations may also have the support of an internal recruitment team within the business that can manage the advertising and response process and perhaps even proactively promote the vacancy amongst targeted groups of individuals who fit the profile requirements of the vacancy.

It is important that the job advert attracts the best possible candidates. Like a good job description, a good advert tells a story and brings the job to life.

Job adverts which simply list a set of requirements and responsibilities will look similar to every other generic IC job advert and fail to make the job stand out in a potentially crowded market.

It's also vital to ensure the advert does not use any discriminatory language and attracts responses from a diverse range of applicants. [Find out more about how to ensure your job ad avoids bias and promotes inclusivity here'](#) [sentence link here.](#)



The advert should also make clear the minimum requirements of applicants to be considered suitable for the role. In addition to these minimum requirements, other indicators of experience or capability, such as qualifications; CPD engagement; professional membership; IC industry awards; and other noticeable personal achievements should be considered.

Indirect hiring

Vacancies can also be advertised with the support of a specialist internal communication recruitment agency such as VMAGROUP. A specialist agency will consist of a team of recruitment professionals who focus on recruiting IC professionals. Not only can a recruitment agency manage an advertising and response process on behalf of the organisation, it can also approach and headhunt specific individuals who fit the profile of the vacancy on an individual basis. Recruitment consultants in a specialist agency will have a network of IC professionals who they have known for some time and whose personalities, strengths and weaknesses they understand, and can provide a targeted short-list of candidates for the vacancy in a short period of time.



A recruitment agency will likely charge a recruitment fee based on a percentage of the candidate's first year salary, but the benefits of using a recruitment agency should include:

Speed - delivery of a suitable, pre-qualified candidate short-list within 10 working days or two working days for contract hires. All candidates on the presented short-list should have already been interviewed face to face by the agency and against the key criteria outlined in the job advert and job description.

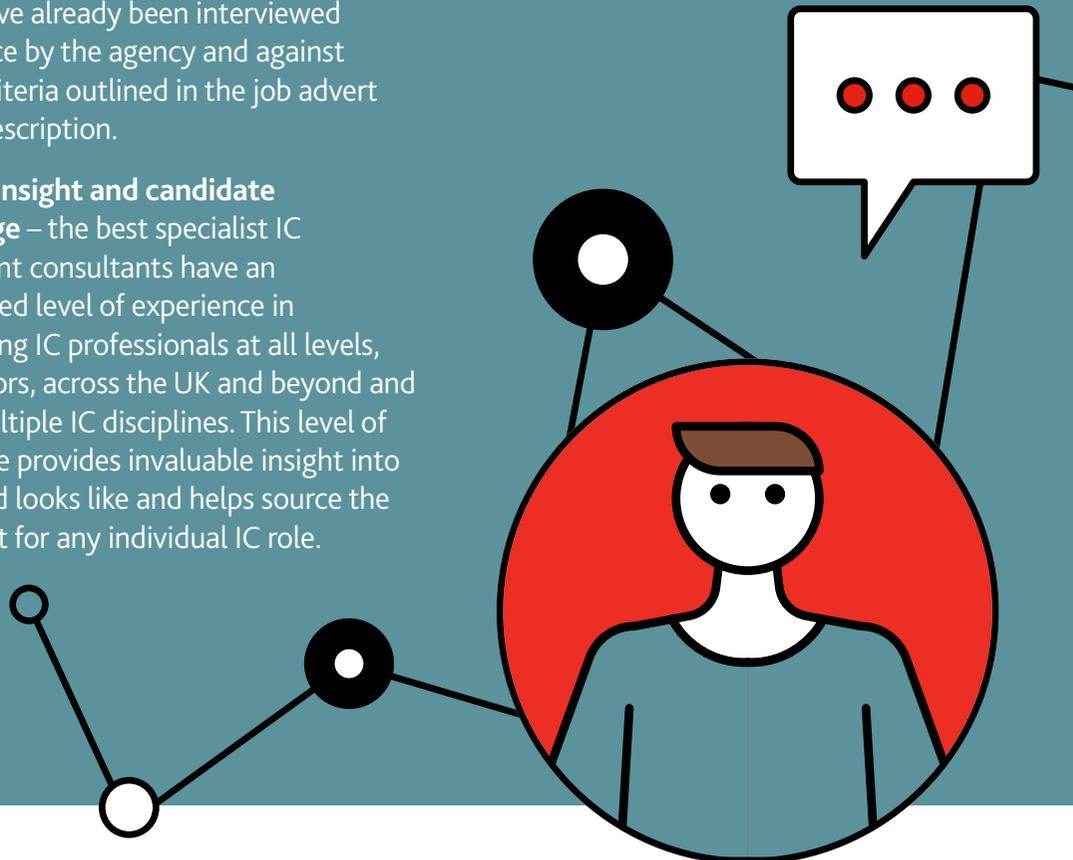
Industry insight and candidate knowledge – the best specialist IC recruitment consultants have an unparalleled level of experience in interviewing IC professionals at all levels, in all sectors, across the UK and beyond and across multiple IC disciplines. This level of knowledge provides invaluable insight into what good looks like and helps source the best talent for any individual IC role.

