How to Develop a Job Description

A Job Description is a useful, plain-language tool that describes the tasks, duties, functions and responsibilities of a position. It outlines the details of who performs the specific type of work, how that work is to be completed and the frequency and the purpose of the work as it relates to the company’s mission and goals. Job descriptions are used for a variety of reasons, such as a tool for recruiting, determining compensation levels, conducting performance reviews, clarifying missions, establishing discretion and independent judgment, outlining management or decision-making authority, career planning and legal requirements for compliance purposes. A good job description gives an employee a very clear and concise resource to be used as a guide for job performance. Likewise, a supervisor can use a job description as a measuring tool to ensure that the employee is meeting job expectations.

Step 1: Perform a Job Analysis

This process of gathering, examining and interpreting data about the job’s tasks will supply accurate information about so that a company can perform efficiently.

* Interview employees to find out exactly what tasks are being performed. You can use face to face meetings, questionnaires and worksheets to gather this information.
* Observe how tasks are performed.
* Identify what tasks are currently not being completed by anyone in the firm.
* Collect data on the job’s tasks from other resources - including templates or examples from other firms or organizations. Excellent idea but remember to adjust for your particular situation.
* The preliminary drafts should be reviewed by employees (who would be completing the tasks, competing training for these tasks or involved in the overall process) and supervisors.

Step 2: Define Work and Standards

Can be listed in different formats – within categories of general functions – for example – service, analysis, production, quality control, compliance, general office, administrative, research.

**List task, project or responsibility**

**Standards** – could include

* What is done by employee and how – Listing out the guidelines or referring to established procedures. This can vary according to the amount of discretion, authority allowed the person and the type of work to be performed.
* When (how often) is this done; Under what circumstances (if needed), and/or Where to perform the work
* What are considered successful results or completion of work
* % of Time Spent, Approximate time to complete and Deadlines for completion
* Priority (low, medium or high – relative to other tasks, projects or responsibilities)

Step 3: Assign Priorities for the Tasks – What are Essential Duties versus Marginal Ones?

For each task (or group of tasks) determine:

* **Essential Duties** – these are duties that ARE the position and can not be assigned to another employee without changing the purpose of the position and affecting the effectiveness of the firm and its operations.
* **Marginal Duties** – these are duties are part of the job but could be reassigned to another employee or may have more than one employee completing these duties.
* For each duty or group of duties: Assign a priority for completion relative to other duties.

Step 4: Determine the necessary qualities needed in the employee who would be successful in this position

* Knowledge: Comprehension of a body of information acquired by experience or study; education experience, designations, etc.
* Skills: a present, observable competence to perform a learned activity – for examples: communication (oral and writing), mathematics, prioritization, organization, attention to detail, critical thinking, technology skills, etc.
* Abilities: competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior that results in an observable product – such as initiative, able to act in emergencies and tight deadlines with level-headedness, management, troubleshooting, innovation, etc.
* Emotional Intelligence: behavior, motivation, values, attitudes

Step 5: Organize the data concisely

The structure of the job description may vary from firm to firm; however, all of the job descriptions within a firm/company should be standardized so that they have the same appearance. The following should be included:

* Date—when job description was written.
* Job status—exempt or nonexempt under FLSA, full time or part time.
* Position title—name of the position.
* Objective of the position—what the position is supposed to accomplish, how it affects other positions and the organization.
* Supervision received—to whom the person reports.
* Supervisory responsibilities—direct reports, if any, and the level of supervision.
* Job summary—an outline of job responsibilities.
* Essential functions—detailed tasks, duties and responsibilities.
* Competency or position requirements—knowledge, skills and abilities.
* Quality and quantity standards—minimum levels required to meet the job requirements.
* Education and experience—required levels.
* Time spent performing tasks—percentages, if used, should be distributed to equal 100%.
* Physical factors— type of environment associated with job: indoor/outdoor.
* Working conditions—shifts, overtime requirements as needed.
* Unplanned activities—other duties as assigned.

Step 6: Add the Disclaimer

It is a good idea to add a statement that indicates that the job description/duties is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee.

Step 7: Add the Signature Line

Showing approval by level(s) of management and supervisor(s) as well as receipt by employee stating he/she received a copy, understands requirements and can contact supervisor if he/she has question

Position Title:

Objective of the Position:

Position Type and Expected Hours of WorkThis is a full-time position. Days and hours of work are xxxxxxxxxx

Job Status: Exempt From Overtime or Eligible for Overtime?

