

### INTRODUCTION

The job description is a written statement of the duties and responsibilities which make up a job, and is useful in providing a standardized method by which to evaluate positions within an organization. It should convey:

- What is done
- How it is done
- Why it is done
- End results

However, it is important to keep in mind that you are describing only the position and not the performance or qualifications of the incumbent.

The job description consists of four parts:

- A. Position Identification
- B. Position Summary
- C. Primary Duties Performed
- D. Specifications

Each part is described in more detail below, and should be read carefully before beginning the description. The following general principles should also be kept in mind when completing the description:

- Keep your sentences short, simple, and to the point
- Use words that contribute to the description of the job itself, avoid terms that relate to performance
- Avoid using vague adjectives and phrases such as “a few”, “very large,” “all,” etc.
- Begin sentences with descriptive action verbs (see examples attached as Appendix).

### COMPLETING THE JOB DESCRIPTION

#### A. Position Identification

This section requires your name, job title, department in which you work, and the title of your immediate supervisor.

#### B. Position Summary

This part is just that, a summary, and as such should contain a number of short phrases necessary to describe the major components of the job. The duties of the position should be given, (starting with the most important) in a brief one paragraph outline of the job.

The following example illustrates the above points:

The Word-Processor Operator works under the supervision of the Administrative Assistant: word processes; performs receptionist duties; maintains files; performs miscellaneous related duties; performs other duties as assigned.

### **C. Primary Duties Performed**

This section expands on the outline given in the position Summary. Take each statement from the summary and give a full account of the duties involved, again giving the facts of:

- *What* is done
- *How* it is done
- *Why* it is done

Be complete in your description but do not be so detailed that the important features are missed.

The following example should be of some help in filling out this section:

Word processes - Word processes, manuscripts, examinations, course hand-outs, correspondence, and book lists for five faculty members, working from hand-written copy, shorthand notes, or dicta phone; receiving work, checking it, and returning it to the faculty member involved.

### **D. Specifications**

This section of the questionnaire is to be completed by the supervisor or by the supervisor in consultation with the employee

#### *1. Knowledge Factor*

This factor consists of three sub-elements, education, experience and the requirement for continuing study. It is used to measure the difficulty of the duties assigned to the position in terms of the knowledge and skills required.

The sub-elements of this factor, as defined in the position description, should refer to the minimum requirements for the position. It is normally expected that it takes some time once a person has been in a particular position to be fully trained or conversant with all aspects of the job and to be performing it at a full level. This factor is not intended to capture on-the-job training.

- a) Education sub-element: refers to the minimum level of formal training required to perform the duties of the position.
- b) Experience sub-element: given the amount of formal education required this element refers to the minimum number of years of progressively responsible experience in a related field which is necessary to perform the duties of the position under a "normal" situation
- c) Continuing study sub-element: this refers to the requirement which is inherent in the duties of some positions to remain current in a particular field. This should also include how the incumbent would be expected to maintain a specified level of study.

#### *2. Complexity Factor*

When describing the complexity of a position the factors you should be trying to address are as follows:

- Nature and variety of duties performed
- Amount and type of procedures, regulations/policies available for the employees guidance
- Requirement to interpret existing or develop new processes/procedures
- Amount of authority or degree of independent action delegated to the position
- Extent of consultative advice expected from the position
- Requirement or adherence to rigid specifications, tolerances, etc.
- Amount of control or direction exercised over the position by the supervisor
- Availability, reliability and extent of data available on which decisions are made

### 3. *Accountability Factor*

When describing the accountability of a position the factors you should be trying to address are as follows:

- Likelihood of error in judgement occurring
- Consequence and extent of error in judgement (own work; work of others; departments; total university)
- Areas/programs/projects of the University or departments that are directly affected by decisions/recommendations made
- Authority delegated to the position
- Level to which advice/recommendations are made as well as the amount of review of these that takes place (if through committees, etc., the reporting relationship of the committee and its mandate) *(if applicable)*
- Whether or not policy matters are involved and if so at what level and the implication and impact of these *(if applicable)*

### 4. *Contact Factor*

- a. Purpose of contact sub-element: this refers to the overall purpose of normal contacts made. Only contacts that are on a regular and continuous basis, and are necessary for the performance of the duties of the position, should be included.
- b. Level of contact sub-element: this refers to the appropriate description of the contacts made necessary by the duties of the position. The level of contact indicated should be inclusive of each group listed in that category.

### 5. *Supervision Factor*

This factor is used to measure the continuing responsibility that the incumbent of the position assumes for the work and guidance of other employees. The description of the type of supervision should include the level of supervisory responsibility and the duties required to perform at that level of responsibility.

In all positions there is the requirement to show other employees how to perform tasks; therefore, this level of guidance is not to be included. Also, occasional supervision such as that performed during the absences of the supervisor, should not be included.