Passive candidates - Using a recruitment agency provides access to a pool of potential, or passive, candidates who might not be actively looking for a new role at the time of the vacancy being advertised but who may, nonetheless, be interested in the role and possibly even be the best fit.

“

To be sure that you're hiring the best IC person in the market for your specific vacancy, you need to know the IC market inside and out. That's where a recruitment agency adds value. A specialist IC recruitment agency such as VMAGROUP will be interviewing 50+ IC professionals each week. That's a level of market insight and candidate knowledge that can't be gained by an in-house recruitment team or by posting a job advert online. If you're going to invest time and money in building your IC team, why wouldn't you want to make sure you're doing it with the best candidates in the entire market?”

Andrew Harvey,
Chief Executive, VMAGROUP



Negotiation and reference checking

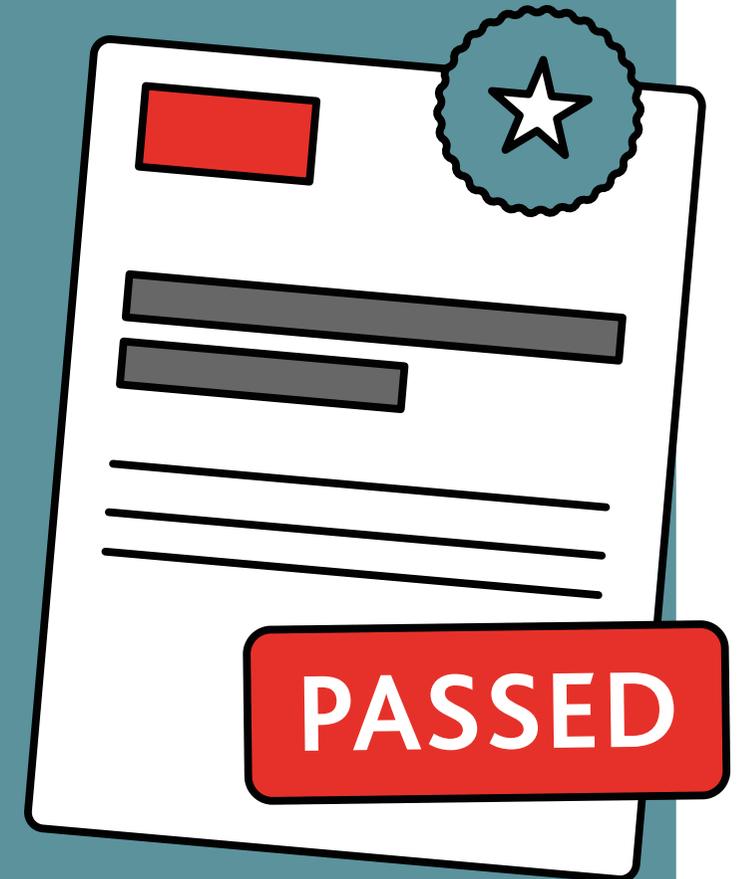
Irrespective of the method via which the perfect candidate is found, the recruitment process does not end until the candidate has started, settled into their new position, and passed their probationary period. Many hours can be invested into a recruitment process, only for things to fall at the final hurdle.

