

## ORIENTATION TASK 6: CREATING JOB TITLES AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

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### VE Departments Involved

All Departments, Human Resources

### Time Frame/Month for Activity

1-2 days/Month 1

### Outcomes

*Students will:*

- Research the job they assume in the VE.
- Develop a sample job description form.
- Write an in-depth job description for each position in the company.

### Activities/Strategies

- Distribute the handout titled "Creating a Job Description," and explain the task to employees.
- Have students use the Internet and other sources (library, corporate partner, etc.) to research the job for which they were hired.
- Review a sample job description with the students and in particular with the HR Department.
- Using the results of their research ask each student to write a job description for their job using the sample provided.
- All job descriptions should be reviewed and revised by each department and by the members of Human Resources. A copy of the final version should be kept on file with HR, the appropriate department, and with the coordinator.

### Online Follow-Up

- Have students search the Internet for various "Job Descriptions." There are many sites that provide this information.
- Direct students to go to <http://www.careerbuilder.com> to explore the website. This is a site where students can select a career field and then search for jobs in a particular city and subfield.

### Materials/Resources

- Handout: Creating a Job Description (see below)
- Sample job description: Vice President of Human Resources (see below)

### Mastery and Assessment

- Each employee will file a copy of their job description with the Human Resources Department.
- Job descriptions will be periodically reviewed and updated based on changing business responsibilities.

## Creating a Job Description

### What is a job description?

A job description is "simply" a list of responsibilities and functions that are required in a particular position. Job descriptions are often called position descriptions, and appropriately so because like jobs can be combined into one description, e.g., clerk, secretary, executive secretary. Each responsibility should start with a verb, which describes that activity. These verbs should be "standardized" or understood by those using the descriptions and the person doing the job.

Some examples of the more commonly used verbs are: analyzes, approves, authorizes, conducts, recommends, schedules, supervises, trains, and verifies. There are hundreds of such verbs and, by using terms that most people understand, one minimizes the chances the responsibilities will be misinterpreted or misunderstood.

### How is a job description used?

The primary use of the job description is to provide clarity within organizational structure. It forces the organization to assess its needs and determine the roles and responsibilities of each of its employees.

A second use is in the performance review. Too often, during a review, an employee will say, "I didn't know that was expected of me." With a job description, signed by the employee, that excuse cannot be made.

Some companies give the job description to job applicants who are seriously being considered for a position. Here again, the applicant who gets the job can't come back after several months and say that s/he didn't know all the job's responsibilities. Of course, descriptions must be updated as the job changes.

### What Information should be in a job description?

For a firm that is starting, the best way to develop job descriptions is to interview individuals who hold the various positions your firm is planning to create. This might be an excellent activity to do with your corporate sponsor. The following outline and questions will help you to gather some of this information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Branch/Department: \_\_\_\_\_

1. In a brief statement, describe the basic purpose of your job.
  - Why does it exist?
  
2. What are the most important duties of your job and what percentage of your time do you spend on each duty?
  - What are the responsibilities? How are tasks to be performed? Why this way? What are the desired results of the performance?
  
3. Additional Responsibilities:
  - List all "secondary" responsibilities or tasks that you perform.

## Vice President of Human Resources

Reports to: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Classification: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

### Major Function:

- Develops Human Resources policies and programs for the entire company.
- Supervises (manages) organizational planning, organizational development, employment, indoctrination and training, employee relations, compensation, benefits, safety and health, and employee services.
- Originates Human Resources practices and objectives that will provide a balanced program throughout all divisions.
- Coordinates implementation through Human Resources staff.
- Reports to the Chair as the ranking Human Resources executive in the company.
- Assists and advises senior management on Human Resources issues.

### Essential Functions:

- Formulates and recommends Human Resources policies and objectives for the entire company.
- Determines and recommends employee relations practices necessary to establish a positive employer-employee relationship and promote a high level of employee morale.
- Identifies legal requirements and government reporting regulations affecting Human Resources function (e.g., OSHA, EEO, TEFRA, ERISA, Wage and Hour). Monitors exposure of the company. Directs the preparation of information requested or required for compliance. Approves all information submitted. Acts as primary contact with labor counsel and outside government agencies.
- Protects interests of employees and the company in accordance with company Human Resources policies and governmental laws and regulations. Approves recommendations for terminations. Reviews employee appeals through complaint procedure.
- Directs a process of organizational planning that evaluates structure, job design, and manpower forecasting throughout the company. Coordinates activities across division lines. Evaluates plans and changes to plans. Makes recommendations to senior management.
- Directs a process of organizational development that primarily addresses succession planning throughout the company.
- Establishes wage and salary structure, pay policies, performance appraisal programs, employee benefit programs and services, and company safety and health programs. Monitors for effectiveness and cost containment.
- Establishes standard recruiting and placement practices and procedures. Reviews variances to schedules. Interviews executive-level candidates.
- Establishes in-house management training programs that address company needs across division lines (e.g., MBO, Performance Appraisal, Interviewing).
- Defines all Human Resources programs, and authority/responsibility of Human Resources and line management within those programs. Provides necessary education and materials to line management and employees-workshops, manuals, employee handbooks, standardized reports.
- Oversees implementation of programs through Human Resources staff. Monitors administration to standards. Identifies opportunities and resolves discrepancies.
- Selects and coordinates use of Human Resources consultants, insurance brokers, insurance carriers, pension administrators, training specialists, labor counsel, and other outside sources.

**Essential Functions (continued):**

- Conducts a continuing study of all Human Resources policies, programs, and practices to keep top management informed of new developments.
- Directs the preparation and maintenance of such reports as are necessary to carry out functions of department. Prepares periodic reports to top management, as necessary or requested.
- Keeps supervisor informed of significant problems that jeopardize the achievement of objectives, and those which are not being addressed adequately at the line management level.

**Additional Responsibilities:**

- Assumes other duties as assigned by supervisor.
- Specialized training in organizational planning, compensation, and preventive labor relations.

**Prerequisites for the Job:**

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Human Resources.
- Affiliations with successful companies who practice effective Human Resources Management.
- Generalist background with broad knowledge of employment, compensation, organizational planning, employee relations, and training and development. Well-developed administrative skills. Strong management skills – principles and people. Experienced working with more than two divisions.
- From eight to ten years' experience gained through increasingly responsible management positions within Human Resources.
- A minimum of three years' recent experience as the top Human Resources executive of a company with 800 to 1,000 employees in a nonunion manufacturing and office environment. Direct marketing companies a plus.

**Personal Characteristics:**

- High energy level, comfortable performing multifaceted projects in conjunction with day-to-day activities.
- Superior interpersonal abilities. Ability to get along with diverse personalities, tactful, mature, flexible.
- Good reasoning abilities. Sound judgment.
- Good communication skills.
- Resourceful and well organized.
- Participative management style—advocate of team concept.
- Ability to establish credibility and be decisive—but is able to recognize and support the organization's preferences and priorities.
- Results and people oriented, but have sound judgment—ability to balance other business considerations. Service oriented, but assertive/persuasive.

**Organizational Relationships:**

- Accountable to the Chair for all phases of activities.
- Positions accountable to the Vice President, Human Resources, for all phases of their activities:
  - Manager, Employee Relations; Manager, Employment and Training.
  - Human Resources Representative.
  - Human Resources Administrative Assistant.
- Advises, consults, and coordinates with:
  - Senior Management: organizational plans, succession plans, company policies, legal issues, divisional results.
  - Treasurer and Controllers: compensation costs, budgets, and expenses.
  - Director, MIS: Human Resources Automated System.
  - Middle Management and Supervisors: as needed.