



JOB DESCRIPTIONS

How To Write, Edit and Maintain Them



Today's Experts

Carol M. Granfield, Principal Consultant
Municipal Resources, Inc.
cgranfield@mrigov.com
Management and HR Consultant to Local Governments
Formerly served as Town Manager, County Manager, Human Resources Director for Local Governments throughout the East Coast.



Aleksandra (Sandy) Stapczynski, President
Human Resources Services, Inc.
hrrsconsulting@comcast.net
*HR Consultant to Local Governments; over 500 communities served
Formerly employed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Municipal Association.*



DEFINITION



ICMA

The Importance of Job Descriptions

- Define standards for the job
- Help in recruitment efforts
- Help analyze the organization
- Aid in compliance with employment laws
- Serve as a foundation for appraising performance
- Provide a basis for job evaluation
- Assist with the creation of training and development

ICMA

Definition

A well-written job description describes the main elements of a job and is not a detailed listing of specifications. It provides guidance on the general nature and level of the work being performed. It describes the duties as they currently exist.

ICMA


Supervisor and Manager Role

- Review and maintain job descriptions
- Monitor for changes in job content
- Communicate with incumbents regarding changes
- Decide when an appropriate change is needed
- Submit current job descriptions to Human Resources for their review and approval

ICMA

Elements


- Job identification
- Job summary
- Essential functions
- Accountabilities
- Job specifications



ICMA

How are they used


Think about the entire employment life cycle – at what points might having an accurate, well-written job description become important to an organization?



ICMA

Events - Recruitment

- Postings-Advertisements
- Interviews
- Candidate evaluation
- Pre-employment physicals



ICMA

Events - Orientation

- Duties
- Responsibilities
- Relationship and interaction with other positions
- Accountabilities

ICMA

Events - Performance

- Coaching
- Evaluation
- Training Needs
- Verbal/Written Warnings
- Corrective Action/Discipline

Job Opportunity JOBS

Apartiguan Public Health Services is seeking for competent, self-motivated and dynamic candidates for the following position based on the attached:

Officer/Assistant Manager

Required qualification & experience:


- Degree in Business Administration/Finance/Economics. Candidate having professional certification in PMS is an advantage.
- Minimum of 12 years of work experience in coordination.
- Must be able to integrate to give support in the area of administration, communication, general and specific.
- Must be available to work in all shifts.

To apply and for details of these positions, visit the link: <http://icmaselectorados.pr> or website www.icmae.pr. Apply within 15 days from publication date of this advertisement.

ICMA

Events - Fitness


- Workers Compensation
- Personal illness or injury
- Performance issues



ICMA

Events - Other

- Succession Planning
- Wage and salary administration
- Safety programs and initiatives



ICMA

JOB ANALYSIS



ICMA

Methods for Job Analysis

- Review and maintain job descriptions
- Monitor for changes in job content
- Communicate with incumbents regarding changes
- Decide when an appropriate change is needed
- Submit current job descriptions to Human Resources for their review and approval

Common Problems

- Exaggerate or downplay importance of job
- Fail to pinpoint critical job elements
- Ignore decision making aspects of job
- Describe qualifications not really needed for job success

Essential Functions

- Define the essential duties
- Use behavioral language
- Focus on functions rather than means
- Target outcomes rather than activities
- Be specific, but not procedural

What Doesn't Belong

- Negative statements
- Generalized statements
- Abbreviations
- Occasional or temporary duties

ICMA

LEGAL AND REGULATORY



ICMA

Compliance

There are a number of laws for which job descriptions are a crucial part of an employer's compliance efforts.



ICMA

Compliance Factors

- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Americans With Disabilities Act
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
- Equal Pay Act
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act
- Age Discrimination in Employment Act



ICMA


FLSA

- Job descriptions are critical for the process of classifying jobs as exempt or nonexempt.
- Proper classification is dependent upon actual duties and responsibilities, NOT by job title.
- Misclassification of employees as being exempt from overtime is the most common violation of the FLSA.
- Engage the services of an employment lawyer or human resources consultant to assist in the process.

ICMA

ADA - #1


1. The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employment discrimination against a “qualified individual” who happens to have a disability.