Not all candidates immediately accept a job offer - often there is a period of negotiation. Any job offer should be handled carefully and with consideration. It's likely the best candidates in the market may be considering multiple opportunities, and they may be pursued by direct competitors of your organisation. The way in which the offer and negotiation process is handled can sometimes be more important than the actual details of the offer itself.

Once the negotiation process has been completed and the candidate has accepted the offer, the next important step in the process is referencing checking.

Wherever possible, multiple references should be obtained before a start date is confirmed. These could include references from previous employers and HR departments, as well as character references from previous colleagues, previous stakeholders, or industry contacts. Although in-depth referencing can be difficult and time consuming, its importance should not be underestimated.

The hiring team may have only spent as little as three hours getting to know the chosen candidate via the interview process - a significantly limited amount of time when compared to the time referees may have spent working alongside and getting to know the person who will be joining the organisation.



Hiring for an interim, contract or freelance position

The process of hiring a professional interim or FTC is similar to a permanent recruitment process, but also includes some additional elements which are important to consider.

The flexible resource market is broadly split into three categories:

1. Professional interim – an experienced IC professional, paid on a daily rate for the consultancy advice and support they provide. An interim may be required to work a varied number of days each week or month and may often work outside of the immediate office environment. However, an interim professional might also be engaged if there is a requirement for support three to five days per week for a month or more. An experienced interim will be entirely comfortable working on complex projects as well as managing the delivery of large volumes of work to tight deadlines, often working independently and remotely.

Interims only charge for the days they work and do not receive any of the usual company benefits such as holiday pay, pension contributions or sickness pay.

Interim professionals may be hired directly or via a specialist IC interim recruitment agency.

2. Fixed term contractor (FTC) – an IC professional who may or may not have worked on a flexible interim or contract basis previously. Many FTCs will take on contracts whilst looking for their next permanent position. An FTC will become an employed member of the team, will receive the standard company benefits, and will need to be managed in the same way as the other members of the team they join. FTCs will accrue holiday pay, pension benefits and sickness pay according to the organisation's HR policy.

3. Freelance – Freelancers will operate in much the same way as a professional interim, but they may also be working with many other clients at the same time and therefore may be more suitable for small projects and tactical level, operational campaign support.

Whichever approach is adopted to the introduction of additional support,

it's important to consider the additional legal responsibilities of engaging flexible resource. When hiring an interim or freelance support, particular attention should be paid to the legal responsibilities of government legislation - notably IR35. If the hiring team is unsure of its legal responsibilities in relation to IR35, they should consult an experienced member of the HR or legal team, or a professional recruitment agency.

Key considerations

- 1** Keep in touch with the chosen candidate throughout their notice period, making sure they're informed about their induction and onboarding period (see page 20)
- 2** Ensure you are clear on the budget, length of contract and required outputs when negotiating the position
- 3** Request multiple references and examples of previous work as quickly as possible to expedite conversations and ensure a good fit



Interim, Contract, Freelance: External advertising and recruitment agency support

If interim, contract or freelance support is required, it's unlikely a formal job description will have been produced. A one-page brief should be enough for an experienced interim or freelancer to confirm their suitability for the position, either directly or via a recruitment agency.

In addition, interview processes for flexible staff are different and often far shorter. Many professional interims or freelancers may be engaged after just one meeting. However, for FTCs, the hiring team may decide to hold a two-stage interview process. Either way, the recruitment process should be much quicker than that followed during the recruitment of a permanent position.

Most interims, contractors or freelancers are also available to provide project support immediately without the tie of a formal notice period that comes with hiring a permanent person.

