



Job Analysis

A job analysis is a questionnaire that aids employers in gathering the data necessary for developing job descriptions. The reason employers use job analyses is to first gather information about a job and then apply that information to create an accurate job description. Job analyses also assist employers with wage and salary administration, orientation of new employees, and training employees.

The following steps may assist an employer in the implementation of an efficient job analysis:

- An announcement of the analysis should be provided to all affected employees, stating the purpose of the analysis and stressing that employee input is vital.
- Information is then gathered through the employer's observations and interviews of current employees. Employees may also be asked to complete a summary of their duties and responsibilities; however, employees should not be expected to write the entire job description. An employee-provided summary should focus on the tasks the employee performs and the percentage of the day, week, and/or month spent on each task. The employee's regular duties, not temporary duties, should be listed.
- The completed job analysis questionnaire should provide the employer with a synopsis of the employees' summary of duties, while allowing for the insertion of any additional duties as necessary.

Note: Employers should always include employees in the job analysis process by asking them to complete a similar questionnaire. However, employers should be aware that employees are personally involved and may present a subjective rather than an objective depiction of the job.

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions provide an employer with the most articulate explanation of what a position requires. A job description outlines the necessary skills, duties, responsibilities, training, and education for each job.

Moreover, job descriptions may be used as follows:

- During the hiring process to review the position with a potential employee.
- To acquaint a new employee with their position.
- To evaluate current employees' job performances.

Development of a job description is cyclical, beginning with analysis of the position and continuing through the position's ongoing review. A well-written job description should include all of the following elements, which in turn comprises the essential job functions:

- Basic functions of the position and quantitative and qualitative standards for the performance of each function.
- Responsibilities of the position.
- Supervisory responsibilities, when applicable.
- Skills necessary for the position.
- Experience necessary for the position.
- Work environment, identifying the physical surroundings.
- All required education and/or training for the position.
- To whom the position reports, in terms of organizational relationships.

- Date of the most recent update to the description.

Essential Job Functions

Essential job functions are those functions that any candidate or employee must be capable of completing to qualify for a position. A well-written job description outlines the essential tasks of a job position and establishes a guideline for the position. For instance, determining the essential tasks of each position is a critical step to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accordingly, employers should review the position's guideline prior to interviewing any job candidates.

Benefits of Job Descriptions

An accurate and suitable job description offers many benefits to the employer, employee, and applicant. For example, a thorough job description would meet the following criteria and consequently provide the following benefits:

- **Define basic responsibilities and essential job functions.** The definitions will effectively communicate job information to current and potential employees.
- **Establish a basis for recruitment, selection, and hiring.** An employer will know what experience or skills a job requires prior to searching for the appropriate candidate. This knowledge allows an employer to write effective employment advertisement, post job notices accurately, and recruit the person most suitable for the position.
- **Protect against legal actions in hiring.** A job description may help prevent an interviewer from over-representing or under-representing the job position.
- **Assist in ADA compliance.** Organizations are required to identify essential versus nonessential job tasks when complying with the ADA. **Note:** Employers with 15 or more employees must comply with the ADA.
- **Narrow the focus.** A narrow, concise focus allows the employer and employee to place emphasis upon data, thereby resulting in clear, accurate performance reviews.
- **Provide a tool for employee orientation.** A specified job description prepares employees to begin their position with optimal productivity because they are aware of job requirements and expectations.
- **Measures and evaluates job performance.** Resulting in reduced turnover with clearly defined job expectations and performance evaluations based on those expectations.
- **Provides a management tool, exposing responsibility gaps and overlaps within the organization.** This is especially helpful during reorganization or downsizing.

Techniques

Upon completion of an accurate and thorough job description employers gain the vital knowledge of job criteria and required qualifications. The recruiting process then begins, using the two basic types of employee selection technique — inquiry and examination.

Pre-employment inquiries (applications) tend to reveal an applicant's general background information. Examinations and tests tend to gather more specific information, in an effort to predict future job performance. For example, many employers administer some type of formal pre-employment test to determine skills, honesty, intelligence, aptitude, and personality tests. Additionally, many employers also perform drug testing.