

## Guide for Writing Position Descriptions

In order to ensure the position description (PD) you are about to write is adequate in terms of quality and quantity of information on each of your major duties, please read and follow this guide.

Position descriptions must reflect the major duties and responsibilities **BRIEFLY, CLEARLY,** and **ACCURATELY** without extensive detail. The length of the position description is not indicative of its content. Describe **WHAT - HOW - WHY - WHEN - WHERE** it is done.

For uniformity and brevity, write position descriptions in the third person singular, present tense, and active voice, with the subject omitted.

Use short specific sentences to promote a clear work picture.

Terms such as:

- ◆ “prepares”
- ◆ “processes”
- ◆ “is responsible for”
- ◆ “complex”
- ◆ “difficult”
- ◆ “assist”
- ◆ “handle”
- ◆ “examine”
- ◆ “under the general supervisions”, and the like are not specific. They should be avoided in writing position descriptions.

The organization structure must be determined before the position can be described and accepted for classification purposes.

To be included in a position description, a major duty must be of a regular, recurrent nature.

Please give realistic time percentages for different kinds of work, example: stenography and its transcription, as opposed to typing from draft and from own knowledge.

Consider the format for Item 8 of PAD Form 01, Position description.

### Item 8, Part I

Purpose of this Position: Write a brief statement on the purpose of the position. The purpose should relate to the function of the organization segment in which the position is located.

The purpose introduces the reader to, and gives an overview of, the major duties which are to follow.

### Item 8, Part II

Major Duty Description: Your approach to this part is governed by the nature of the position:

- a. If the position is supervisory - that is, has administrative and technical responsibility for the work of others - the position should be described under each of the following headings:
  - ◆ Work Planning
  - ◆ Work Organizing
  - ◆ Work Directing
  - ◆ Human Resource Management
  - ◆ Safety
  - ◆ Any major personally performed duty in discharge of a responsibility
- b. If the position is non-supervisory, - that is a senior worker or work-leader, full performance worker, intermediate worker, helper, or trainee - the position should be described as follows:

1. Senior/leader type:

Use first paragraph to describe the aspects of work-direction of other employees;

Describe in descending order of importance or in work sequence, the other major duties you personally perform on a regular basis.

2. Full performance, Intermediate, helper and trainee:

Describe each of your major duties in descending order of importance, or in work sequence of a production line type.

### Item 9

Certification and Date - Self explanatory.

### Item 10

Number and Classification of Position Supervised: - if the position is supervisory, as discussed in Part II above, show actual, not anticipated, information e.g., 6 Plumber I, MS-24; 1 2 Labourer I, MS-14; 1 Clerk Typist II, GS-16.

THE FOREGOING INSTRUCTIONS APPLY TO SUPERVISORY AND NON-SUPERVISORY EMPLOYEES WHO WRITE PD'S.

THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS APPLY TO MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS - IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR OF POSITION BEING DESCRIBED:

### Item 11

**Minimal Qualifications** - these are qualifications required to be brought to the position. They are based upon the kind and level of work described in Item 6, and upon the supervision received as described in Item 12. See below. The qualifications are not what the incumbent has at the time of writing the *PD*.

- ◆ Education, general: Self explanatory.
- ◆ Education, technical or professional: Self explanatory
- ◆ Experience: express in years and/or months, the specific kind of experience required to do the work under normal (your definition) supervision after a 30 - 60 day period on the job. To say 3 1/2 years in a plumbing shop is to make an unacceptable statement. An acceptable statement: 3 1/2 years as a plumber performing the full range of installation and major repair of interior and exterior plumbing facilities. Licences, etc: Self explanatory.

### Item 12

Positions usually are subject to some degree of supervision, both technically and administratively - by word of mouth, and by written guidelines. Completion of this Item 12 should be based upon some, or all, of the following:

- ◆ oral technical
- ◆ written technical
- ◆ oral administrative
- ◆ written administrative

A supervisor, having exercised some, or all, of the 4 preceding elements, has put a subordinate position in motion - the position is dynamic - work is being done. To maintain

control of work, he/she must follow up and review the results, Therefore, you must explain the nature and purpose of the review.

### Item 13

Signature and position title of immediate supervisor. This means the first supervisor above the position being described who has human resource management responsibility.

- ◆ Signature of the department head. This term means the Deputy Minister or his/her designator, or equivalent position in other organizations.