Communications Officer

MAIN PURPOSE

We want what we say to our staff, the people who use our services, fellow professionals and our partners to be:

- really easy to understand;
- accessible;
- consistent;
- effective;
- accurate;
- right on brand; and
- brilliant.

The purpose of this communications officer role is to work alongside our other communications officer and the wider communications team to produce creative and effective communications that are all of those things with a cherry on top.

In the PSS comms team we do all of our own stunts, so on a day-to-day basis you'll turn your hand to lots of different creative challenges – whether it's filming and editing an accessible video with people we support, writing SEO copy for the website, scheduling social media or writing up an amazing press release. Of course, all of this depends on what the organisation needs from us, and what's in our communications strategy.

You'll craft on-brand communications that are human and get the message across in the right way. One of your main responsibilities will be writing, editing and proofing copy, so you'll need to have both a knack for words and a love for language. We work on a bajillion different types of content and pretty much all of them involve an element of writing. Your job is to ditch the jargon, write complicated things clearly, keep the PSS voice flowing through your work and use our house style (a really in-depth guide to writing for PSS) to keep things consistent. Oh, and because our brand is human-to-human, we don't use AI to write stuff – so you'll need to have skills of your own. We'll need you to coach other people from across the organisation to help them with their written work and edit things where you need to, too, so that we keep all of our communications on brand.

There are stories in every nook and cranny of PSS. It's up to you to find them and (if the people they're about are ok with it) tell them; or better still, pass the mic and support the people involved to use their own words. After-all, there's nothing more powerful than a story told by the person who experienced it. You'll use your eye for what's media-worthy to whip up a press release when you spy something that you think would make a good read. Or, on the other hand, you'll know that actually, although one of our colleagues is understandably absolutely delighted for him, Jim from Norfolk getting a new lawn-mower last week probably isn't tomorrow's front-page news.

As well as all the day-to-day stuff, we hope you can see that there's also a much greater purpose to this role. Like everyone else here at PSS, we think this is more than just a 9-5 job; it's a way for us to help make other people's lives that bit better, in our own way. As a communications team, we may not be responsible for delivering the services directly, but

what we do on a daily basis could mean that someone in desperate need finds out we can help; or it could mean we're commissioned to help even more people; or that we foster the best organisational culture, with the happiest teams in the west. That's all really important to us, and we'd like to find someone who finds that equally important.

SCOPE OF JOB AND FOCUS OF ROLE

- Service delivery – 90%
- Finance and resources – 10%

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Contract Type
This is a permanent contract.

Salary
£19,109.80 per year (FTE £31,425). This salary is equivalent to PSS Fixed point 37.

Hours
22½ hours per week, to be worked Monday to Wednesday

Location
Eleanor Rathbone House, Connect Business Village, 24 Derby Road, Liverpool, L5 9PR.

Annual Leave
28 days per year pro rata. In addition to eight paid statutory bank holidays (bank holidays are pro rata for part-time staff).

Pensions
PSS operates an Occupational Pension Scheme with The People's Pension.

Conditions of Service
Offers of employment are made subject to the following conditions:

a) Completion of medical questionnaire
b) Receipt of two satisfactory references, including one reference from a current or most recent employer.
c) Authorisation to work in the UK. Under the Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006 successful candidates will be required to produce documentation which demonstrates their authorisation to work in the UK. Documents may include; Passport; full birth certificate; UK work permit; Home Office letter.

YOUR KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Writing, editing and proof-reading content

Bring your best content ideas and your wordsmithery: a really big part of your role will be writing, editing and proof-reading. Here at PSS, we don't try to make ourselves sound clever with big words or jargon, so you're going to need to be comfortable with creating simple, easy-to-read communications, giving other people's written work the magic touch and following the PSS house style.

We'll need you to:

- plan, write and distribute written content aimed at external and internal audiences, across PSS's channels, helping us get that integrated approach we want to achieve. We're talking about things like blogs, news articles, press releases, web pages, leaflets, booklets, posters, pull-up banners… you name it;
- write and create easy read communications for people who have learning disabilities;
- proof-read and edit the work of others, spotting and simplifying any complex language, making sure it's grammatically correct and that it follows our house style;
- put that great knowledge of grammar to work, making sure all of our communications are written well, are accurate and easy to read;
- work with our house style to nail the PSS voice, get a firm grasp on the tone and style of how we communicate and help us get everyone else using the house style, too.

