

**TITLE:** Head of communications (maternity cover)  
**GRADE:** E (£50,000)  
**MANAGER:** Chief executive

## PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Transport Focus exists to make a difference for passengers. The head of communications works closely with the chief executive and chair to support the delivery of organisational objectives through internal and external communications. The successful candidate will also play an active part in the leadership of the organisation via the management team.

You will oversee effective media handling, external affairs management, and management of our campaigns.

## OUTLINE

Managing a small team and associated budget, the head of communications will identify, target and deliver specific campaigns that will deliver 'wins' for transport users.

This will include proactive media relations, internal communications, PR, social media and raising the profile of the organisation with all stakeholders.

Other responsibilities include running a 24/7 press office, delivering high-quality publications, managing the website, maintaining and developing our social media presence, and protecting the organisational brand. On occasion the post-holder will be required to act as a media spokesperson (full training provided).

There will be a high degree of cross-organisational working in project teams to ensure the successful delivery of the Workplans.

This post is based in London and will require some travel and out-of-hours working.

## TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Communication

- To be responsible for the development of our front-line communication channels to make our information, policies and data accessible to transport users and stakeholders.
- To plan and ensure delivery of effective communication materials and events by using the most appropriate delivery channels, including electronic communications, social media and other channels. This will include an interactive website, consumer advice, conferences, stakeholder communications and events and corporate publications such as the annual report.
- To give sensible, practical high-level communications advice to internal stakeholders and to

represent or support the Board at high-level meetings with industry partners and others.

- Delivering broadcast and print media interviews.

### Reputation management

- To maintain influential relationships with the media and industry partners such as Department for Transport, Highways England, Network Rail and rail operators.
- Direct dealings with the media at short notice and under pressure and providing an out-of-hours response at weekends and evenings.
- To give advice and support to staff on maintaining and developing the reputation of the organisation.

### Marketing

- To manage the ongoing marketing of the Transport Focus brand, ensuring consistency of application. Also, to continue to develop the profile and recognition of Transport Focus with transport users and industries.
- To manage the production of all branded publications including the annual report.
- To develop and exploit electronic marketing opportunities using our customer relationship management system, social media and other appropriate electronic channels.

### Leadership

- To lead, coach and manage the communications team.

## TRANSPORT FOCUS - PERSON SPECIFICATION

### EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

#### Essential

- Demonstrated experience in a comparable role, including experience of successfully leading a team and managing suppliers.
- Demonstrated experience in a high-pressure, fast-moving media/public relations environment, working to very tight deadlines.
- High level of oral and written English.
- IPR/CAM diploma or other professional qualification.
- Efficient in the use of using Microsoft Office (particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook).
- Experience of using and exploiting customer relationship management systems, electronic communication channels and social media for marketing and communications.

#### Desirable

- Degree or equivalent educational attainment.
- Membership of CIPR or other professional organisation.
- Knowledge of, or interest in, the transport industry.
- An understanding of consumer or transport user aspirations and an interest in how transport user issues are identified and improved.

## CORE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

### **Working with others**

Works effectively as part of a team by collaborating with others and contributing towards team goals. Professional in approach. Demonstrates empathy and understanding of others' viewpoints in order to build rapport. Supports colleagues and works cross functionally to provide an effective input to the organisational team. Engages with others at all levels, sharing knowledge and best practice. Manages the expectations of others. Gains cooperation from others by talking through issues and solutions. Proactively inspires trusting partnerships. Initiates and develops relationships to further organisational goals. Networks both internally and externally to the organisation. Focuses on developing long-term relationships.

### **Influential communication**

Communicates in a way that can be easily understood. Speaks clearly and concisely at an appropriate pace, checking for understanding. Presents verbal and written information in a structured way. Actively listens to others and asks questions to indicate engagement or for clarification. Engages positively when communicating with others. Adapts communication style to the needs of the audience and situation. Conveys credibility when communicating at all levels of the organisation. Persuades and influences others, considering the implications of messages being given. Negotiates in order to secure positive outcomes. Demonstrates diplomacy when faced with objections or potential conflicts.

### **Flexible planning and organising**

Systematic and methodical when developing structured plans to manage own workload. Considers timescales and the materials available and manages these effectively in order to meet deadlines. Recognises the need to be flexible in approach to completing tasks. Thinks ahead and anticipates changes. Prioritises tasks in order to respond effectively to competing demands. Monitors progress by reviewing stages regularly. Responds flexibly to changing priorities by re-arranging own workload or adapting existing plans. Manages multiple projects effectively in order to meet deadlines. Builds in contingencies in plans. Recognises the consequences of planned actions and tailors approach accordingly. Creates plans which balance short, medium and longer term goals. Reallocates the workload of others in response to changing demands.

### **Problem solving and critical thinking**

Is able to assess problems from a variety of angles by recognising relevant and irrelevant information. Will formulate solutions based on the facts. Able to understand research information or data and link outcomes to objectives. Establishes key facts and identifies root cause issues. Identifies a range of possible solutions and assesses the associated risks. Makes objective and reasoned decisions based on facts and evidence. Is able to interpret research information or data correctly. Quickly and accurately establishes and filters key facts and information. Champions an evidence-based approach, making unbiased and emotionally controlled decisions. Is able to translate research data or information, ensuring that it is meaningful for others.

### **Continuous improvement**

Committed to continuously strive for results and takes pride in producing work to high standards. Committed to improving self through learning from own experiences. Proactively identifies improvements to processes and services, implementing own ideas in line with best practice. Appropriately challenges the status quo. Takes steps to identify a way to fill their own skills/knowledge gap and takes positive steps to address the gap.

### **Tenacity and resilience**

Works well under pressure, focused on completing tasks. Delivers consistent, quality representation of the organisation and retains business focus in difficult situations. Remains emotionally controlled when under pressure or in stressful situations. Self-starting with the ability to handle challenges and obstacles confidently. Determined to succeed, demonstrating persistence. Anticipates issues and potential conflict. Unwavering approach to finding a balanced solution. Focused on achieving successful outcomes for the business, even when faced with making tough or unpopular decisions.

### **Strategic thinking**

Demonstrates organisational awareness. Understands the role of the organisation and who the stakeholders are. Recognises how own role impacts and links into organisational objectives. Thinks through the wider consequences of their actions and how these will impact on organisational goals. Considers wider strategic issues when developing approach to achievement of own objectives. Understands how key departments fit together and looks outside own team to link strategically and achieve wider organisational goals. Identifies both internal and external issues that might impact the organisation.

## **LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES**

### **Leading and inspiring others**

Provides direction for others. Understands the capability of their team. Defines success and measures the performance of others. Empowers individuals to take responsibility for their own performance.

### **Developing others**

Identifies talent and development needs in others. Supports others to maximise their professional development. Understands the importance of taking a long-term view when developing others.

### **Managing change**

Demonstrates commitment to change, without promoting change for change's sake. Considers those affected by the transition, providing support. Gains buy-in to the changes from others.

### **Driving strategic results**

Proactively researches the strategic needs of team and organisation to ensure that goals and objectives are intrinsically linked to achieving results for the business and maintaining

organisational reputation.

## **Emotional intelligence (self-awareness and emotional perception)**

Understands and monitors one's own emotions, recognises emotional triggers and manages them effectively to guide own thinking and performance.

## **IMPORTANT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

- Chairman, Board and chief executive
- National, regional, local online and specialist communications and contacts
- Agency suppliers
- Media organisations
- Other consumer organisations.