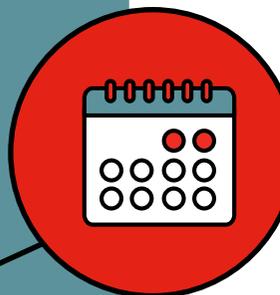
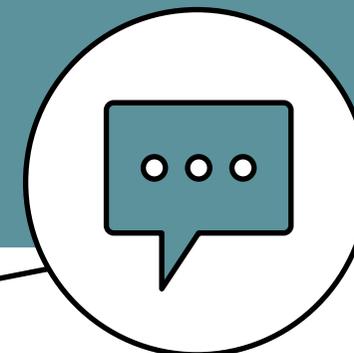
Similarly to the process of seeking applicants for a permanent position, adverts promoting flexible opportunities might be posted on a variety of recruitment websites or via engaging the support of a specialist recruitment agency that provides interim, contract and freelancer recruitment support.

Interim, Contract, Freelance - Job offer and expectation management

Job offers to interim, contract, or freelance staff can often be agreed more quickly than they would be in a permanent process. On the basis that many people who are offered such a role will not currently be in a permanent job, there is also less chance of the chosen candidate having to work a lengthy notice period or taking a counteroffer from their current organisation - although it is possible that the preferred interim or contractor may be in demand by more than one organisation, and therefore some negotiation may be required. Salary and pay rate may also be a bigger negotiation point compared to the negotiation demands of potential permanent candidates.

By the very nature of the often-urgent demand for flexible resource, the hiring team should be prepared to move through the onboarding process more quickly. Any contracts, referencing or compliance should be completed as quickly as possible and ideally within a few days or a week of the offer, if not immediately.

One of the benefits in hiring an interim professional versus a permanent member of staff is that it is normal to offer flexible support a very short notice period if the project they are supporting ends or there is no longer a need for flexible support. It's important to note, however, that this shorter notice period should be outlined in the contract agreed at the start of the interim's period with the organisation. Whilst the noticed period of an FTC may mirror that of permanent employees, it is usual to agree more flexible terms with professional interims and freelancers.



Interim, Contract and Freelance: Onboarding, management, review and extensions

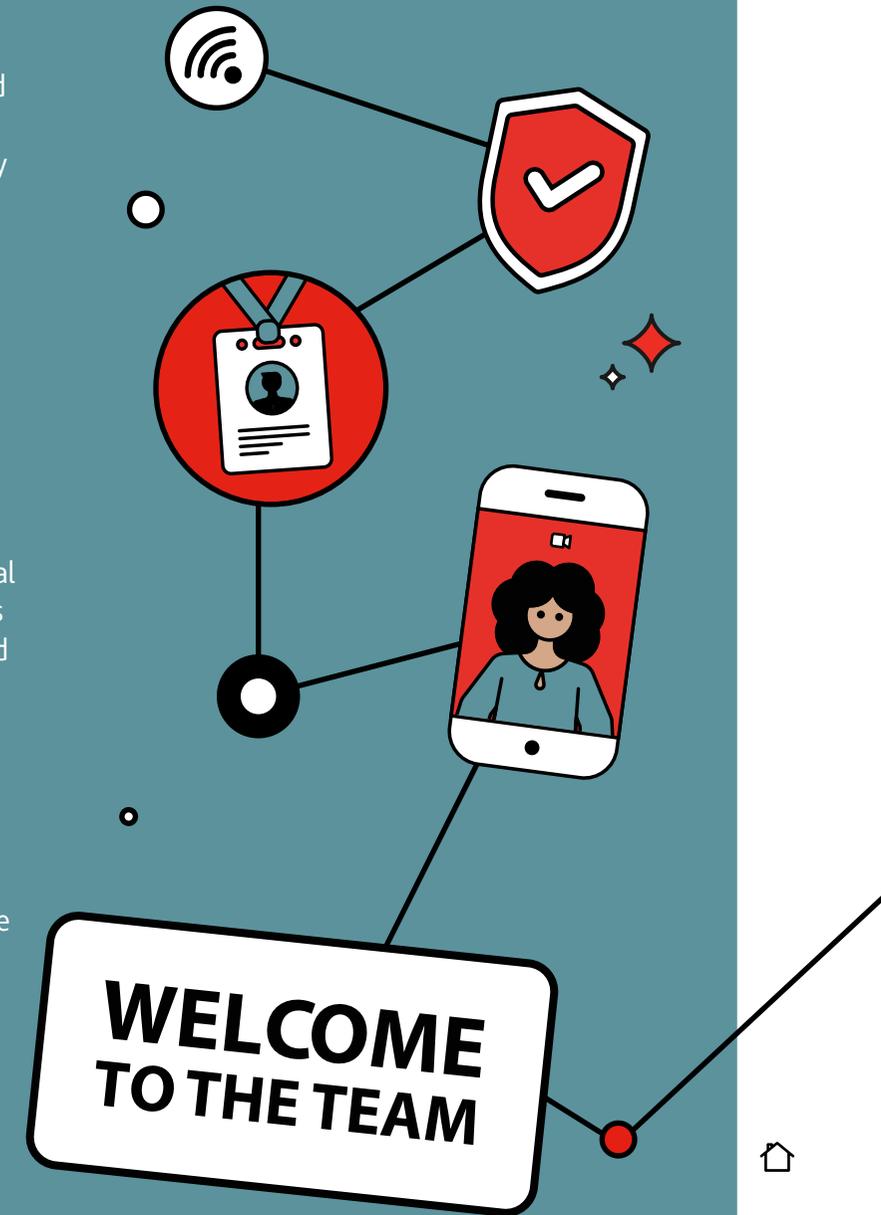
The onboarding process for a fixed term contractor should, ideally, be the same as that of a permanent member of the team – after all, they will be part of the team in much the same way as any other team member, but just for a fixed period.