Reports to:

Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisory Responsibility  
This position has no supervisory responsibilities.

Work EnvironmentThis job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets and fax machines.

Physical DemandsThis is largely a sedentary role; however, some filing is required. This would require the ability to lift files, open filing cabinets and bend or stand as necessary.

Other DutiesPlease note these job duties and standards are not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Profile – Competencies, Education/Knowledge and Experience

**Skills and Abilities**

1. Reasoning, Critical Thinking
   * Thinking objectively regarding the problems or issues at hand. Anticipate and plan to resolve the issues or problems and how you can use your other abilities and skills.
     + Able to think ahead about possible outcomes, issues or problems that need to be anticipated and planned for.
     + Able to think about and analyze the practical options and outcomes. Using the best plan.
   * Confidentiality and discretion

* Quality of Work - Accurate, attention to detail, thorough, takes time to do it right but also mindful of deadlines and keeping up with the volume of work.
* Math Skills – be able to correctly interpret and work with numbers. Understand and utilize correct mathematical operations to obtain the desired solutions.
* Organization
  + Can plan week to handle work and emergencies – using daily planner; computer programs to schedule reminders, activities, track information
  + Can prioritize effectively according to business needs
  + History of punctual attendance and dependability – work is done ahead in anticipation of emergencies
  + Keep up with the workload – put in extra effort.
* Communication
  + Able to prioritize work, assign and ask for deadlines and communicate problems/questions clearly with team members and supervisors.
  + Share information with team members and planner. Document information for others to access.
  + Writes and speaks professionally – professional appearance
* Grammar and Writing Skills – proficient in correct and professional writing, spelling and grammar skills.
* Systematize processes so work is completed in acceptable timeframes and according to a process everyone follows.
  + Generally follow established guidelines and procedures – but at times be able to think creatively or differently in order to get work done.
* Business technology and technology support – understand basics of programs, be able to learn programs on own, ask for help and troubleshoot basic issues with regard to obtaining results from using software. Experience in Word, Excel is a must. Database software experience is desirable.

**Education**

* Able to and have track record for self-study – recognize learning need, establish own training schedule and complete training.

**Experience – work**

* Financial Planning Knowledge
* Experience in insurance, financial planning practice. This can be work involving administrative, client service and analytical tasks.
  + Can understand basic financial planning and investment concepts in order to complete administrative work and help with client service.
  + Enjoys working with #’s
* Computer
  + Familiar and proficient in basic level of Word™ and Excel™
  + Some Knowledge of client relationship management software preferably but not necessary
* Series 7, (or 6), 65, 63, licenses - as needed

**Emotional Intelligence – behavior, motivation, values, attitude**

Team Work

* Working with people of all ages, cultures, values and beliefs as part of a team. Having a respect for other people’s knowledge even if that individual does not possess similar or more formal education.
* Being gracious and willing to work with others.

Customer Focus

* Knowing and demonstrating that clients, prospects and everyone that we encounter deserves respect, timely action/attention and service beyond what they expect.
* Have an appreciation for the business owner – the focus for success and the risks entailed. Work with and appreciate clients, team mates as part of the success of the business. “Treat the business as if it were your own”.

Initiative

* Take “ownership” of your responsibilities and don’t hand off items that you can not or do not want to complete. Find the help and information to do your work well, accurately and completely – view this as expected of you all the time.
* Anticipate future events, issues, problems or opportunities and actively work on them.

Willingness to Learn

* Have a natural curiosity that leads you to learn more about the business – even if it is outside your roles and responsibilities.
* Ability to receive criticism and utilize the information to improve one’s self.

Adaptability and Flexibility – able to handle volume of work; last minute changes

Interpersonal Skills

* Loyalty and Integrity – be able to speak up and take responsibility for actions, learn from mistakes and create a plan or process to avoid similar mistakes in the future

Dependability and Reliability – can be relied during deadline stress – able to remain calm and effective

Problem Solving and Decision Making – troubleshoots, quick insight and able to learn

**Signatures**These job duties and standards have been approved by all levels of management:

Manager\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

HR\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employee signature below constitutes employee’s understanding of the requirements, essential functions and duties of the position.

Employee\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_