

## Recommendations for Writing Inclusive Job Postings

Writing an inclusive job posting is crucial to attracting a diverse pool of candidates and aids in the Commonwealth's goal of reducing unconscious bias during the hiring process. These guidelines will help you create an inclusive job posting.

### Use Inclusive Language

1. **Avoid gender-specific language and use gender-neutral terms.** *Examples include:*

Instead of	Use
He or She	They, you
Manned	Operated, staffed, ran
Chairman	Chair, chairperson
Manpower	Workforce, employees
Businessman	Businessperson
Foreman	Foreperson
Man-made	Synthetic, machine-made
Ombudsman	Ombudsperson, ombud
Spokesman	Spokesperson, representative

2. **Avoid gender-coded terms when describing your ideal candidate.** [Research](#) has shown that job postings with masculine-coded words tend to attract male candidates and job postings with feminine-coded words tend to attract female candidates. By removing gender-coded terms in job postings, organizations see a 29% increase in applications compared to job postings that include gender-coded words<sup>1</sup>. *Examples of male and female-coded words include:*

Male-coded words	Female-coded words
Ambitious	Agreeable
Confident	Honest
Logical	Cheerful
Superior	Collaborative
Fearless	Empathetic
Competitive	Connected

3. **Avoid jargon and buzzwords.** Jargon is defined by words or expressions that are used by a particular group and are difficult for others to understand. Use inclusive words and plain language that appeal to a broad audience. *Examples of jargon include:*

Jargon	Try this Instead
Self-starter	Dependable, Reliable, Independent, or Motivated
Multitasking	Organized, Focused, Meticulous, or Good Work Ethic
Rockstar	Describe the qualities of the ideal candidate (i.e. experienced in xx)
Ninja	Skilled

<sup>1</sup>[The Impact of Gendered Wording on Candidate Attraction](#), Appcast

4. **Avoid racially biased language.** Phrases like “native English speaker” may turn away candidates who can speak English perfectly but aren’t native English speakers. Instead, say “fluent in English”. Another example is including a “clean-shaven” requirement, which may turn away candidates whose faith requires them to maintain facial hair (it is also gender-specific language that implies the position is only open to men). To be more inclusive, “professional attire and appearance required”.

### **Highlight your Agency’s Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

1. **Explicitly state your commitment to diversity and inclusion in the workplace.** All Executive department job postings include the following statement:

***An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Females, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.***

*The Commonwealth is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. Research suggests that qualified women, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) may self-select out of opportunities if they don't meet 100% of the job requirements. We encourage individuals who believe they have the skills necessary to thrive to apply for this role.*

2. **Mention any diversity and inclusion initiatives or programs your agency has in place.** This could include employee resource groups, diversity training programs, or other initiatives. Ideally, this information is included in the *About your Organization* section of the job posting.

### **Focus on Skills and Qualifications**

1. **List the skills and qualifications required for the job clearly and concisely.** Ensure that the qualifications are relevant to the job and avoid unnecessary requirements that may exclude qualified candidates.

### **Avoid Unconscious Bias**

1. **Take the Unconscious Bias training.** For Commonwealth hiring managers, review the [Unconscious Bias training](#) in MassAchieve.
2. **Review your job posting for unintentional bias and ask colleagues to provide feedback.** Consider using [tools](#) that analyze job descriptions for gendered language and bias.

## **Salary Transparency**

1. **Be transparent about the position's salary range to attract candidates from diverse backgrounds.** Transparency helps eliminate wage gaps and creates a more inclusive hiring process. Executive department agencies are required to post full ranges for bargaining unit positions and have the option to post a specific range for management positions (i.e., if posting an Administrator VI position and the budget won't support a salary over \$120,000, post a salary range of \$100,000 - \$120,000 instead of the full salary range of \$84,791 - \$130,521).

## **Flexible Work Options**

1. **When applicable, mention any flexible work options or remote work possibilities.** This can attract candidates who have diverse needs, such as individuals with specific accommodations.

## **Accessible Application Process**

1. **Ensure that the application process is accessible to all candidates, including those needing additional support.**
2. **Mention any accommodations available for the application and interview process.**

Remember, the goal is to create a supportive and inviting job posting that attracts a diverse candidate pool. Regularly review and update your job postings to ensure they remain inclusive and aligned with the Commonwealth's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.