

JOB DESCRIPTION GUIDELINES

Job descriptions are basic human resources management tools which can help to increase individual and organizational effectiveness. A good, up to date job description helps the incumbent to understand their duties and responsibilities, the relative importance of those duties and how their position contributes to the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization. Good job descriptions contribute to organizational effectiveness by ensuring that the work carried out is aligned with the organization's mission.

When writing a job description use clear and concise language. Do not use ambiguous, technical or elaborate language. Use nondiscriminatory language which has no gender bias. Describe only the duties, skills and knowledge required for the position - don't understate or overstate any of them. Describe the position as it exists today rather than how it was in the past or how it will be in the future.

1. Position Identification

Complete the position identification information as listed on the form. If this is a new position and you do not have a position number, you will need to both get the position classified by HR and have the budget office assign a position number. The budget office will require proof of appropriate funding in order to assign a position number. HR will need a position number in order to post a position.

2. Position Summary

Provide a brief summary of the position in relation to the work unit in which it is located. The summary provides an insight into the reason for the position's existence and the role it plays in the unit.

3. Key Responsibilities and Expectations

Identify the positions three to five key responsibilities in descending order either by percentage (based on an annual average) or impact on the work unit). This is intended to group the duties of the position into manageable categories. Track the percentage of time spent carrying out each of the primary responsibilities.

Clarify the duties and expectations for each key responsibility. Answer the questions: What is done? Why is it done? How is it done? How frequently is it done? This is intended to provide the detailed description of duties and expectations for each responsibility.

Consider the nature or kind of work performed, the variety (limited or narrow and diverse or wide-ranging) and the degree of difficulty in performing those tasks.

This section should be no more than one or two pages.

4. Classification Factors

Describe how the factors listed below impact on the position duties:

a. **Independence of action, authority and decision making**

Identify the decisions or actions which the incumbent may make or take on their own initiative. Identify the decisions or actions which the incumbent will refer to their immediate supervisor.

Identify as well the level of problem solving and decision making expected in this position. Look at examples of typical problems this position would resolve.

b. **Accountability – scope and impact**

Include details on the scope and impact of this position in the unit. Scope applies to the range of operation of a position's primary responsibilities. It can range from the unit or department to something which is University wide. Impact refers to the effect of the position's actions on the organization by unit or university wide. Consider the position's role in planning the programs, functions and activities of the unit.

c. **Supervision Given and Received**

Identify the degree of supervision, direction or guidance received or given by this position. For example:

- Close Supervision:** Work is reviewed at several steps along the way for accuracy. (Generally pertains to entry level or trainee positions.)
- Supervision:** Incumbent performs standard and routine assignments independently to conclusion; unusual problems which may require exceptions to procedures or processes are referred to the supervisor. (Generally applies to "journey level" worker able to work independently.)
- General Supervision:** Incumbent develops procedures for performance of a variety of duties or performs complex duties within established policy guidelines; responsible for a defined set of assignments, e.g. all financial activities for the department; is expected to determine and create necessary procedures to set priorities and meet specific goals and objectives of the function or unit. (Typically pertains to advanced/operational, senior professional, unit supervisor)
- Direction:** Establishes procedures for attaining specific goals and objectives in a broad area of work. Only final results are reviewed. (Typically applies to a manager or expert/top level professional.)
- General Direction:** Receives guidance in terms of broad goals and overall objectives and establishes the methods to attain them. Generally the incumbent is in charge of an area of work and typically formulates policy for this area, but does not necessarily have final authority for approving policy.

In addition, identify the supervisory functions:

- Train:
- Handle grievances?
- Plan and assign work?
- Hire new employees?
- Recommend reclassifications and salary increases?
- Conduct performance evaluations?
- Take disciplinary action?

d. Budget, Financial & Material Resources

This factor identifies the responsibility exercised for the care, maintenance, protection and control of resources. Include information on the size of the budget and the value of the resources involved (though this is not the only consideration for this factor).

Assessment should include the nature and extent of the responsibility and whether the responsibility is shared with others.

e. Problem-Solving

Assess the application of knowledge to the analysis and resolution of problems using thinking activities when completing this section. Indicate whether there are guidelines, standards, precedents and available assistance which might limit the requirement for problem-solving

5. Summary of Qualifications

Identify the qualifications required to perform the job including:

- Education and formal training, including desired degree, and field of study or equivalent.
- Specify certificate or license requirements (e.g. nursing, engineering, counseling, human resources etc.)
- Work experience including type of work and number of years practical experience required.

These should be directly related to the work and not to the education and experience level of the current incumbent.

6. Signature

The Manager should sign and date the form. This helps to keep the historic records on the position development.