

# 12

DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

## Hiring Briefs & Job Descriptions

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01

## What this guide helps you create — and who it's for

Two linked documents: a **hiring brief** (the one outcome this role owns, the few things the person must be able to do, the things they explicitly don't need, the deal-breakers, and what success looks like at 90 days) and the **job description** that comes from it — written to attract the right person and repel the wrong ones.

**Use this if** you're about to write a JD by pasting one from a bigger company and changing the logo. **Skip it** if you have a hiring process that reliably finds great people and you're just running it again.

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- 1 **Read sections 02–04** so you know why a JD is an outcome, not a list of responsibilities.
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** — the one you set up in guide 01.
- 3 **Make the decisions in section 03** — the one outcome, must-haves vs trainable, the deal-breakers, the 90-day picture. Do this *before* you touch the prompt.
- 4 **Copy the prompt in section 05** into the chatbot. Paste your Founder Context Block where it says to, and fill in the `{curly braces}`.
- 5 **Send it**, then sharpen what comes back using the four moves in section 06 — one at a time.
- 6 **Post the JD; keep the brief.** The JD is for candidates; the brief is for you — it's what you interview against.

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02

## Why this document matters

The standard founder JD is a list of responsibilities — “you will: own X, manage Y, collaborate on Z” — followed by a wall of “requirements,” half of which are nice-to-haves dressed as essentials. It describes activity, not a result; it scares off the brilliant person who's missing requirement

#9, and attracts the mediocre one who'll claim all twelve. Then the job turns out to be different from the JD, the hire churns, and you start again.

A hiring brief fixes the front end of that. It forces you to name the *one outcome* the role owns — if you can't, you've got two roles or no role — and to be ruthless about which few capabilities actually gate success versus which you can train. The JD that comes out of it is honest about the reality (including the hard parts), specific about what the person will actually do, and asks for a real first piece of work instead of a CV. You get fewer applications, and far better ones.

## A job description should attract the right person and repel the wrong ones. Most do neither — they describe a job that doesn't quite exist, to everyone.

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It comes from four decisions. Section 03.

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### 03

## The thinking framework — what to settle before you prompt

The prompt writes the brief and the JD. These calls are yours.

### — What's the one outcome?

What is this role *for*? Not “responsibilities” — the single result this person is accountable for in 6–12 months. (“Get us from 412 to 3,000 paying businesses through the trades-community channel” — not “manage marketing.”) If you can't compress it to one outcome, you're trying to hire two roles, or you don't know what you need yet. Find the one outcome first.

### — Must-have vs nice-to-have vs trainable

Be ruthless. Most “requirements” are nice-to-haves; the must-haves are the three or four things that, if the person doesn't have them, the hire fails *regardless* of everything else. Everything else — the tools, the domain

trivia, the “5 years of X” — is trainable or learnable. Write the short must-have list, and write the “you do NOT need” list too: it’s the one that gets the great non-obvious candidate to apply.

### — What are the deal-breakers?

The things no amount of skill compensates for: a values mismatch, can’t operate without a playbook, won’t ship, needs a big budget to do anything, treats the hard part of the job as beneath them. Name them. The deal-breakers are usually about *how* someone works, not *what* they can do — and they’re the biggest source of “great on paper, disaster in the seat.”

### — What does 90-day success look like?

Concrete. “X is live.” “The channel’s documented and repeatable.” “The funnel’s moving.” Not “settled in” or “up to speed.” Write the 90-day picture in the brief — it’s what you’ll actually evaluate against, and it tells you whether the role is even well-formed (if you can’t picture 90-day success, the role isn’t ready to hire for).