Making our communications accessible

We're on a mission to make sure all PSS communications are as accessible as possible. It's part of your role to:

- produce easy read versions of some of our most-needed information;
- follow accessible information guidelines to make our communications work for everyone; and
- advise and train people in other teams about how to make their communications more accessible.

Working with our graphic designer

We'll need you to build a fab relationship with our freelance graphic designer, Heather, who works remotely and does all of PSS's snazzy artwork.

You'll need to:

- proof-read artwork to check all the info's in the right place;
- collaborate with Heather to come up with creative ways of presenting our communications;
- give thorough and accurate briefs; and
- have a nose over the artwork Heather produces, giving honest, constructive and kind feedback when you need to.

Identifying and helping tell our stories

Like we've mentioned before, PSS is chock full of stories. We touch the lives of so many people, each one an individual and each one with their own tale.

We'll need you to:

- open your eyes and your big heart to help us find stories to tell (making sure, of course, we always respect the privacy and wishes of the people involved);
- support the people who use our services to tell their own stories, in their own words;
- creatively bring stories to life and figure out which platform would suit them best – whether it's through video on the website, in pictures via social media, in writing in our staff newsletter or another creative way; and
- have a great sense of what's newsworthy and the ability to use trending topics as an opportunity to get our messages out there.

Developing and rolling out communications plans

We've got so many plans for ways we can make our external and internal communications brilliant (and a ton more integrated), but, we need the help of another pro to help us get there.

We'll need you to:

- help deliver PSS's overall communications strategy, and get involved with thinking up a brand new one each time it's complete;
- help put new communications plans in place for some of our new projects and services; and
- keep your eye on emerging communications channels and, if they're appropriate for our audiences, help us integrate those into how we do things.

Creating communications with the people who use our services

The number one priority at PSS are the people who use our services. We like to deliver our services *with* people, not *to* them, and we try and take this angle with our communications. We want to create more communications in partnership with the people who use our services and use what we do as a way to help people's voices be heard.

We'll need you to:

- hand over the mic – allow people we support to tell their story, their way;
- work with the people we support to come up with new ways to give them a platform and a voice; and
- look out for opportunities to plan, test and deliver communications with the people who use our services.

Creating original video content

As you know, video is a huge part of communications and at PSS, we've got the basics we need to make cracking in-house videos.

We'll need you to:

- plan, film and edit creative video content that engages people, helps give a voice to the people who use our services and gets our message out there

Events

We don't do loads of events, but we do have the odd one here and there.

You don't need to be a huge expert in events, but we'll need you to:

- use your organisation skills to help plan, organise and make our events runs smoothly; and
- help out with the ground work on the day (stuff like the balloon-blowing, decorating the room, making playlists and greeting people). We all get involved in this bit - even our chief exec - and we'd need you to be willing to muck in with the rest of us.

Looking after our print and production schedules

Along with our other communications officer, it's your job to help manage our print and production schedules.

We'll need you to:

- look after the production schedules for each of our printed communications, including what needs to go to print and when;
- send orders to the printers and keeping an eye on where things are up to;
- review and agree proofs; and
- organise the distribution of printed stuff.

Being a brand guardian

In the communications team it's our job to make sure our brand is upheld and that it remains consistent in everything we do. We're launching an updated take on the PSS brand in 2018, so we're going to need a hand rolling it out.

As part of the team, we'll therefore need you to:

- learn the PSS brand inside out and back-to-front;
- pass that knowledge onto our colleagues when they need some help with upholding the brand; and
- be a brand guardian, making sure all PSS communications you come across or create are on-brand, and if they're not, that you flag it up.

Keeping our staff in the loop

We've got lots of different types of role at PSS – from support workers and psychotherapists to finance experts and tech whizzes. It's the role of the comms team to keep them all up-to-speed on the important stuff they need to know about and feeling part of the team.

