

How to brief a role so you get the right three people

A vague brief produces a shortlist of generalists. Fifteen minutes of specificity changes who applies.

About 5 minutes to read

We advertise the specific job, not a generic VA post, because that is what decides who applies. What we can advertise depends entirely on what you tell us.

What we need from you

- The five tasks that fill most of the week, in your words, not job-description language
- The tools they will be in every day
- The hours that genuinely matter, and which are flexible
- What 'good' looks like after three months
- What has gone wrong before, if you have hired for this before
- Your budget range, a real one, because it decides who we can approach

On budget

Tell us the real number. We would rather say 'that gets you someone with three years' experience, not eight' than advertise a role we cannot fill and waste a month of your time.

What makes a brief specific enough

Vague	Specific
"Admin support"	"Chase 40 outstanding invoices a week and reconcile the bank in Xero daily"
"Good communication skills"	"Will be on the phone to Australian tradespeople; needs to be understood first time"
"Social media"	"Five posts a week for Instagram and TikTok, editing our own phone footage in CapCut"
"Detail-oriented"	"Will spot when a quote does not match the scope, and ask rather than send it"

Set the interview up properly

Before you meet the shortlist

- ☐ Read the skills-test result before the call, not during it
- ☐ Prepare three questions about work they have actually done, not hypotheticals
- ☐ Ask each candidate to walk you through one thing on their CV in detail
- ☐ Have them describe a time the instructions were wrong and what they did
- ☐ Tell them honestly what the hardest part of the job is
- ☐ Leave five minutes for their questions. What they ask tells you a lot