**APPENDIX**

1. Acknowledges: Recognizes as true or pertinent; admits obligation; reports receipt of (a letter, cheque, etc.).
2. Acts: Performs in lieu of or in substitute capacity for, operates for another, as in assuming responsibility and authority of a superior (e.g., acts for supervisor in his absence)
3. Advises: Consults with; gives advice to; counsels; gives information or notice to; recommends course of action (particularly applicable to staff and technical fields); e.g., advises a subordinate of proper course of action.
4. Analyzes: Studies parts, elements, or factors of a situation or problem in detail to determine course of action, solution, or outcome; examines critically for understanding the organization or nature of; e.g., analyzes malfunction of computing circuits.
5. Approves: Confirms officially, such as plans and recommendations of subordinates; endorses, such as reports or replies of subordinates to higher authority.
6. Arranges: Puts in proper order; adjusts or settles, especially by prior agreement; classifies; e.g., arranges in key duty style.
7. Assigns: Appoints, prescribes a course of action; specifies, selects or designates; e.g., assigns responsibilities to subordinate personnel.
8. Assures: Insures; confirms; makes certain.
9. Audits: Assures adherence to standard practices such as checking the accuracy of accounting records.
10. Calculates: Determines. by mathematical processes -- implies highly intricate processes as against computes which implies simple arithmetical process and exact results; forecasts consequences or results, as in taking risks.
11. Carries out: Takes action on basis of orders, regulations, directives, established policies, approved plans, etc.
12. Checks: Reviews, controls, tests, verifies, investigates, etc., by means of checks.
13. Compiles: Collects into proper or designated form; e.g., compiles data into a report. Composes out of materials from other documents, such as summary reports and statistical summaries, from several individual reports.
14. Composes: Forms a combination, makes up, constitutes; puts together in proper order or form; makes coherent and integral; adjusts or settles, as to compose differing opinions, or reconciles, as reconciles contending factions.
15. Computes: Determines by calculation; reckons or counts; takes account of, makes up a count; e.g., computes a payroll.
16. Constructs: Puts together, systematically; builds, devises, as a bridge, theory, triangle, etc.
17. Controls: Checks or regulates; keeps within limits; exercise directing, guiding or restraining power over; e.g., controls site deployment of materials and equipment.
18. Co-ordinates: Brings into common action with others, generally with equal ranks, not subordinates, as in co-ordinating staff functions to obtain a result that requires action on the part of several staff sections. To bring into common action, condition, or harmony; to produce a smooth operation; as, to co-ordinate the work of key punching and tabulating to meet

production schedule deadlines. Employees can only co-ordinate activities if they have authority to control them. When the term co-ordinate is used, it must be followed by the activities or elements being co-ordinated.

19. Corrects: Makes or sets right; alters or adjusts to bring to a required condition; rectifies; indicates errors, faults, discrepancies to be amended.
20. Creates: Makes, plans, designs, or generally brings about something new and original in thought and imagination.
21. Decides: Arrives at a solution that ends uncertainty or dispute; makes a choice or judgment.
22. Delineates: Traces the outline of, sketches out; describes; e.g., delineates cartographic data, delineates the topography of aerial photos.
23. Demonstrates: Gives-evidence of, displays; shows with the intent of proving; explains or illustrates.
24. Designs: Plans / sketches a pattern or outline for; contrives; e.g., designs cards and report forms.
25. Develops: Unfolds more completely, evolves the possibilities of, makes active (something latent), advances further, promotes the growth of; unfolds gradually, forms or expands by a process of growth; makes more available or usable; e.g., develops patterns and templates for metal fabrication. To obtain a new method or product by combining, and/or expanding various existing ideas.
26. Directs: Regulates the activities or course of; controls; guides; gives an order or instruction to; e.g., directs men in tree planting operations. Assign, guide, and review the work of others. Does not imply complete supervision.
27. Distributes: Divides deals out, portions; administers, dispenses; e.g., distributes incoming mail to divisions.
28. Drafts: Makes a preliminary sketch or composition of; e.g., drafts correspondence
29. Establishes: Makes firm, sets on a firm basis, as in establishing specific procedure to be followed; sets up as an order or precedent.
30. Estimates: Forms a judgment about / gauges /determines / calculates approximately; e.g., estimates the need for supplies and equipment.
31. Evaluates: Determines value or worth of, appraises; e.g., evaluates inspection forms, work orders, and discrepancy reports.
32. Exercises: Puts into action, uses, employs; practices, activates for the purpose of training or developing; exerts, wields, or has (influence, control, authority); e.g., exercises control over departmental publications.
33. Fabricates: Makes, builds, puts together, frames, manufactures, as by assembling parts (connotes processing over a period of time, rather than relatively instantaneous construction); e.g., fabricates rigid crating and flexible base assemblies.
34. Files: Lays away documents, papers, etc., in a methodical manner; sets in order.
35. Handles: Manages, controls, directs; deals with, performs a function with regard to; treats, manipulates; touches.
36. Identifies: Establishes the identity of; distinguishes, discriminates.
37. Initiates: Brings into practice or use, introduces by first doing or using; e.g., initiates routine correspondence.

