

THE ART OF WRITING JOB DESCRIPTIONS



Presented by: Sandy Stapczynski
Human Resources Services, Inc.
9 Bartlet Street, Suite 186
Andover, MA 01810
978-474-0200

www.hrsconsultinginc.com

The importance of

JOB DESCRIPTION



- Define standards for the Job - clarify the purpose and essential functions of positions
- Help in recruitment efforts – evaluating applicant qualifications
- Help us analyze and improve the organization – who is responsible for what
- Aid compliance with employment laws
- Serve as a foundation for appraising performance
- Provide a basis for job evaluation, job classification, and wage administration
- Help employees understand their responsibilities
- Inform the creation of training and development plans.

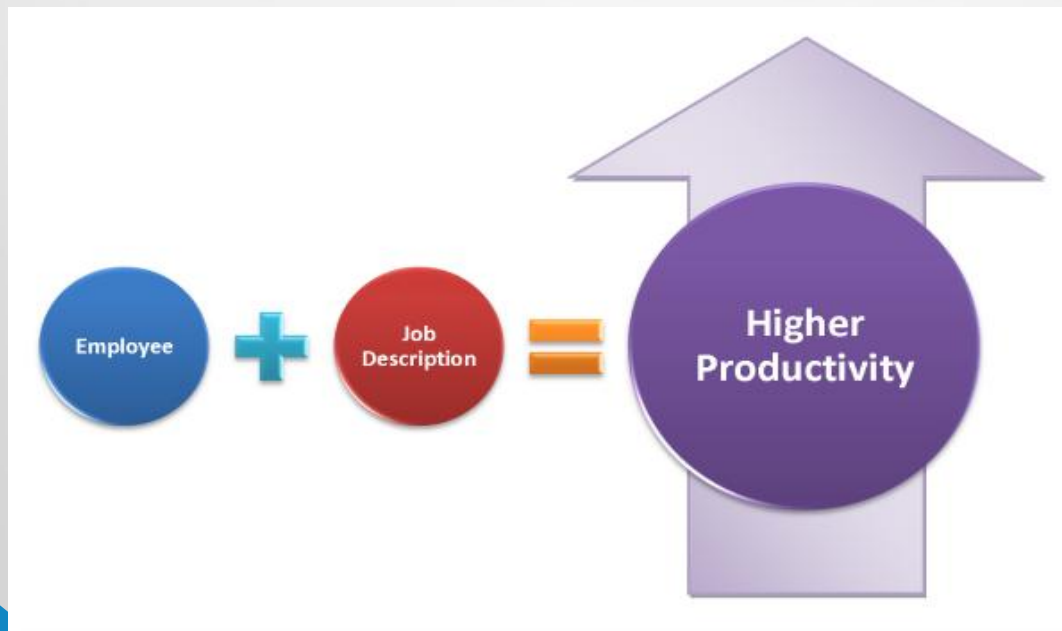
A Job Description Defined

A well written job description describes the main elements of a job and is not a detailed listing of specifications. It provides guidance on the general nature and level of the work being performed. It describes the duties as they currently exist.



Importance of Supervisor/Employee's Role

- ❖ Review and maintain job descriptions
- ❖ Monitor for changes in job content
- ❖ Communicate with incumbents regarding changes
- ❖ Decide when an appropriate change is needed
- ❖ Submit current job descriptions to Human Resources for their review and approval



Elements of Job Description

- Job identification
- Job summary
- Essential functions
- Accountabilities
- Job specifications



How Are Job Descriptions Used?

- Think about the entire employment life cycle – at what points might having an accurate, well-written job description become important to an organization?



Key Events

- Recruitment

- ▶ Ads/postings

- ▶ Interviews

- Competencies as well as skills & experience

- ▶ Candidate evaluation

- ▶ Pre-employment physicals

Job Opportunity JOBS

A prestigious Public Private partnership company is looking for competent, self-motivated and dynamic candidate to fill the following position based in Islamabad:

Officer/Assistant Manager

Required qualification & experience:

- Degree in Business Administration/Finance/Economics. Candidate having additional qualification in HR/IT shall be preferred.
- Minimum 03 years of work experience in coordination.
- He/she will be responsible to give support in the area of administration, communication, payroll, and HRD side.
- He/she must be proficient in MS Office.

To apply and for details of above positions, visit the link:
<http://telecomsector.rozee.pk> or website www.Rozee.pk. Apply within 15 days from publication date of this advertisement.