DECIDE	WEAK DEFAULT	WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE
The one outcome	“manage growth”	“412 → 3,000 paying sole traders via the trades-community channel”
Must-haves	“12 requirements, all ‘essential’”	“3–4 things that gate success; everything else is trainable”
Deal-breakers	“(none stated)”	“needs a big budget to act · can’t work without a playbook · won’t be the face in communities”
90-day success	“ramped up and contributing”	“the channel’s documented + repeatable; activation up X pts; first contractor hired or planned”

04

## Common failure modes — what generic output looks like

Ask an AI for “a job description” cold, and you get the LinkedIn-template JD. Reject these:

× WHAT TO REJECT ON SIGHT

- **The responsibility list.** “You will: manage, own, collaborate, drive...” — a list of verbs that describes activity, not the result the role is for.
- **The kitchen-sink requirements.** Twelve “must-haves,” every one “essential.” It repels the great misfit and attracts the mediocre overclaimer.
- **The dishonest reality.** “Fast-paced!” (means chaotic). “Wear many hats!” (means understaffed). Omits the hard parts entirely. The hire finds out in week two and leaves in month three.
- **“Competitive salary” and “send your CV.”** No number → wasted conversations on misaligned comp. No real first task → a pile of low-signal applications.
- **The ninja/rockstar register.** “We’re looking for a growth ninja to join our rocketship.” Anyone good reads that and closes the tab.

If the JD looks like this, you haven’t named the one outcome or cut the requirements. Section 03.

05

## The prompt template

This is the bit that does the work. You don’t need to understand prompting — you just need to do these five things, in order:

### RUNNING THIS PROMPT – STEP BY STEP

- 1 **Copy the entire grey box below** (all of it, top to bottom).
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** and paste it into the message box. Don’t press send yet.
- 3 **Paste your Founder Context Block** where the prompt says `{paste your Founder Context Block here}` — delete that line and put your block in its place. (No Context Block yet? Build one in guide 01.)
- 4 **Replace every `{curly-brace}` bit** with your own answer — your four decisions from section 03 go straight in. If you’re unsure of one, leave it; the prompt will ask.
- 5 **Send it.** Then go to section 06 to sharpen what comes back.

PROMPT TEMPLATE

→ Copy the whole box. Paste your **Founder Context Block** where it says to, then swap everything in {curly braces} for your own answers before you send it.

You are helping me write a hiring brief and the job description that comes from it – for a role that owns one outcome, written to attract the right person and repel the wrong ones.

Here is everything you need to know about my company:

{paste your Founder Context Block here}

Four things I've decided (use these – don't soften them):

- The one outcome this role owns in 6-12 months: {e.g. "412 → 3,000 paying sole traders via the trades-community channel"}
- The 3-4 true must-haves (everything else is trainable): {list them, each with a one-line "because"}
- The deal-breakers (things no skill compensates for): {e.g. "needs a big budget to act · can't work without a playbook · won't be the face in communities"}
- What 90-day success looks like, concretely: {e.g. "the channel's documented + repeatable; activation up X pts; first contractor hired or planned"}

Produce TWO documents:

PART 1 – THE HIRING BRIEF (this is for me, not the candidate)

- a. The one outcome – restated in one sentence.
- b. The 3-4 must-haves – each with its one-line "because."
- c. The "you do NOT need" list – 4-6 things people will assume are required but aren't. Be specific.
- d. The deal-breakers – restated, plus any obvious ones I missed.
- e. The 90-day success picture – concrete and checkable.

PART 2 – THE JOB DESCRIPTION (this is for candidates)

- An honest title.
- One paragraph on what the role is FOR – the outcome, in plain language.
- "The reality" – a frank section: what's hard, what's chaotic, who this is NOT for. If "fast-paced" really means chaotic, say chaotic.
- "What you'll actually do" – week one and month one, concretely.
- Who you'll work with.
- Compensation – a real range (use the figure I gave you, or ask for it), and an honest line on equity if we're early-stage.
- How to apply – a specific first task or a sharp question, not "send your CV." Make it something the right person would enjoy doing.

Rules:

- No "ninja / rockstar / unicorn / wear many hats."
- No 12-item requirements list. The must-haves are the must-haves; everything else goes in "nice to have."
- Anything in `{curly braces}` is a slot for me to fill. If I left one blank, ask me for it – don't invent it.

When you're done, tell me which requirement I'm most likely over-weighting (i.e. which "must-have" is actually a nice-to-have), and why.

