

CREATING A JOB DESCRIPTION

Learning Resource Guide

It is important for organizations to maintain job descriptions in order to summarize the duties that will be completed by employees in each role, to outline the knowledge and skills necessary to complete the role, and to outline any job qualifications and education necessary. Note: This information is appropriate for paid and unpaid staff, and includes information appropriate for developing job descriptions as well as job postings.

COMPONENTS OF A JOB DESCRIPTION

- Organizational Overview
- Summary
- Responsibilities
- Qualifications
- Salary (for paid positions)

Overview

Serves as a quick summary introducing your organization. This section should include a brief summary about your organization, what it does, and your mission, vision, and values.

This section is intended to give potential candidates an idea about what it is your organization does, your intentions and how you approach your work. This is important because it will help attract and retain employees and volunteers whose beliefs, goals, and values are in line with that of your organization. It will also help potential candidates determine whether or not your organization would be a good fit for them.

Summary

A short summary describing main purpose of the role, the reporting relationships, work conditions (ex: working outside, long hours of standing, etc.), how the role connects with your organization's strategic plan, and type of job (ex: full-time, part-time, contract, permanent, or temporary).

This is important because it gives potential candidates an overview about the role and provides information to determine whether or not this is the type of role that they are looking for. For example, if a university student is searching for part-time employment working evening hours in order to accommodate their school schedule, this is one of the first things he or she would be interested in

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seeing when they look at the job posting. For example, if the summary for the job posting mentions that “the human resources assistant will provide administrative and recruitment support to the human resources department”, an experienced HR professional may not be interested in the position; however, a new graduate or less experienced individuals may be interested in applying.

Example:

ABC Society is looking for a self-motivated individual with strong organizational skills to join our Human Resources department as a full-time, permanent Human Resources Assistant. The Human Resources Assistant will provide administrative support to the Human Resources department in the areas of recruitment, benefits, training, and assist with various HR projects. This will help ABC Society with essential tasks as we strive for internal excellence, an integral part in executing our 2015-2017 Strategic Plan.

Responsibilities

- Bullet point list
- Lists **key** duties that will be completed in this role, but does not include every single thing that will be completed by the individual. It is important to include key duties that will be completed by the employee, as it will give them an idea about the type of work that they will be completing on a day-to-day basis. This can help them determine if they are capable of completing the role and if it is the type of role that they would be interested in completing. However, it is not recommended to have a long list of every single task that the employee is responsible for completing as it will result in a list that is too long and may lose the interest of potential candidates.
- Begins with “Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to” or ends with “other duties as assigned”. This is important because employees must be aware that may occasionally be required to complete work that is not included in the job description. This can help prevent issues such as employees refusing to complete work because it was not included in their job description.
- Uses present tense
- Provides a realistic and **accurate summary** of the type of work that will be completed. It is important that the responsibilities include are realistic and accurate. Do not leave out key duties that you believe will be unappealing to candidates as this will create unrealistic expectations that will likely be left unmet.

Qualifications

This includes:

- Education (ex: Marketing or Public Relations degree)
- Experience (ex: minimum of -2 years of Marketing experience)
- Knowledge (ex: Basic knowledge of FOIP)
- Skills (ex: communication skills, Microsoft Excel skills, etc.)
- Other (ex: professional designations)

It is also important to differentiate between **required** qualifications and **preferred** qualifications. You can include these in one list if there are few of one of the categories, or if there are a number of each, splitting them into two separate lists.

Examples:

- 1-2 years of Marketing experience required, 2-3 years of experience preferred
- Past experience in a nonprofit organization is an asset

Required Qualifications

- Post-Secondary education in Human Resources, Business Administration, or related area (Certificate or Diploma)
- 1 - 2 years of administrative experience in a nonprofit organization
- Strong organizational and communication skills
- Proficiency in Microsoft Excel, Word, and Powerpoint

Preferred Qualifications

- Post-Secondary degree in Human Resources, Business, or related area
- 1 - 2 years of administrative experience in a non-profit organization within a human resources capacity
- Intermediate to Advanced skills in Microsoft Word and Excel

Salary

For paid staff, you may choose to include a salary range. This section may also contain a summary of the benefits provided to employees.

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Some organizations may choose to keep their salaries private on internal documents. However, providing this information on a job posting can save time for both your organization and the potential candidate. For example, an employer may interview a candidate and make an offer, only to have the candidate reject the offer because the salary or benefits did not meet their expectations.

If you choose not to include salary and benefit information, it is important to ask this information in the interview or pre-screening questions.

Examples:

The salary for this role ranges from \$45,000 to \$50,000. Salary determined based on experience and qualifications. Upon completion of a three-month probationary period, full-time, permanent employees are eligible for a comprehensive benefits package that includes health and dental benefits, three weeks' vacation, a health spending account, and tuition reimbursement.

Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. Upon completion of a three-month probationary period, full-time permanent employees are eligible for a comprehensive benefit package.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

<https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/human-resources/employee-resources/employment-information/job-descriptions>

<http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/right-people-job-descriptions.cfm>

<https://www.go2hr.ca/articles/why-you-need-job-descriptions>

http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/employment/employer_info/recruiting/establishing_requirements.asp

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