PRIS/1036/12



Key Events

- Employee orientation (not just the first day/week)
 - ▶ Duties
 - ▶ Responsibilities
 - ▶ Relationship and interaction with other positions

Key Events

- Performance management
 - ▶ Informal coaching
 - ▶ Periodic performance evaluation
 - ▶ Identifying skill gaps & training needs
 - ▶ Verbal and/or written warnings
 - ▶ Formal corrective action/discipline
 - ▶ Discharge

Key Events

- Fitness for duty (or modified duty) issues
 - ▶ Workers Compensation
 - ▶ Personal illness or injury
 - ▶ Performance issues

Other Key Events

- Succession Planning
- Wage and salary administration
- Safety programs and initiatives



JOB ANALYSIS

Methods of Job Analysis

1. Observation – watch the job being performed
2. Questionnaires – ask questions of employees and supervisors/managers
3. Interview – ask questions of the employee and supervisor/manager. This can be done in person or via video-conference
4. Review of work diaries or logs and other information – this assists with the timing of tasks over time



Common Problems

1. Exaggerate or downplay importance of job
2. Fail to pinpoint critical job elements
3. Ignore decision making aspects of job
4. Describe qualifications not really needed for job success



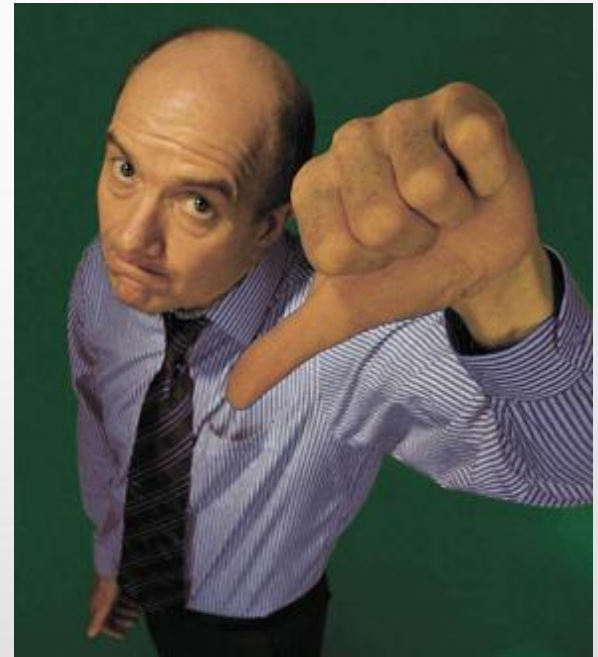
Essential Functions

- Define the essential job duties
- Use behavioral language
- Focus on functions rather than means
- Target outcomes rather than activities
- Be specific, but not procedural



What Doesn't Belong

Negative statements
Generalized statements
Abbreviations
Occasional or temporary
duties





LEGAL ISSUES

Compliance

There are a number of laws for which job descriptions are a crucial part of an employer's compliance efforts:

- ▶ Fair Labor Standards Act
- ▶ Americans With Disabilities Act
- ▶ Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
- ▶ Equal Pay Act
- ▶ Pregnancy Discrimination Act
- ▶ Age Discrimination in Employment Act



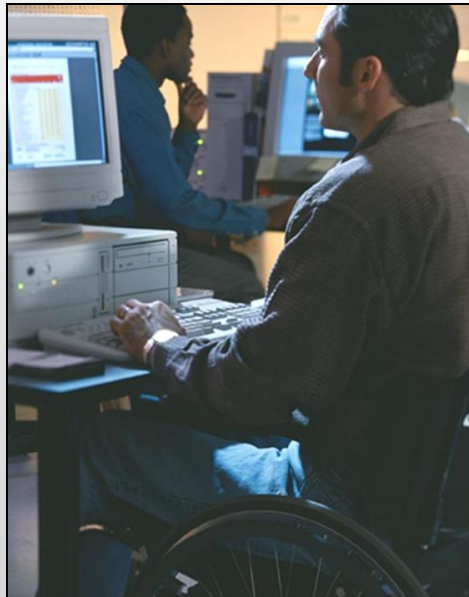
Fair Labor Standards Act

- Job descriptions are critical for the process of classifying jobs as exempt or nonexempt.
 - ▶ Proper classification is dependent upon actual duties and responsibilities, NOT by job title.
- Misclassification of employees as being exempt from overtime is the most common violation of the FLSA.



The Americans With Disabilities Act as Amended

- The recently-amended ADA prohibits employment discrimination against a “qualified individual” who happens to have a disability.



The Americans With Disabilities Act as Amended

- A “qualified individual” is someone who can perform the “essential functions” of a position either with or without “reasonable accommodation.”
- Employers determine the essential functions, but, in cases of a complaint, the burden of proof is on the employer for demonstrating and justifying its decisions.

The Americans With Disabilities Act as Amended

- Employers are obligated to provide “reasonable accommodation” unless doing so creates an “undue hardship.”

