



Quick Reference Guide Writing Effective Position Descriptions

- ☐ Is the Position Description (PD) accurate, and does it reflect the level and responsibility assigned to the job now, or in the immediate future to meet organizational needs?
- ☐ Does the PD include a brief (2-3 sentence) Summary that describes the job's purpose?
- ☐ Is the PD clearly and concisely written using action verbs in present tense?
- ☐ Are all the key responsibilities related to job content included, in descending order of importance/frequency?
- ☐ Do all items relate to jobs and not specific incumbents?
- ☐ Does the PD reflect the minimum qualifications needed to perform the job, not an individual's strengths/experience?
- ☐ Do the minimum qualifications indicate education, experience, applicable certification, training or special skills/competencies necessary to perform the job?
- ☐ Have references to name, age, sex, race, or salary data been left out to ensure objectivity?
- ☐ Did the writer have or get firsthand knowledge of the job? Has the current incumbent, if there is one, been consulted?
- ☐ Does the PD reflect the work currently being performed or as approved in the near future for business strategy or necessity?
- ☐ Are the marginal duties listed in that section?

Position Description – Sample Language

Job Title: Compensation Analyst

- Evaluates (action verb) jobs (what) using Guide Charts and Job ladders and other tools (how).
- Matches (action verb) key job information (what) from PD to similar jobs externally (where) to arrive at accurate job grade (why).
- Analyzes (action verb) job content (what) to identify critical evaluation factors (why), then places in appropriate grade (when).
- Assists (action verb) managers (who) with locating PDs for their employees (what), for recruitment purposes, updates and audits (why) at the request of HR Business Partners (when).

PD Writing Do's and Don'ts

Do's	Don't's
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Base the PD on the division or department's needs.• Consult with the incumbent on content and frequency of tasks.• Write an accurate, concise, and thorough PD.• Use complete sentences starting with action verbs.• Keep sentence structure as simple as possible, omitting unnecessary words that do not contribute pertinent information.• Use words like "may" and "occasionally" to describe tasks that are performed once in a while, or tasks that only some employees perform when there are multiple incumbents in one job.• When referring to others, use titles not names.• Consult with HR Business Partner for guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write the PD as an SOP or step-by-step guide on how to do the job.• Omit key duties or responsibilities.• Write the PD in the future tense.• Use the PD as a space for writing goals, aspirations, or strategy of the department.• Base the content of the job description on the capabilities, skills, and interests of the incumbent(s).• Write the job description based upon the desired job grade or FLSA classification.• Include very minor or occasional tasks, which are not unique to a specific job.• Include language that might be considered discriminatory.• Write the PD as an ad for posting.