



The Pre-Hiring Comms Checklist from Engage Comms

Recruitment is often treated as business as usual. But when it's tied to change, it rarely is. Whether you're restructuring, expanding, entering new markets or shifting direction, the roles you hire for send powerful signals about where your organisation is heading.

And yet, in many cases, communications comes too late. At Engage Comms, we believe the opposite should be true because recruitment doesn't just fill roles, it shapes perception, builds belief and creates momentum.

This short guide is designed to help you step back before you hit 'post', so your hiring approach reflects not just what you need, but where you're going.

The Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure your recruitment activity starts with clarity.



Start with Insight

Before defining the role, ask:

- Do we understand the current talent market for this role?
- Are expectations (salary, skills, availability) realistic?
- How are competitors positioning similar opportunities?

Why it matters: Strong communications starts with realism. Insight ensures your narrative is grounded, credible and competitive.



Define the Story Behind the Role

Go beyond responsibilities and ask:

- Why does this role exist now?
- What has changed to make it necessary?
- What does success in this role unlock for the business?

Why it matters: Candidates and employees aren't just buying into a job, they're buying into a direction.

Align Leadership Messaging Early

Before anything goes to market:

- Are senior leaders aligned on the purpose of the role?
- Can they clearly articulate the same narrative?
- Is there consistency in how the opportunity is described?

Why it matters: Misalignment at the top creates confusion everywhere else.

Make the Change Meaningful Internally

Consider your internal audience:

- Have you explained why this hire matters?
- Do teams understand how it impacts them?
- Are managers equipped to answer questions?

Why it matters: Your people are your most important ambassadors. If they're unclear, your message won't land externally either.

✓ Ensure Consistency Across Every Touchpoint

Check alignment across:

- Job adverts and role descriptions
- Careers pages and employer brand messaging
- Interviews and candidate conversations
- External communications (LinkedIn, PR, etc.)

Why it matters: Inconsistency erodes trust. Consistency builds confidence.

Avoid the "Job Ad First" Trap

Ask yourself:

- Have we jumped straight to writing the advert?
- Are we reacting quickly instead of thinking strategically?

Why it matters: Once the role is live, your narrative is already out there. It's much harder to reshape it later.

Build Comms In, Not On

Plan communications alongside recruitment, not after it:

- What needs to be communicated internally and when?
- What external narrative supports this hire?
- How will we maintain momentum throughout the process?

Why it matters: Comms shouldn't follow recruitment, it should power it.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

We see these time and time again:

- Starting with the job spec, not the story
- Bringing comms in too late to shape the narrative
- Assuming internal understanding without confirming it
- Overlooking the external signals recruitment sends
- Relying on instinct instead of insight

Avoiding these pitfalls is often the difference between a reactive hire and a strategic one.

How We Help

At Engage Comms, this is where we do our best work. We partner with organisations at key moments of change to:

- Clarify the story behind key hires
- Align leadership messaging
- Create consistent internal and external communications
- Ensure recruitment reinforces, rather than undermines, strategic direction

Where relevant, we also work alongside specialist talent research partners to bring insight into the process early, helping ensure decisions are informed, messaging is sharper and outcomes are stronger.

Considering a fresh approach to your recruitment comms? LETS TALK!

Get in touch:

www.engagecomms.co.uk/info@engagecomms.co.uk