

Position Description Writing Instructions

A position description should be a high-level summary of the expectations of the incumbent's role. It need not be all-encompassing or list specific tasks. The position description (PD) is intended to collect current information on jobs in a consistent, systematic way, while still providing the opportunity to describe the particulars of each job.

Completing the PD Form

Complete the PD in draft form first and review and discuss it with your supervisor, reaching consensus before submitting the final version. If you need assistance, please contact the Office of Human Resources.

Instructions

- **Major Function:** This is a two or three sentence statement that captures the reason the job exists.
 - **For example:** "This position is responsible for providing administrative support to the Human Resources Office." **OR** "This position is responsible for managing and maintaining compliance with various governmental regulatory agencies."
- **Essential Functions:** List only key responsibilities. A job function may be considered essential for any of several reasons, including but not limited to the following:
 - *The function may be considered essential because the reason the position exists is to perform the function.*
 - *The function may be essential because of the limited number of employees available among whom the performance of that job function can be distributed; and/or*
 - *The function may be highly specialized so that the incumbent in the position is hired for his/her expertise or ability to perform a particular function.*
- **Questions to consider:**
 - *Would removing this function from the job description fundamentally alter the position?*
 - *Does the incumbent spend a significant portion of his or her workday or work week performing this function?*
 - *Would failure to perform this function bear significant consequences?*

If the answer to these questions is yes, the duty is an essential function. Generally if an individual "contributes" or "assists" in a particular area, chances are that this function is non-essential since these terms suggest that someone other than this person is responsible for that particular function.

The purpose of the PD is to gather information on the major responsibilities and essential functions of a position; do not include tasks and responsibilities that are not essential to the job's purpose.

Prioritize your ideas and responsibilities. Group ideas by functional theme, if possible. Each theme can then be written as a paragraph (or bullet point) in your job description.

The statements should clearly convey the nature and scope of responsibilities and how they get accomplished. It is helpful to think of the statement in three (3) parts:

Action word + End Result + Activity

To illustrate:

- Key responsibility for a Human Resources representative:

<u>"Provide</u>	<u>qualified candidates for job openings</u>	<u>by screening applicants"</u>
action word	end result	activity

NOT an appropriate statement:

"Provide ads for job candidates in newspapers"

- Final essential function should state:

Performs other related duties as required and assigned.

Education: Indicate the minimum level of education generally necessary to effectively handle the job's essential functions.

Prerequisites:

- **Relevant Work Experience:** Indicate the minimum level of work experience required to effectively perform the position's responsibilities.
- **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:** Describe the type and level of knowledge, skills and abilities required to handle the position's responsibilities. This is not necessarily the same as the incumbent's knowledge, skill and ability.

Finalization: You and your supervisor should review, discuss, and reach consensus on this PD. You should both sign the form and send it to the Department Head for final review before it is sent to the Office of Human Resources.