You'll do that by:

- working with our head of comms and the rest of our comms team to put together an ace internal communications strategy that will allow us to get the right messages to the right people at the right time;
- thinking up new ways to show people how they're contributing to our Big Plan (our five-year strategy);
- keeping an eye out for new trends in internal communications;
- producing original content that delivers key messages to staff;
- keeping everyone in the loop:

  We've got a cracking little e-newsletter for our staff that we send out weekly. It's called The Loop. Working with our head of communications, we'll need you to:

  - sniff out stories from across the organisation and plan strategic bits of content to go into The Loop;
  - work with our editorial group to prioritise which stories should be 'must reads' for our staff, and which stories are nice to know;
  - write articles getting the key messages across;
  - keep production on track and plan future editions;
  - build the email using our e-marketing software; and
  - keep looking for new ways we can get the message to our staff.

Helping develop our social media channels

We want to get more savvy with our socials and put more time into developing them.

We'll need you to:

- develop, grow and produce well-written, on-brand content for our social media channels;
- use tools like Canva to develop accessible multimedia content;
- help us broaden our horizons with social media and grow our following in new places;
- manage any ad campaigns we start on social media, come up with smart ad content, look after requests from managers in our services to increase/reduce social media advertising budgets, keep an eye on progress and continuously learn how we can make things better;
- think up creative ways to start two-way conversations on our social channels;
- use social media insight and analytics tools to keep track of how we're doing and what we need to do better; and
- stay on top of emerging social trends and find ways to take advantage of them.

Keeping our website fresh

Our website is one of our main communications channels.

We'll need you to:

- develop original content for the website to keep it fresh and relevant;
- help keep our website accessible to everyone;

- help maintain the site (via WordPress) – creating and removing pages, reviewing content, updating links, adding images, etc; and
- use Google Analytics to make sure our site is performing at its best.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES

1. To support our head of communications with some of her tasks when things get super busy – whether that's to run a story in to a journalist or to help come up with some creative campaign ideas. If you'd like to see just what our head of communications does, give us a shout and we'll share her job description with you.

2. To take a genuine interest and active role in your performance and learning reviews and come along to our 1:1/team meetings with an open mind and creative energy.

3. We want PSS to continue getting better and better all the time. You're encouraged to use your creativity to think up new ways to do things. If there's something we're not doing that you think would work, say something! Let's give it a whirl if we can.

4. We're a charity and, as you might expect, to make sure the people who use our services get the best possible experience, we all chip in when we need to. That means there may be times when we ask you to go above and beyond the role described here if it's appropriate to your skills. We'll need you to be flexible and go with the flow sometimes. But don't worry, we won't ask you to do things that aren't safe for you or the other people involved (like providing care, for example). Can't promise there won't be an elf costume involved around Christmas, however! The post holder is expected to be flexible and do any other duties we think are appropriate to the post.

5. To help our colleagues to be self-sufficient and creative, we sometimes train other teams in how to do things like film and edit basic videos, manage social media or set up presentations. You'll be involved in passing on some of your knowledge and getting involved in training sessions.

JOB DESCRIPTION

This job description is a general guide to the work we'll need you to do and the responsibilities you'll have. It doesn't form part of your contract of employment. All jobs are subject to change from time to time, and this job description will be reviewed regularly.

Person specification: communications officer

Requirement	Essential	Assess from:
	E= Essential D = Desirable	A = application I = interview R = references E = exercise/practical
Qualifications		
Degree in English, media, communications, marketing, PR or related discipline (or equivalent)	E	A
Evidence that you're always striving to get better at what you do	E	*A/I*
Knowledge		
Understands how communications strategies are developed and put into action	E	A/I/E
Knows how to tailor communications for different audiences and, while staying true to the PSS voice, carefully tuning it to suit each one	E	A/I/E
Understands why keeping things on brand is so important	E	A/I
Excellent knowledge of grammar	*E*	*A/I/E*
Knows what makes a great story	*E*	*A/I/E*
Able to match content with the most appropriate channels to reach audiences, give maximum reach and engagement	*E*	*A/I/E*
Understands how to get the best from social media and how to evaluate social engagement using insights and analytics	*E*	*A/I*
Knows what makes good internal communications and external communications	*E*	*A/I*
Makes sure they keep topping up their knowledge about emerging communications channels	*E*	*A/I*
Understands how the media works	D	A/I
Understands the health and social care field and the potential risks associated with communications in our field	*D*	*A/I*
Knows how to manage social media advertising	*D*	*A/I*
Understands SEO	*D*	*A/I*
Skills		
Mega writing skills with the ability to: • *Write simple, clear and accurate content* • *Turn your hand to any subject* • *Make complicated language simpler* • *Write both long and short copy with style* • *Write for a variety of different audiences with completely different needs – from the grandparents of prisoners' children and mums with postnatal depression through to teenagers*	E	A/I/E