ICMA

ADA - #2


2. A “qualified individual” is someone who can perform the “essential functions” of a position either with or without “reasonable accommodation.”



ICMA

ADA - #3

3. Employers determine the essential functions, but in cases of a complaint, the burden of proof is on the employer for demonstrating and justifying its decisions.



ICMA

The ADA

- The ADA protects individuals who:
 - Have a disability
 - Have a history of disability
 - Are regarded as having a disability

ICMA

Sample Language

A computer programmer job might be described as “the ability to develop programs that accomplish necessary objectives”, rather than “the ability to use hands to write programs.”

A job that requires mastery of information contained in technical manuals would be stated as the “ability to learn technical material”, rather than the “ability to read technical manuals”.



WRITING THE JOB DESCRIPTION






Your Mantra...


WE ARE LOOKING AT THE JOB/POSITION

NOT THE PERSON DOING THE JOB



Format

- Length
- Layout
- Standardization
- Classification Job Description VS. Custom Job Description
- Title Series and Consistency



ICMA

Content

- ✓ One paragraph job summary
- ✓ List of job duties and responsibilities (essential functions)
- ✓ List of accountabilities
- ✓ Unique physical demands and/or working conditions
- ✓ List of qualifications
 - Education and Training
 - Certifications or Licenses
 - Experience
 - Basic knowledge, ability and skills
- ✓ Competencies – job, department, organizational
- ✓ Disclaimers

ICMA


HOW TO WRITE....



ICMA


Helpful Tips for Writing Job Descriptions

- Begin each essential function or job duty statement with an active verb, (i.e., prepare, calculate, coordinate).
- Avoid using acronyms. Use nontechnical language when possible.
- List duties in order of importance or to reflect how majority of time is spent.



Helpful Tips for Writing Job Descriptions

- Do not provide excessive detail; be concise.
- Focus on what is required; not how it is done.
- Avoid non-descriptive verbs such as “assists” or “handles” when possible.




Determine Levels Needed

Consider whether there are, or should be, different levels for a position, for example:

- Administrative Assistant I
- Administrative Assistant II
- Administrative Assistant III

Or

- Water Operator
- Senior Water Operator
- Chief Water Operator



Determine Levels Needed

- Carefully define the differences.
- Experience alone does not justify different levels – duties and required skills and responsibilities must differ.
- Develop a job matrix to make comparisons.



Compliance Considerations When Writing

- ❖ For ADA compliance, duties must reflect reality, i.e., what is actually required of people in the position is what rules.
- ❖ For FLSA classification; exemption from overtime depends upon what an individual actually does on the job, NOT what the job title is.



Union and Employee Considerations

- ❖ Must consider collective bargaining obligations.
- ❖ Job descriptions are sometimes a negotiable item depending on the State and labor laws.
- ❖ Having employees involved in the development and review process helps with collective bargaining.




Jobs are always changing...

- Most jobs are dynamic, i.e., they are constantly changing; it is critical to periodically review and revise the organization's job descriptions.
 - Consider annually – maybe at performance review time.
 - Revise on an ad-hoc basis when major changes occur in duties, skill requirement, etc.
 - Another typical time and opportunity is when you are recruiting someone for the position.
 - Job reclassification is another time; if you are updated your pay and classification plan.

ICMA


REVIEW GUIDELINES



ICMA

Organization of Information


- ❖ Sequence of operations approach
- ❖ Major duty approach
- ❖ Relative importance approach
- ❖ Percentage of time approach
- ❖ Team approach




ICMA

Helpful Reviewing Guidelines


- ❖ Words are chosen carefully
- ❖ Each sentence begins with an active verb
- ❖ Language is non discriminatory and gender neutral
- ❖ Job description is focused
- ❖ Language qualifies whenever possible
- ❖ It is easy to read and understand





Helpful Reviewing Guidelines

- ❖ Include essential information only - adding more unnecessary paragraphs won't increase the position's status, grade level or pay.
- ❖ Described the desired outcome only; all job descriptions are summaries.
- ❖ Focus on essential activities – this is not a procedures manual, brevity is preferred.
- ❖ Refer to job titles rather than people.









INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
