

GUIDE

Writing Effective Position Descriptions

UMassAmherst

Human Resources

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This workbook provides guidance, suggestions, and tips for writing position descriptions (PD) to ensure consistency and effectiveness across the University.

General Guidelines	3
Position Title	6
Job Summary	7
Essential Functions with Responsibilities/ Duties	9
Other Functions	16
Minimum Qualifications	17
Preferred Qualifications	22
Physical Demands/ Working Conditions	23
Additional Details, Work Schedule	24
Salary Information, Special Instructions to Applicants	25
Proofread, Edit, Proofread	26
Appendices	27
WORKSHEET	42

General Guidelines

A position description sets the foundation for recruiting, developing and retaining talent, and sets the stage for work performance by clarifying responsibilities, expected results, and evaluation of performance. It is also an important component to maintaining an equitable compensation system and ensuring legal compliance.

A well-written position description will attract the right candidates to apply by communicating clearly the type of person you are seeking and the responsibilities and tasks the job entails, so there is no question as to what the candidate is applying for. When well written, the position description shows a realistic picture of a job and answers the question, **“What does the person in this role actually do?”**

Writing effectively involves applying a thought process to ensure each position description is concise, clear, consistent, and inclusive.

- ✓ The position description contains sufficient information to describe major responsibilities and essential functions as they exist today.
- ✓ The position description provides information necessary to classify the position, not the person. Job descriptions are “incumbent neutral” and not based on any specific quality of an incumbent (such as knowledge, skills, abilities, performance, dedication, loyalty, years of service, or degree).
- ✓ The length of the job description does not affect the position level/ classification.
- ✓ The description should not include every detail of how and what work is performed so that it remains useful even when minor changes occur.
- ✓ Writing a job posting that is too long and detailed can be a deterrent. If jobseekers have to scroll more than once or twice to get to the end of your ad, they might lose interest before they apply.

✓ Do

1. **Avoid using adjectives.** Adjectives tend to give extra detail to nouns and may be unnecessary. *Adjectives are helpful when needed to describe the **level or depth of knowledge/skill required for entry into the position.**
2. Be mindful to use **unbiased, inclusive language** throughout the PD.
3. **Use gender-neutral pronouns and language** (avoid use of gender-charge verbs, adjectives)
4. **Avoid age-related terms**
5. **Avoid abbreviations, acronyms and terminology that would be unfamiliar to an external applicant.** If abbreviations and acronyms are necessary, define them the first time you use them.
6. **Keep sentence structure as simple and clear as possible;** omit unnecessary words that do not contribute pertinent information
7. Throughout, ask yourself **“Is this wording exclusionary?”**
8. **Check overall formatting,** ensure consistency
9. **Check, double check spelling, grammar, typos**

✗ Do not

- Use the narrative form when writing a job description
- Base the content of the job description on the capabilities, skills, and experience of the incumbent
- Write the job description based upon the desired job classification
- Write the job description as step-by-step guide on how to do the job
- Include minor or occasional tasks, which are not unique to a specific job

Staff Posting Template 14May20 (9), UMass Amherst Human Resources**About UMass Amherst**

UMass Amherst, the Commonwealth's flagship campus, is a nationally ranked public research university offering a full range of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. The University sits on nearly 1,450-acres in the scenic Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts, and offers a rich cultural environment in a bucolic setting close to major urban centers. In addition, the University is part of the Five Colleges (including Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, and Smith College), which adds to the intellectual energy of the region.

Position Title**Job Summary****Essential Functions****Other Functions****Minimum Qualifications (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Education, Experience, Certifications, Licensure)****Preferred Qualifications (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Education, Experience, Certifications, Licensure)****Physical Demands/Working Conditions****Additional Details****Work Schedule****Salary Information****Special Instructions to Applicants**

Position Title

The *Position Title* greatly influences whether or not a person will read the rest of the job posting. It shapes the first impression the candidate has of the position.

Guidance

- ✓ **Limit to 4 words if possible.** To maximize recruitment efforts, avoid title inflation. The title does not need to be all-encompassing.
- ✓ **Reference existing position titles** whenever possible to assure consistency of job grading and other comparisons throughout the University.
- ✓ If the position's state **title is too non-specific**, then look at **creating a working title**.

UPDATE: All **classified jobs** are required to have their **state title listed** in the posting, but can now **also include a working title**, example: Maintainer I – Custodian.

Examples

Effective titles	Titles that need improvement
Program Director	Director of the XYZ Program at the School of AB
Administrative Assistant	Assistant to the Director of ABC Department
Help Desk Support Analyst	Systems Programmer II
Business Manager	Administrator II

Additional Tips:

Job Summary

The *Job Summary* provides a brief, engaging overview of the position. It is a concise description telling why the job exists.