The Americans With Disabilities Act

- The ADA protects individuals who:
 - ▶ Have a disability
 - ▶ Have a history of disability
 - ▶ Are regarded as having a disability

Sample Language (Examples)

A computer programmer job might be described as “the ability to develop programs that accomplish necessary objectives”, rather than “the ability to use hands to write programs”

Sample Language (Examples)

A job that requires mastery of information contained in technical manuals would be stated as the “ability to learn technical material”, rather than “the ability to read technical manuals”



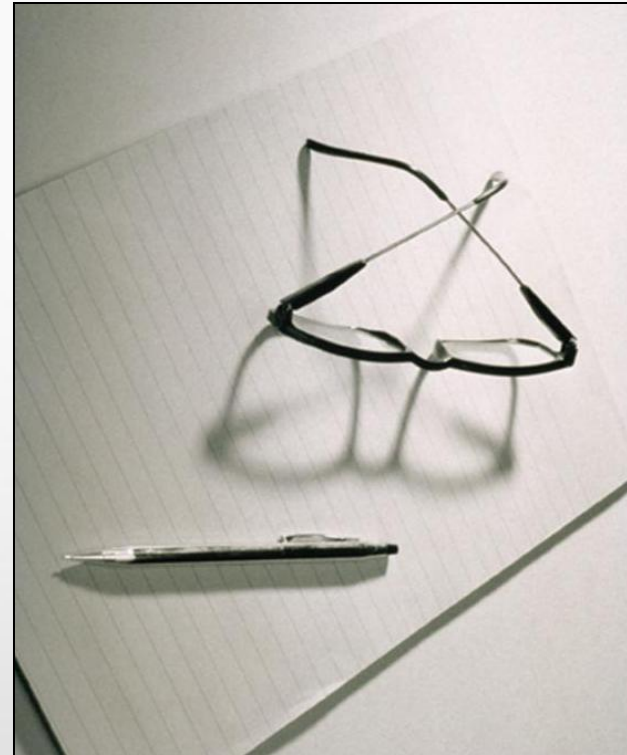
Reviewing the Job Description

Remember

- We are looking at the job/position
 - ▶ NOT the person doing the job.

Format

- Length
- Layout
- Standardization



Format

- A typical format would include:
 - ▶ One-paragraph job summary
 - ▶ List of job duties and responsibilities
 - ▶ List of accountabilities
 - ▶ Unique physical demands and/or working conditions
 - ▶ List of qualifications
 - Education
 - Certifications or licenses
 - Experience
 - Basic knowledge
 - ▶ Competencies – job, department, organizational

Helpful Hints

- Begin each essential function or job duty statement with an active verb, (i.e., prepare, calculate, coordinate).
- Avoid using acronyms. Use nontechnical language when possible.
- List duties in order of importance or to reflect how majority of time is spent.

Helpful Hints

- Do not provide excessive detail – be concise.
- Focus on what is required – NOT how it is done.
- Avoid non-descriptive verbs such as “assists” or “handles.”

Helpful Hints

- Consider whether there are, or should be, different levels for a position, for example:
 - ▶ Administrative Assistant – Junior
 - ▶ Administrative Assistant – Intermediate
 - ▶ Administrative Assistant – Senior
- Carefully define the differences.
- Experience alone does not justify different levels – duties and required skills and responsibilities must differ.

Helpful Hints

- For ADA compliance, duties must reflect reality, i.e., what is actually required of people in the position is what rules.
- Same for FLSA classification – exemption from overtime depends upon what an individual actually does in the job, NOT on what the job description might say they do.

Helpful Hints

- Ensure flexibility so individuals can, and realize that they are expected to, work “outside the box.”
 - ▶ Must consider collective bargaining obligations

Helpful Hints

- Most jobs are dynamic, i.e., they are constantly changing – it is critical to periodically review and revise job descriptions.
 - ▶ Consider annually – maybe at performance review time.
 - ▶ Revise on an ad-hoc basis when a major changes occur in duties, skill requirement, etc.
 - ▶ Another natural, and advantageous, opportunity is when you are recruiting someone for the position.

Review Guidelines

- Choose your words carefully
- Begin each sentence with an active verb
- Be specific
- Qualify whenever possible



Review Guidelines (cont.)

- Include essential information only (adding more unnecessary paragraphs won't increase your grade level or pay)
- Describe the desired outcome only
- Focus on essential activities (this is not a procedures manual, brevity is preferred)
- Refer to job titles rather than people



Organizing the Information

- Sequence of operations approach
- Major duty approach
- Relative importance approach



Helpful Checklist

Use the following checklist to aid the review/preparation of a job description –

General Summary

- Is there a brief overview (3-5 sentences)?
- Does the overview align with the duties?

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Do the essential functions accurately reflect the job ?
- Are they limited to core responsibilities ?
- Can the core responsibilities be categorized with regard to importance?
- Includes 'performs other duties as assigned'?

Other Applicable Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Managerial responsibilities detailed?
- Scope of financial responsibility defined?
- Education and /or experience defined as 'preferred'?
- Certifications necessary for success?
- If applicable, physical requirements defined?

Other Requirements

- Travel, overtime, weekend work

Sample Language

For Essential Duties and Responsibilities structure the sentences Verb /
Object / Explanatory Phrase

Example

Collects (action verb) key job information (object) from various sources, e.g. work interview and direct observation (explanatory phrase).
Analyzes (action verb) the data (object) to identify job content and critical evaluation issues (explanatory phrase).

Action Verbs online at <http://www.job-analysis.net/G053.htm>

We have gone from this.....



To this.....





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