Onboarding an interim or freelancer, in the traditional sense, is not required. Not only is the relationship between client and individual very different from a contractual perspective, but there should also be no significant demand for an interim or freelancer to work in a shared office in the same way as an FTC or permanent employee.

You should keep in mind that an FTC is an employee of your business and should be treated as such, but professional interims and freelancers operate as external businesses and consultants, and you should not expect them to behave or be treated like a permanent employee or FTC.

FTCs may require regular management and direction and, depending on the length of their contract, should have the opportunity to receive feedback on their performance via regular review meetings. This is not appropriate for professional interims or freelancers as they're generally highly skilled and able to complete the work with limited direction.

Whichever type of flexible support is brought in, it's important to keep track of the relevant contract end dates. There is often a need, or want, to extend the original contract end date that was agreed. If this is likely to be the case, the hiring team should proactively discuss pending end dates with the interim, freelancer or FTC at least four weeks prior to the agreed end date. If an extension is not agreed until the end of the contract, it is possible the individual may have committed themselves to other organisations and clients and will be unable to accept an extension offer.



Keeping in contact and onboarding

Once the job offer has been accepted and references have been received, it is vital that communication with the chosen candidate continues, especially considering that most IC professionals have a notice period of between one and six months.

Companies will not want to lose their best IC staff and the chosen candidate may receive a counteroffer from their current employer. Depending on the size and shape of the counteroffer, the chosen candidate may be persuaded to stay after all. This happens most often when there are low levels of communication between the chosen candidate and their new

employer during the candidate working their notice period.

Having successfully navigated the notice period and any counteroffer challenges, attention should be turned to the onboarding process and ensuring everything is in place to support a smooth and successful introduction and induction period. The IC profession, particularly, should lead by example by ensuring a positive employee experience from start to finish.

As well as the usual technical support and equipment, the best onboarding processes will also include other helpful and important considerations such as a 'work buddy'; structured induction processes; regular 1-2-1 performance and review meetings, allowing for feedback from both parties; and a clear probation review date. A clear set of activities, objectives, performance metrics and professional development support should also be discussed and agreed.

Key considerations

- 1** At the point of offering the role discuss how the candidate would like to be communicated with ahead of their start date and offer opportunities to send over materials and organise sessions to get know key colleagues ahead of the start date, for example any social sessions they could join
- 2** Put together a clear induction programme and share this with your chosen candidate along with any relevant details relating to their role so they understand what to expect during their induction and probationary period
- 3** Identify potential in-house learning and development opportunities ahead of their start date and any buddy or mentoring programmes they can avail of



Job titles and salaries

Job titles often vary between different sectors and organisations. It is important to ensure the title of the job vacancy clearly describes the remit of the position and reflects the accountability the chosen candidate will hold.