38. Instructs: Imparts knowledge systematically; informs; furnishes with directions; direct or commands; trains or indoctrinates.
39. Interviews: Meets with personally; sees; consults formally with; usually implies questioning or obtaining information, as interviews applicants to determine qualifications.
40. Lays out: Prepares materials for a subsequent work operation; e.g., lays out elementary designs or metal structures.
41. Localizes: Limits or confines to a place, area, or locality; determines the origin or place of, as an organic or mechanical malfunction, etc.; e.g., localizes a malfunction in equipment sub-assemblies.
42. Maintains: Holds or keeps in a state or condition, especially in a state of efficiency, newness, validity or cleanliness; keeps property (real estate, machinery, equipment) in such fashion as not to let fail or decline; supports, sustains, upholds, defends. To keep in a prescribed state or condition as, to maintain records by keeping them up-to-date.
43. Manages: Controls; directs; conducts; guides, administers. Plan, organize, staff, direct and control efforts of subordinate organizational units through intermediate levels of management or supervision. Sometimes this term is used to denote final responsibility for an organizational function whether or not supervision of exempt supervisors or employees is involved.
44. Measures: Ascertains the extent, degree, quantity, dimensions or capacity of, by a standard; hence, estimates.
45. Negotiate: Confers with another so as to arrive at the settlement of a matter.
46. Observes: Adheres to, follows, keeps or abides by (law, duty, rule, custom), celebrates; notices or perceives, pays special attention; examines scientifically; e.g., observes the safety precautions appropriate to electric equipment.
47. Operates: Puts into or continues in operation or activity; manages, conducts, carries out or through; drives, as to operate a vehicle; e.g., operates a voice radio.
48. Organizes: Arranges; systematizes persons or things into proper places, especially in relation to each other; gives structure to; puts in proper order
49. Originates: Begins, produces as new; e.g., procedures, plans, techniques, etc.
50. Overhauls: Examines thoroughly and checks for needed repairs; makes repairs and adjustments needed to restore working order; e.g., overhauls generating and control equipment.
51. Plans: Represents as by a diagram; devises or projects as a method or course of action; prearranges the details of, as to plan a campaign; intends, proposes to do; e.g., plans a daily work assignment.
52. Processes: Prepares by or submits to a special treatment or process.
53. Programs: Works out a sequence of operations to be performed (as an electronic computer).
54. Provides Supplies for use, furnishes; equips in preparation.
55. Receives: Takes or comes into possession of; ordinarily implies passiveness in the one receiving.
56. Recommends: Advises; counsels; offers or suggests course of action; e.g., recommends a survey of general and technical stores items.

57. Records: Writes, enters, registers for purpose of evidence or reproduction; e.g., records data in a record book.
58. Repairs: Restores to working condition, as equipment; e.g., repairs radio headsets and microphones.
59. Reports: Gives an account of; relates; tells; repeats; prepares an account of, orally or in writing; presents conclusions reached; makes, issues, or submits formal report; presents oneself, as reports for duty.
60. Requisitions: Makes a formal request, application or written order, as for equipment, tools, paper, food, supplies, etc.; e.g., requisitions allowed materials.
61. Researches: Conducts investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws, in the light of new facts or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws.
62. Resolves: Analyzes, determines, decides, settles, solves, explains, convinces, assures, implies position and authority for making a decision.
63. Reviews: Examines again; makes formal or official examination of the state of, inspection of staff, equipment, etc.
64. Responsible for: Does not do but is held accountable for something; responsible for ensuring that "something is carried out".
65. Schedules: Designates fixed times for accomplishment of, as training programs, mail deliveries, courier service, etc.
66. Selects: Takes by preference from among others, picks out or from; e.g., selects portable power tools for maintenance of equipment.
67. Services: Performs maintenance, supply, repair, installation, distribution, etc., for or upon.
68. Sorts: Puts in a certain place or rank according to kind, class or nature.
69. Sterilizes: Frees from living germs; e.g., sterilizes instruments.
70. Stores: Furnishes or provides, particularly for a future time or need; accumulates; deposits, as in warehouse or depot.
71. Suggests: Advances as opinion or recommendation.
72. Tests: Examines critically or tries out material; measures skills, knowledge, capacities, or aptitudes of an individual or group.
73. Trains: Forms or imparts proficiency by teaching, drilling, instructing, discipline, etc.
74. Transcribes: Takes a written or typewritten copy of (shorthand notes, speech, etc.); arranges or adapts (a piece of music) for an instrument, voice or ensemble other than that for which it was originally composed; records for rebroadcast.
75. Transfers: Conveys from one place, a person or thing to another; transports, removes or causes to pass to another; prints or otherwise copies from one surface to another; makes over the possession or control of, conveys; e.g., transfers circuits for normal and emergency conditions.
76. Verifies: Proves, confirms, substantiates; authenticates; checks or tests the accuracy or exactness of, e.g., verifies by comparing payroll to draft payroll.