Guidance

- ✓ **Keep to approximately 2-4 sentences**
- ✓ **Write verbs in the present tense – not future tense**
“This position works in a team that is responsible for...” versus “This position will work in a team...”
- ✓ **Summarize the job’s primary purpose -- without reiterating the specific duties and qualifications**
- ✓ **In general, do not include in this section who the position will be reporting to; it is unnecessary for the job posting.**

Examples of what not to include in the Job Summary

- *“Under supervision of Director of Services, the position is responsible for...”*
- *“Under the general direction of the Assistant Director, ... ”*
- If their supervisor’s role is however directly related to the essential job functions, then reference the supervisor’s title in the Job Summary and/or Essential Functions section. If the position has more than one supervisor, then include that information in the Job Summary and/or Essential Functions section.

Examples of Well-Written Job Summaries

“This position entails editorial, layout, and graphic design work on a wide range of marketing materials which are targeted to student and alumni audiences.”

“This position conducts institutional research and analysis in support of institutional decision making; supports central administration as well as faculty and staff administrators throughout campus. The analyst is responsible for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on a variety of topics including, but not limited to, admissions, enrollment management, students’ progress, and program evaluation.”

“This position is part of a team responsible for creating and implementing best practices in recruitment and search processes to support the University in attracting the best in talent. This role will maintain exceptional rapport and provide extraordinary customer service throughout the search and hiring process.”

“The Academic Programs Manager provides leadership and direction for the department's Graduate, Undergraduate, and Continuing Education Programs by supporting administration through managing enrollments, scheduling, data reporting and forecasting, and shepherding student progress.”

“Provides custodial services at assigned site, ensuring an attractive, sanitary and safe environment for students, staff, faculty and visitors. Performs a variety of cleaning operations and assists in preparing and maintaining facilities for classroom activities and campus events.”

- Consider including in the job summary **connecting the importance of the role in helping achieve the department’s goals and the university’s mission.**

Examples

Effective	Ineffective
Serves as the first impression for our executive offices.	The incumbent will handle all receptionist duties including greeting clients.
Closes sales, provides exceptional customer service, and is an intricate component of our progressive team environment.	This position is responsible for generating sales and servicing customers.

Additional Tips:

Essential Functions with Responsibilities/ Duties

Essential Functions are the fundamental duties of a position: the duties a person holding the job absolutely must be able to do. Essential job functions are used to determine the rights of an employee with a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). An employee who cannot perform the essential job functions, even with a reasonable accommodation, is not considered qualified for the job and is not protected from discrimination.

Guidance



An Essential Function is a group of duties that constitute one of the distinct and major activities involved in the work performed. Think of essential functions as work buckets; and the specific duties of that essential function only go in that respective work bucket.

Consider these factors to determine if a function is essential:

- whether the reason the position exists is to perform that function
- the time spent performing a function
- the degree of expertise or skill required to perform the function