The job title should also be set in line with the salary on offer and the scope and size of the position, for example, a standalone role such as Head of Internal Communication on a salary of £40K may be inappropriate, even in a very small organisation.

Much better to call the position Internal Communication Manager and attract a pool of candidates who meet the requirements of the role.

Salary levels can vary widely too, depending on a number of factors such as:

- 1 Sector
- 2 Location
- 3 Organisation size
- 4 Team size
- 5 National versus international remit.

To attract the best candidates in the market, it's important to ensure the salary and benefits package of a vacancy is benchmarked against the industry averages to ensure it's competitive and does not hinder the ability to bring great people into the organisation.

If the hiring team is unsure about the appropriate salary for a position, they should seek external advice.



Although basic salaries can vary between different types of IC position, the following provides general guidance on appropriate base salary brackets.

Interims and freelancers do not receive company benefits. But Fixed Term Contractors often do.

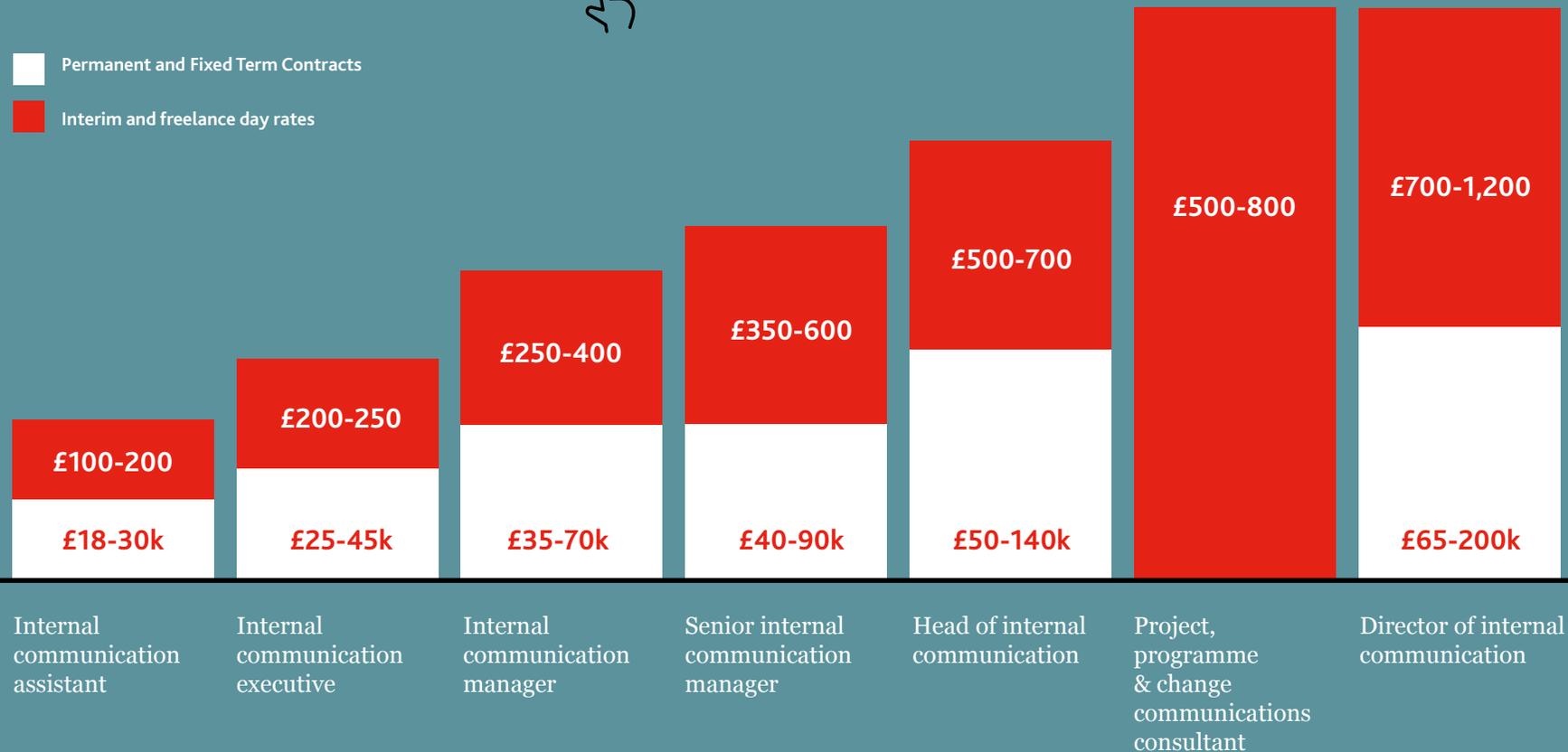
For detailed advice and guidance on salaries, benefits packages and day rates, contact [VMAGROUP](#).