with learning disabilities, GPs and social workers • *Write for a wide variety of different channels – from press releases and brochures through to social media posts* • *Identify and translate jargon* • *Use grammar correctly* • *Write fluently using the PSS tone of voice*		
Presenting complicated ideas in a simple, engaging way using various communications channels/content	E	A/I/E
Editing the work of others	E	A/I/E
Brilliant people skills	*E*	*A/I/E/R*
Identifying and telling stories telling stories that move, motivate and inspire people; in the most effective ways	*E*	*A/I/E*
A creative brain and the ability to apply that creativity practically	*E*	*A/I/E*
Strong planning skills with the ability to prioritise tasks	*E*	*A/I/E*
Good IT skills – know your way round Outlook, Word and Excel	*E*	*A*
Customer service skills – the ability to keep our colleagues (who we treat a bit like internal customers) happy and satisfied with the communications service we provide	*E*	*A/I*
Creating eye-catching, well-written and engaging social media content	*E*	*A/I*
Great proof-reading ability and an eagle eye for detail	*E*	*A/I/E*
Amending and creating basic designs on InDesign	*D*	*A/I*
Filming and edit video content	*D*	*A/I*
Photography skills	*D*	*A*
Experience		
At least two years' experience in a busy communications team, juggling a variety of tasks/projects	E	A/I/R
Lots of experience in writing content for a whole host of online and offline channels	E	A/I/R
Working to deadlines	E	A/I/R
Providing communications advice and support to colleagues of all levels across the organisation.	E	A/I
Working closely and maintaining relationships with many teams and departments across an organisation	E	A/I/R
Working on digital communications (website, social media, e-shots)	E	A/I
Working with a brand identity and making sure it's implemented	E	A/I/R
Working with creative agencies	D	A/I
Managing social media ad campaigns	D	A/I
Working with a graphic designer – briefing, appraising work, feeding back amends, etc.	D	A/I
Sending communications/marketing stuff to print	D	A/I
Working with a house style	D	A/I

Working with journalists and handling media enquiries	D	A/I
Filming and editing video content	D	A/I
Producing communications content on a really tight budget	D	A/I
Contributing to and rolling out communications strategies	D	A/I
Working on newsletters	D	A/I
Attitude		
Altruistic and here for the right reasons – to help our organisation support the people who use our services	E	A/I/R
Non-judgemental, respectful to everyone and committed to treating everyone as equals no-matter who they are or what they believe in	*E*	A/I/R
Not afraid to be themselves and let their voice be heard	*E*	I/R
Able to challenge things when appropriate and in a respectful way	*E*	I/R
Doesn't take themselves too seriously, has a good sense of humour and likes working in a fun atmosphere	E	I/R
Loves being creative	E	A/I/R
Wants the team to be the best we can possibly be	E	I/R
Friendly, kind and encouraging to others	E	I/R
Positive and motivated to do amazing work	E	I/R
Willing to muck in and get stuff done when it needs doing, even when it's not run-of-the-mill (like decorating a venue for a PSS awards ceremony, for example)	*E*	A/I/R
Strong belief in the abilities of others (both your teammates and people who use our services)	*E*	A/I/R
Self-aware	*E*	A/I/R
Big-hearted	*E*	A/I/R
Determined	*E*	A/I/R
Genuine	*E*	A/I/R
Professional	*E*	A/I/R
Open-minded	*E*	A/I/R