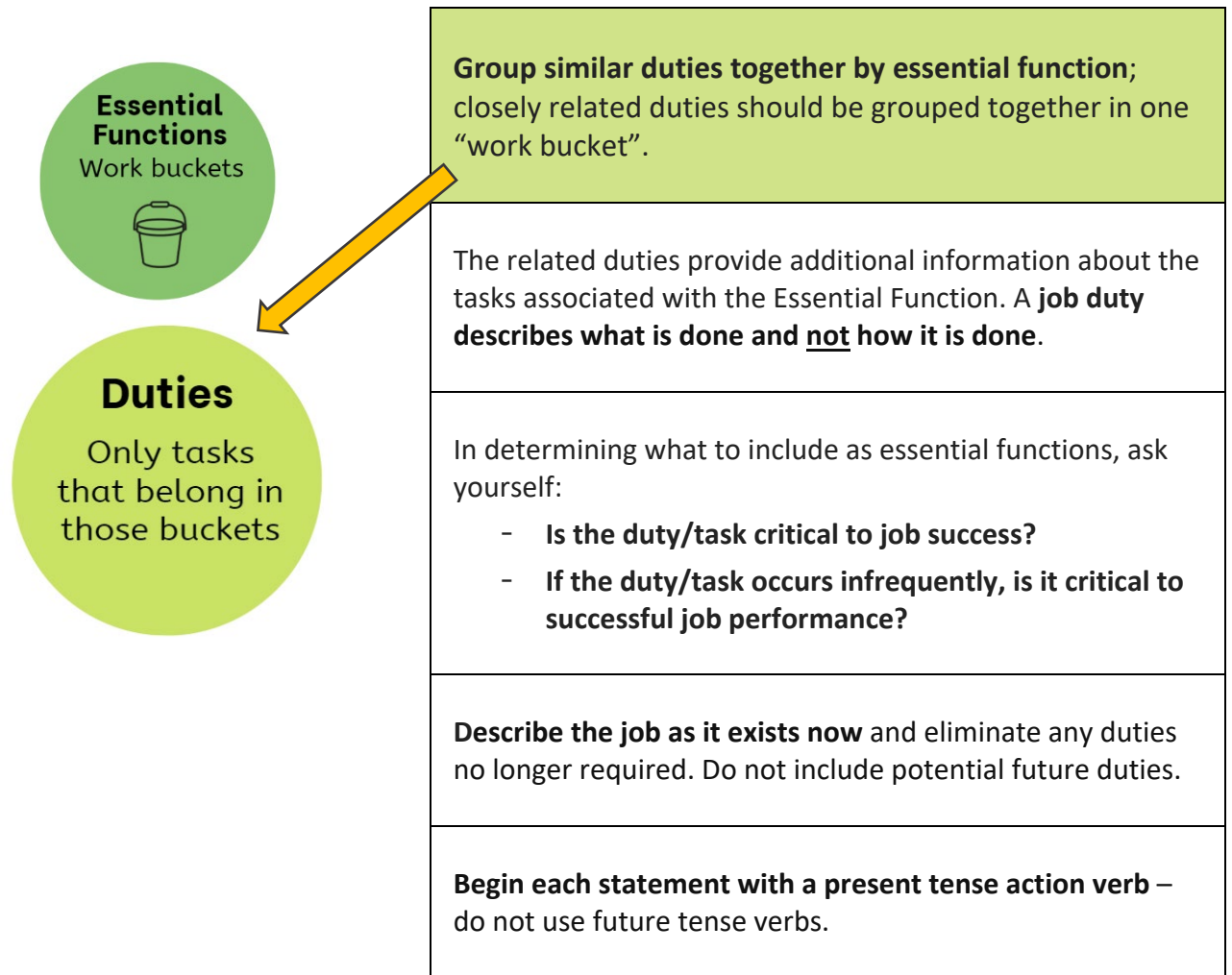
Limit to 4-6 essential functions. A position with more responsibilities may have 5-10 essential functions. Each essential function should make up at least 5 – 10% of an employee's job over the course of a year.

Examples - Essential Functions

Budget Management
Administrative Support
Event Coordination
Program Development

Supervision
Maintenance
Cleaning





How to prepare and organize your thoughts for writing the *Essential Functions* section:

On the following pages are examples of different ways to identify and outline *essential functions*. What approach works best for you?

What are the big work buckets (essential functions) that are fundamental to the position?

What group of duties can be placed in each work bucket?

Brainstorm relevant duties/tasks



Duties

- Organizes events - meetings, student presentations, department celebrations
- Handles all operation reports and records to comply with state policies



Duties

- Handles personnel procedures - student workers, external grant-funded staff, payroll and attendance



Duties

- Handles purchase orders, contracts, vendors
- Prepares budget reports, audits, processes, card expenses

Once you have identified the duties for each essential function, write description statements of those duties.

**Tips:**

The statements should be dynamic and active. Some things to consider to help with writing your description (not all of these factors are applicable to every position):

- Determine if the employee is working with data, people, and/or with goods/items/services.
- Determine what function or job duties the person in the position would perform.
- Determine the amount of time spent on each function or job duty.
- Determine the degree of expertise or skill required to perform the function or job duty.

Reminders:

- Use present tense action verbs.
- Do not write in narrative form.
- Do not write a list of tasks.

Examples of description statements of the duties for each essential function:



Description of duties:

- Works cooperatively with faculty and students in organizing and managing departmentally sponsored professional and academic events, such as meetings, student presentations, and departmental celebrations.
- Files and maintains all reports and records, educational materials, program documents, and human resources paperwork in accordance with state policies.



Description of duties:

- Hires and supervises student workers, assists with the hiring paperwork for external grant-funded staff, and performs payroll and other time and attendance duties.



Description of duties:

- Initiates purchase orders, creates contracts, follows up on process until receipt of goods and handles processing of payments to vendors.
- Prepares monthly budget reports, prepares materials for annual audit, processes purchasing card expenses.

For your "final" draft of the Essentials Function section of the PD --
Here are suggestions on how to organize the functions and their duties.