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06

## How to iterate when the output is weak

First drafts come back as a polished version of the template JD. These four moves give it teeth — one at a time:

1. **Name the one outcome.** *"State the single result this role owns in 6–12 months, in one sentence. If you can't, tell me whether this is actually two roles or an underdefined one."*
2. **Cut to the true must-haves.** *"Of these requirements, which 3–4 — if missing — mean the hire fails no matter what? Keep those. Move everything else to 'nice to have' or 'we'll train it.' Add the 'you do NOT need' list."*
3. **Make 'the reality' honest.** *"Add a section to the JD that says, plainly, what's hard about this job, what's chaotic, and who it's NOT for. If 'fast-paced' really means 'chaotic,' say chaotic."*
4. **Fix the comp and the apply step.** *"Replace 'competitive salary' with a real range. Replace 'send your CV' with a specific first task or a sharp question the right candidate would enjoy answering."*

If two passes don't fix it, the role isn't well-formed yet — back to section 03.

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07

## A worked example

Sam from guide 01, Ledgerwise — hiring the first growth person.

> WORKED EXAMPLE — SAM'S FIRST GROWTH HIRE

**The one outcome:** *“Get Ledgerwise from 412 to 3,000 paying sole traders by working the trades-community channel that’s already converting — own the channel, the funnel, and the activation rate.”*

**Must-haves (4):** has done founder-led / community-driven growth at an early-stage company (not agency, not enterprise); writes plain English that lands with tradespeople, not marketers; comfortable being the visible person in communities; numbers-literate enough to know what’s working without a data team.

**You do NOT need:** a marketing degree · paid-ads expertise · agency background · “10 years of experience” · to have grown a company past Series A.

**Deal-breakers:** needs a real budget before they can do anything · can’t operate without a documented playbook · thinks “community engagement” means scheduling posts · won’t actually get into the Facebook groups.

**90-day success:** the channel is documented and repeatable; activation rate up at least 5 points; first contractor hired or a clear plan for one.

**The JD’s “reality” section:** *“You’ll spend real time answering bookkeeping questions in trades Facebook groups. Some weeks the numbers don’t move and you have to keep going anyway. You report to a founder who will have opinions. Comp is £{X} plus meaningful equity — we’re pre-seed, and the equity is the upside. If you need a big team and a big budget to do your best work, this isn’t it.”*

**How to apply:** *“Send us the post you’d write for {community} this week, and the one metric you’d watch to know it worked. No CV needed yet — we’ll ask for that if your post lands.”*

08

## Edge cases — and when to go deeper

A few situations need more than the template:

- **You’re hiring a senior leader.** The “one outcome” is bigger and fuzzier — it’s really a bet, plus an envelope of autonomy. Spend less of the brief on must-have skills and more on the bet you’re making, the decisions they own outright, and how you’ll know in 6 months whether the bet’s working.
- **You’re hiring a contractor or a fractional.** The “brief” is a scope-of-work, not a JD — deliverables and a definition-of-done, not an out-

come they own. Different document; same discipline about being specific.

- **You're hiring for a role you've never done.** You can't write the must-haves well, because you don't know which ones actually gate success. Talk to two or three people who've done the role before you write the brief — borrow their judgement.
- **You want a real interview process, not gut-feel calls** — a scorecard per round so you're judging the same things consistently:

→ WHEN YOU NEED TO GO DEEPER

**Interview Scorecard** — Turn a hiring brief into a structured interview process — a scorecard per round so you're judging the same few things every time, not vibes.

[n-access.co.uk/playbook/interview-scorecard](https://n-access.co.uk/playbook/interview-scorecard)

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09

## What to read next

- **13 · Customer Research & Interview Synthesis** — your first hires usually touch customers; this is the discipline they (and you) should be using.
- **03 · Brand Positioning & Messaging** — the JD should sound like your company, not a job board; the positioning brief is the source of that voice.
- **04 · Go-to-Market Plan** — if you're hiring for growth, the GTM plan is the job; the hiring brief should point straight at it.

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## The Founder's Playbook

A library of short operator guides for founders building with AI — not prompt-pack content, an actual method. Each guide is free, each routes you to deeper blueprints when you need them, and each assumes one thing: that you've built your **Founder Context Block** (that's guide 01).

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