Click here to read the 2021 VMAGROUP Inside Insight report



Permanent and Fixed Term Contracts
 Interim and freelance day rates



About VMAGROUP

Since launching in 1978, VMAGROUP has grown to be a leading international recruitment and talent consultancy, supporting the Communication, Marketing and Digital sectors.

And over the last forty years VMAGROUP has become the largest Internal Communications recruitment business in the UK and Europe, with a strong track record of building internal communication teams for organisations, large and small, across multiple sectors.

In addition to practical recruitment experience, VMAGROUP has a long and distinctive heritage in delivering thought leadership and industry research, publishing regular reports and commentary on all aspects of the internal communications sector and future landscape.

VMAGROUP also maintains proactive industry networks for gaining and sharing insight amongst the internal communications community. These include senior level Advisory Boards, industry round tables and a wide variety of interactive seminars and networking events.

VMAGROUP provides interim, contract and permanent recruitment support.

HELLO



Find out more
about VMAGROUP
[here](#)



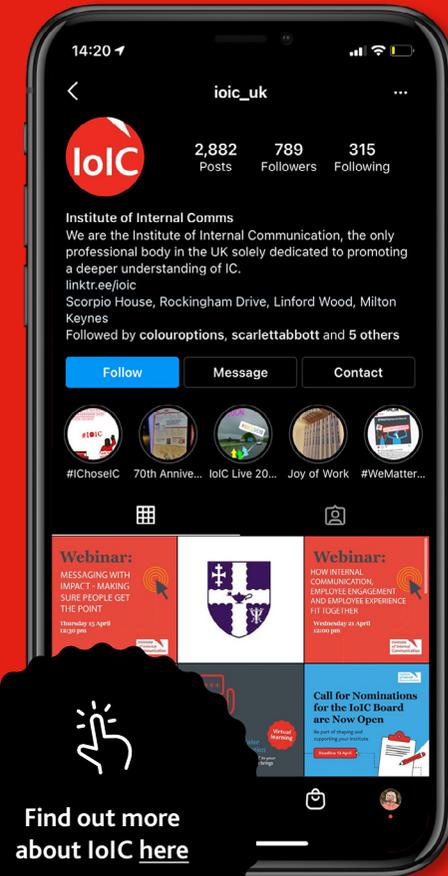
About IoIC

The IoIC is the only independent professional body in the UK solely dedicated to internal communication. We exist to help organisations and people succeed through promoting internal communication of the highest standard.

Our accredited members are shaping the workplaces for the better. They know people and business. They create conversations that help people feel connected, engaged and purposeful. They impact the working lives of millions.

We've been driving standards for over 70 years, through our qualifications, leadership and communities. We are the voice for internal communication, driving the agenda and building a movement of passionate, dedicated professionals.

Because how we communicate at work matters. Because **#WeMatterAtWork**.



Find out more
about IoIC [here](#)



*For any further
help or advice,
please contact;*

Sarah Magee
Sarah@ioic.org.uk