Method A: *Organize the duties in single statements*

Essential Functions

- Works cooperatively with faculty and students in organizing and managing departmentally sponsored professional and academic events, such as meetings, student presentations, and departmental celebrations.
- Files and maintains all reports and records, educational materials, program documents, and human resources paperwork in accordance with state policies.
- Hires and supervises student workers, assists with the hiring paperwork for external grant-funded staff, and performs payroll and other time and attendance duties.
- Initiates purchase orders, creates contracts, follows up on process until receipt of goods and handles processing of payments to vendors.
- Prepares monthly budget reports and prepares materials for annual audit.

Method B: *Organize all the duties of each essential function into one statement*

Essential Functions

- Provides administrative support for the Department; works cooperatively with faculty and students in organizing and managing departmentally sponsored professional and academic events- such as meetings, student presentations, and departmental celebrations; Files and maintains all reports and records, educational materials, program documents, and human resources paperwork in accordance with state policies.
- Hires and supervises student workers, assists with the hiring paperwork for external grant-funded staff, and performs payroll and other time and attendance duties.
- Performs duties for budget management: Initiates purchase orders, creates contracts, follows up on process until receipt of goods, handles processing of payments to vendors; prepares monthly budget reports and materials for annual audit.

Method C: *Organize by using this formula -*

‘Essential Function as a verb, including the rest of the duties for this function.’

Essential Functions

- Provides administrative support for the Department, including working cooperatively with faculty and students in organizing and managing departmentally sponsored professional and academic events - such as meetings, student presentations, and departmental celebrations; maintaining and filing reports and records, educational materials, program documents, and human resources paperwork in accordance with state policies.
- Holds responsibilities for certain personnel duties, including: hiring and supervising student workers, assisting with hiring paperwork for external grant-funded staff, and performing payroll and other time and attendance duties.
- Manages department budget, including initiating purchase orders, creating contracts, following up on process until receipt of goods, handling processing of payments to vendors; preparing monthly budget reports and materials for annual audit.

Additional Tips:

Other Functions

Other Functions are also known as “non-essential” or “marginal” functions. A marginal function is not unessential to the work unit, only to a given job. The function has to be accomplished, but it can be done by another employee or position.

For *example*, a job requires the operation of a machine. In the job description, “painting the machine twice a month” is stated. However, this is not critical to the execution of the job. “Operating the machine” is the critical role, hence it is listed in the “essential functions”. “Painting the machine” is not critical to the performance; hence, it is listed in the “other functions”. Redistributing the “painting the machine” function would not alter the “Machine Operators” job description. (P.C. Grant, “Essential or marginal? Job functions and the Americans with Disabilities Act,” *Business Horizons*, March-April 1997)

Guidance

- ✓ **Recommended to include this statement or a similar one:**
 - “Performs other duties as assigned”

Examples

- Performs other related duties as assigned for ensuring the efficient and effective functioning of assigned building(s).
- Contribute to the overall success of the department by performing other essential duties and responsibilities as assigned.
- Performs related duties as assigned or required to meet Department, Executive Area/Division, and University goals and objectives.

Additional Tips:

Minimum Qualifications

List only minimum qualifications that are required to perform the job successfully:

- ✓ *Knowledge*
- ✓ *Skills*
- ✓ *Abilities*
- ✓ *Education*
- ✓ *Experience*
- ✓ *Certifications, Licensures*

Guidance - *General*

- ✓ Qualifications need to be justified by the responsibilities and duties section.
- ✓ The most effective minimum qualifications are measurable and objective.
- ✓ The more requirements you list, the further you limit your qualified candidates, potentially limiting diversity.
- ✓ Whenever possible, indicate the required level of proficiency: basic, intermediate, or advanced.
- ✓ Write qualifications in terms of observable work behavior versus subjective words or general phrases.
- ✓ Use specific versus general language.
- ✓ Tip: Read the qualifications aloud. If they do not sound realistic or demonstrable, get rid of them.

Examples

Subjective and too general	More appropriate and specific
Able to handle high stress/ pressure.	Able to perform a variety of duties, often changing from one task to another of a different nature.
Able to concentrate well.	Able to perform with frequent interruptions and/or distractions.
Has common sense/ good judgment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes appropriate job decisions following standard office policies and past precedents. • Recognizes an emergency and takes appropriate action. • Thinks through the consequences of a decision prior to making it.
The person is easygoing/ has an even temperament.	Ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with co-workers and the public.
Has high energy level.	Completes heavy workload within established timeframes.
The person has self initiative/ drive, is self-confident/ self-reliant.	Works independently and is able to identify potentially more effective methods of work operations.
Able to be flexible/ adaptable/ versatile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts to frequent changes in workload. • Adjusts priorities quickly as circumstances dictate. • Ability to interact appropriately with colleagues and students for different purposes and in different contexts.
Computer literate	Intermediate proficiency with Excel, Drupal, Microsoft Word.
Good communication skills	Ability to communicate technical information to non-technical audiences.
Attention to detail	Attention to detail; able to develop accurate written materials.
Effective facilitation skills	Effective facilitation skills. Should be able to facilitate group discussions.
Action oriented	Action oriented. Should be able to follow up on feedback to ensure positive outcomes.

