

Director of Digital Engagement

Summary Information

Department
Cabinet Office

Closing Date
04/03/2009

Salary
£81,600 - 160,000

Salary Details
c£120k

Location
Whitehall, London

Nationality Eligibility
UK National, EEA National, Commonwealth Citizen

Appointment Terms
This is a Fixed Term appointment for three years (with the possibility of extension or conversion to a permanent appointment)

Working Arrangement
Full Time, Job Share, Part Time

Vacancy Description

Job Description

The successful applicant will:

- Develop a strategy and implementation plan for extending digital engagement across Government
- Work with communication, policy and delivery officials in Government departments to embed digital engagement in the day to day working of Government
- Work with Directors of Communication to ensure that digital media are included in the reporting of reaction to Government policy and initiatives
- Work closely with web teams to ensure that digital communications are making the most effective and efficient use of hardware and software
- Act as head of profession for civil servants working on digital engagement
- Ensure that digital engagement is always a leading part of Government consultation
- Introduce new techniques and software for digital engagement, such as 'jams' into Government
- Convene an expert advisory group made up of the leading experts on digital engagement to provide advice to Ministers and act as a sounding-board for the Government's digital engagement strategy
- Work closely with the Ministerial Group on Digital Engagement, delivering the work agreed at Cabinet on digital engagement

You will manage a small team, directly, but will have to manage relationships with a wide group of senior officials across Government. This will require developing working arrangements in which departmental officials feel they are accountable to the Head of Digital Engagement without the benefit of a formal line management arrangement. These relationships will be at Director and Director General level and may well involve five or six departments at any one time. The relationships will be across professions, involving policy and delivery officials as well as communications and IT. Since this is a new role charged with getting

Government to work differently, you will have to develop these relationships from scratch in a pressured environment in which Ministerial expectations of delivery are high.

You will have a small budget, but two key purposes of the job are to assist Government in making effective use of current digital spend, which runs into many millions, and to enable departments to save significant sums on their engagement activities through complementing traditional face to face and postal methods with cheaper digital techniques. You will be accountable for leading Government's new focus on digital engagement, which is central to Government priorities and with significant risk of reputational damage if this does not happen or Government gets it wrong.

You will be accountable to the Permanent Secretary - Government Communications and to the Minister for the Cabinet Office.

Judgement will be crucial in this role. It leads on the future of Government engagement with citizens through digital means. This means that the post will be breaking new ground on a daily basis, across Government. The agenda is politically very high profile and full of complex issues between and within departments that you will have to exercise very sensitive judgement on how to manage and resolve. You will have a level of professional expertise that is likely to mean that you will be unique in your ability to exercise judgement and provide advice to Ministers and Permanent Secretaries/ senior officials on matters within your remit.

Influence is a key aspect of this role. You will be required to exercise influence across departments with Ministers and senior officials to drive forward the future of digital engagement. This will require Government and individual departments to change the way they do business – from consulting citizens to collaborating with them on the development of policy and how public services are delivered to them. It will involve supporting Ministers and senior officials in entering conversations in which Government does not control the message or the dialogue. Giving Ministers and senior officials the confidence to do this will require influencing skills of the highest order. This role has few direct reports and little direct resource at its command. The ability to make change and delivery of challenging objectives happen by negotiation, persuasion and influence will be critical.

This is not a role for a generalist. The professional skills required are formidable. Engagement in the digital space is a young 'profession' and the job requires someone who would be acknowledged by their peer group to be a leader in this field. The successful candidate will have a CV that creates instant credibility and confidence with Ministers, senior officials and digital communicators in Whitehall.

Within six months the Head of Digital Engagement will have developed a strategy and implementation plan and be able to show concrete signs of momentum in executing the plan.

Within a year the Head of Digital engagement should be able to point to two departments whose use of digital engagement are recognised in the digital community as being world class

Within two years the use of world class digital engagement techniques should be embedded in the normal work of Government

How To Apply

For an information pack and details on how to apply please email recruitment@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

Or write to the Recruitment Team, Cabinet Office, 4th Floor, 22 Whitehall, London SW1A 2WH. Please quote reference REC/08/243 in all communications.

Document last modified on 17/02/2009 11:32.