

TITLE: Communications officer
GRADE: C
MANAGER: Head of communications

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

Do you want to help ensure people using public transport or the major road network have a better experience using services that are reliable and routes/facilities managed for their benefit?

Transport Focus is the independent consumer watchdog – a champion for Britain’s rail, bus, coach and tram passengers, and for domestic or business drivers who use England’s major A roads and motorways. We listen to what users want (in a variety of ways) and then we speak up on their behalf and make a difference for them, striving to give all transport users a voice as powerful as those who provide services and manage routes.

We’re looking for an experienced, driven and creative Communications Officer to join our small, friendly team in a busy office where every day is different. In this role you’ll deliver internal communications and get to build your skills helping colleagues deliver many types of integrated external communications activity undertaken to raise the profile of Transport Focus and strengthen its engagement with the travelling public.

OUTLINE

You will have a good news sense, strong skills taking calls from the media gained at the heart of busy communications team, some experience of horizon scanning and media/website analysis, solid administration skills/experience, strong IT skills including familiarity with a newsletter platform and a web content management system. Digital content skills and/or familiarity with using a social media dashboard and planning tool would be a definite advantage.

The communications officer will be personable, motivated with a flexible approach, able to manage their own time to handle a busy workload, have some digital competencies, and have excellent writing and editorial skills with close attention to detail.

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic communication

- Act as guardian of the Transport Focus brand, working with other staff to ensure the corporate identity is consistently applied on across all external and internal communication channels/ resources.
- Create and deliver materials to help promote Transport Focus activities, research and policy guides over digital and conventional channels.

- Take responsibility for horizon scanning and forward planning (such as maintaining the grid) as part of wider integrated communications and campaign planning.
- Suggest ideas for / help develop activity over social media channels as appropriate.
- Support a 'digital by default' approach to all communications materials/ projects

Media

- Work as part of the press team, acting as first point of contact (gate-keeper) with journalists, responding to media enquiries, helping to arrange interviews with spokespeople.
- Maintain log of press contacts and searchable record of comments/lines issued.
- Proactively identify opportunities to promote messages to a wide range of conventional and digital media outlets.
- Create and deliver daily media monitoring email.
- Undertake analysis of coverage (using Kantar news monitoring platform).

Internal communications

- Build internal relationships and lead the process to source a steady supply of internal news
- Post internal news items to the intranet (using Sharepoint) and drive daily bulletin

Digital

- Contribute to maintenance of the website (using a CMS).
- Oversee the social media monitoring and scheduling tools, helping colleagues to plan and deliver social media activity.

Newsletters and publications

- Help with scheduling and production of monthly newsletter (familiarity with Mailchimp or CommuniGator and advantage).
- Help produce external publications, including proofreading in line with the House Style and liaising with a design agency where appropriate.

Events

- Work as necessary with colleagues to plan and deliver well run internal or external events
- Represent Transport Focus at internal and external events as required.

Team support

- Team admin (including suggesting improvements where identified):
 - Booking travel
 - Processing invoices

In addition to the above, you may be required to perform other duties that fall outside your job title or key duties.

TRANSPORT FOCUS - PERSON

EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & RELEVANT

ESSENTIAL:

- Demonstratable experience working in a comparable/relevant role in a busy communications team.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with high level of speed and accuracy in all written materials.
- Strong news sense, with solid experience of media handling (reporters and broadcast planners).
- A good understanding of social media. Experience of using Twitter and Linked In
- IT skills: experience of using Microsoft Office (particularly Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook) to an advanced level. Demonstrable experience of using a content management system (e.g. WordPress).
- Articulate, with excellent communication skills and an ability to engage effectively with a broad range of people at all levels
- Excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to establish priorities.
- Experience of working to plan or deliver internal and/or external events.
- Willing team player, capable of cross functional collaboration.
- Flexible and adaptable, able to react quickly to changing requirements and new challenges.

DESIRABLE:

- Knowledge of, or interest in, the transport industry.
- An understanding of bus/rail/tram passenger and road user experience/ aspirations with an interest in how their issues of concern can be identified and addressed.
- Some understanding of how to prepare an operational or press notice
- Familiarity with using a newsletter programme such as MailChimp/CommuniGator.
- Experience of preparing assets social media using relevant tools e.g. Canva/Powerpoint/Infogram/Photoshop and Illustrator
- Video editing or subtitling skills (especially in Adobe Elements).

CORE SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

WORKING WITH OTHERS - Level 2

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.

INFLUENTIAL COMMUNICATION - Level 2

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.

FLEXIBLE PLANNING AND ORGANISING - Level 2

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.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND CRITICAL THINKING - Level 1

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.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT - Level 1

Committed to continuously strive for results and takes pride in producing work to high standards. Committed to improving self through learning from own experiences.

TENACITY AND RESILIENCE - Level 2

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.

STRATEGIC THINKING - Level 1

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.

IMPORTANT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- Communications team
- Transport teams
- Chief executives' team
- Board and Chief Executive
- Insight team

External

- Key stakeholders, including the Department for Transport, Road companies, Network Rail and train companies, bus / coach operators and MPs
- Media and miscellaneous specialist contacts.