

UNIVERSITY *of* WISCONSIN LA CROSSE

POSITION DESCRIPTION INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose

The Position Description (PD) is a formal action-oriented document that summarizes the important functions of a position using clear and concise language. Position descriptions begin with a careful analysis of the important facts about a job, such as individual duties, methods used to complete the duties, the purpose and responsibilities of the job, the relationship of the job to other jobs and the qualifications needed for the job. It is important to make a job description practical by keeping it dynamic, functional and current. As many jobs are subject to change due to personal growth, organizational development and/or new technologies, flexible position descriptions will encourage employee growth for continuous organizational development.

When writing the position description, keep in mind that the PD will serve as a major basis for outlining training needs and development and conducting future performance evaluations. An accurate PD helps the employee know what is expected by clearly defining the work to be performed in relation to the overall goals of the work unit. The position description is also used as an information source for the development and implementation of an effective recruitment and selection plan if a position becomes vacant. PDs also serve as a source document for worker's compensation or disability accommodation matters. The Position Description should be completed cooperatively by the employee and supervisor unless the position is new or vacant, in which case it should be completed by the supervisor.

A Position Description should be reviewed annually and updated when the duties or skill requirements have changed significantly. Contact Human Resources at 608-785-8013 with any questions regarding career progression or title changes.

Instructions for Completing the Form

Position Identification/Demographic Information (First Section):

Official Title: The official title designation for the position, in collaboration with Human Resources.

Working Title (if different): The non-official title for the position.

Department/Unit: The name of the unit or department in which the employee is assigned.

College/Division: The name of the college or division in which the employee is assigned.

Reports to: Name of the first line supervisor.

Position Type:

Supervisory Position: Will this position have supervisory authority of other employees?

Contract Basis:

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Appointment %: Budgeted FTE

Date: Date the Position Description is created/updated.

Created/Updated By: Name and title of individual who created or updated the Position Description.

Position Summary Statement

This statement is generally a summary or overview of the general nature, level, purpose and objective of the position. Describe the overall purpose of the position using two to three sentences.

Essential Job Functions and Responsibilities

This section describes the major duties and responsibilities of the occupant of the position for which accountability can be assigned. This should include every essential job duty or responsibility that is critical to the successful performance of the job. Begin with the most important functional and relational responsibilities and continue down in order of significance. Include the top four or five areas of responsibilities the position will perform and include fiscal, supervisory and decision making responsibilities.

Additional Duties and Responsibilities

Responsibilities/duties performed that are not essential to the position, but are part of the job.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

Identify the minimum amount of qualifications needed to perform the essential functions of the job, such as education, formal certifications, experience, knowledge and skills. Any critical skills and expertise needed for the job should be included. Include in the description which are required, preferred or desirable. (Ex. Required: Bachelor's Degree in business related program, working knowledge about annual financial reporting requirements for the public sector and excellent written and verbal communication skills. Preferred: Master's Degree in Accounting and five years experience in a higher education institution.)

Physical Demands

Does this job require significant physical activity or a specific degree of physical ability (only indicate if assistance cannot be provided)? Describe as appropriate using the list below:

- lifting - how many pounds
- carrying
- pushing/pulling
- standing
- sitting
- walking stooping
- crouching
- bending
- climbing
- balance
- reaching
- crawling/kneeling
- repetitive motion
- manual dexterity
- talking

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- specific hearing
- specific vision
- significant degree of time using equipment or machinery (i.e. operating a computer)

Working Conditions and Environment

What unusual working conditions, if any, are associated with this job?

- lighting
- heating
- ventilation
- odors
- noise
- animals
- heights
- infectious diseases
- danger
- exposure to inclement weather
- irregular hours
- driving
- traveling

Miscellaneous Information

Comment on any other aspects of the position not reflected in the position description.

Signatures

The Position Description is reviewed annually as part of the Performance Evaluation Process. Annual signatures by the Supervisor and Employee certify that any changes to the position have been documented on the Position Description.

Once signatures have been obtained, please submit the original document to Human Resources.

Tips for Writing Effective Position Descriptions:

- Always use the present tense of verbs.
- If necessary, use explanatory phrases telling why, how, where or how often to add meaning and clarity.
- Omit any unnecessary articles such as “a,” “an,” “the,” or other words for an easy to understand description.
- Use unbiased terminology. For example, construct sentences in such a way that gender pronouns are not required.
- Avoid using words which are subject to differing interpretations. Try not to use words such as “frequently,” “some,” “complex,” “occasional,” and “several.”