



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Right Person, Right Job

Writing job descriptions is an art. A correct job description brings in the right employee, meaning companies with good job descriptions have a shortened recruitment cycle.

What is a job description?

A job description specifies job requirements and acts as a screening tool. Therefore, manpower requirements and planning are dependent on job descriptions. Information about duties, responsibilities, Key Result Areas (KRA's), qualifications and compensation are detailed as part of the job description.

- **Duties.** Clearly outlining the duties is crucial for a good job description. Duties need to be specific to both short-term issues and long-term challenges of the position. Short-term priority issues need to be addressed during the first few days. Long-term challenges relate to where the hiring manager wants to be months down the road.
- **Qualifications.** Qualifications are the principal screening elements. These fall into two areas – must haves and nice to haves. Must haves are absolute requirements and without them the person is screened out. Nice to haves are like the icing on the cake.
- **Compensation information.** Generally, this area is skipped in job descriptions. When stated, however, it will attract a wider range of qualified individuals. It is important to remember, however, that for the right person, compensation can always be adjusted, titles changed and duties expanded.

The why's of job description

It is essential to guide people about what to do and how to do it. Job descriptions enable people in organizations to know who does what and who knows what. Above all, they provide information about the technical skill requirements and “nature” of the person best suited for the job.

How to write a good job description

- **Be crystal clear.** The crucial question is, "What is the purpose of the job?" It highlights:
 - Management's expectations from the employee
 - Role of the job-holder
 - Employee's contribution towards the achievement of company goals
 - Relationships between different jobs and activities of the organization
- **Source of information.** The best-written job descriptions are those written by or with the person in the job. He or she knows the most about the job and thus will be able to easily complete the work profile. In case the employee is not articulate enough to



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write the details, help him or her with formal and informal interviews and questionnaires. Encourage him/her to choose the titles.

- **Assess skills and abilities.** This requires complete analysis of the work structure on the following lines:
 - Technical/professional aspects
 - Administration
 - Management
 - Commercial activities
 - Written or spoken communication skills
 - Analytical skills
- **List the tasks.** They should be arranged in an order based on their importance, frequency and processes.
- **Analyze the job.** It should be analyzed on the following accounts:
 - Decision-making authority
 - Time-frame to make decisions.
 - Number of units under control
 - Definition and distinction between the staff and line functions
 - Levels of authority
 - Chain of command
- **Write the job description.** It should contain the title and department, location, responsibility and major functional relationships.

Current trends

E-recruitment is now very popular. Potential hires are also looking for opportunities on the Internet. Writing job descriptions for the Internet is radically different from writing for regular media. Here are a few tips that will help you attract the best talent to your company. An effective job description format online includes:

- **Position heading.** It is the text that catches the job-seeker's attention. The text must goad them into going further and hence needs to have punch.
- **Company statement.** It is essential to create excitement and interest about your company.
- **Position summary.** This enhances the interest level in the position along with providing additional information.
- **Salary and benefits summary.** It provides the salary range associated with the position as well as a profile of company benefits.



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- **Qualifications.** These need to be stated clearly. If unclear, the job-seeker may think the position is below his expertise and may not apply.