Guidance - Knowledge

- ✓ **In stating required knowledge, include the level or depth of knowledge required for entry into the position.**
 - Working knowledge: sufficient familiarity with the subject to know basic principles and terminology and to understand and solve simple problems.
 - General knowledge: sufficient knowledge of a field to perform most work in normal situations. The work calls for comprehension of standard situations and includes knowledge of most of the significant aspects of the subject.
 - Thorough knowledge: advanced knowledge of the subject matter. The work calls for sufficient comprehension of the subject area to solve unusual as well as common work problems, to be able to advise on technical matters, and to serve as a resource on the subject for others in the organization.
 - Comprehensive knowledge: requires complete mastery and understanding of the subject. This term should be used sparingly and only for unusually exacting or responsible positions required to originate hypotheses, concepts, or approaches.

Examples

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General knowledge of basic principles of food preparation and handling, including standardized recipes, batch cooking, and proper temperatures for storage and service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive knowledge of public sector collective bargaining including scope of representation, contract compliance and public sector labor union behavior.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough knowledge of federal/state affirmative action and equal employment laws/regulations sufficient to analyze proposed personnel policies.

Guidance - Skills, Abilities

✓ Each skill and ability statement should indicate:

- What is the skill or ability
- What is the level or amount of the skill or ability
- What is the context (for what purpose) in which the ability or skill is utilized (optional)

Skills and Abilities are often used interchangeably, but there are subtle differences.

Ability is the capacity to perform.

Examples of abilities

• Able to work independently with minimal guidance and as part of a team.
• Ability to establish priorities and manage multiple activities to meet unit, division, and university deadlines.
• Ability to complete assignments with attention to detail and high degree of accuracy.
• Capable of explaining complex issues in a concise manner to faculty and staff administrators.

A **skill** is the actual performing.

Examples of skills

• Demonstrated proficiency in accessing information stored in large data systems.
• Demonstrated experience using computer applications, including data statistical, word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software.
• Experience analyzing and interpreting written material and quantitative data to draw conclusions and make recommendations based on that data.
• Skilled at collaborating with variety of individuals who have conflicting agendas.

Guidance - Education, Experience

- ✓ Only include discipline-specific degrees if needed to perform the duties.
- ✓ You may include ***equivalency language**, but must be specific about substitutions.
 - **confirm with Talent & Comp. each time**

Examples

- Two years of relevant experience will be considered in lieu of an Associate's degree.
 - At least four years of progressively responsible instructional or subject work experience.
- ✓ **The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967** prohibits discrimination against people over the age of 40. Ageism is one of the more common biases in job descriptions.

Examples

- Do not use "Recent college grad" or "Young" or "Entry level opportunity".
- Replace "Must have 3 to 5 years' experience" with "Must have a minimum of 3 years' experience"

Guidance - Certifications, Licensures

- ✓ Licenses and certifications must be included if they are a requirement of the job.

Example Valid Massachusetts Class A Commercial Driver's License

Additional Tips:

Preferred Qualifications

***Preferred qualifications* serve as the secondary screening criteria for the hiring manager to use when evaluating applicants for a position.**

Preferred Qualifications are **those an applicant does not have to possess in order to be considered a “candidate” for the position**; however, they are seen as “good to have” qualities that can lead to a higher level of success for the applicant.

These qualifications are **not** required for the performance of the essential functions.

Guidance

- ✓ *Knowledge*
- ✓ *Skills*
- ✓ *Abilities*
- ✓ *Education*
- ✓ *Experience*
- ✓ *Certifications, Licensure*

Example Prior experience working in a large public research university.

Additional Tips:

Physical Demands/ Working Conditions

Identify any *physical demands* and/or *working conditions* that relate directly to the essential job duties and responsibilities to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The **physical demands** of a job are the demands that any person in the role should be able to meet in order to perform the job successfully.

The **working conditions** of a job are conditions that a person encounters or is exposed to during the course of performing the job.

Guidance

- ✓ **What are the environmental and physical requirements, if any, applicants must meet to successfully perform the essential functions?**
 - *Environment*, such as office or outdoors
 - *Exposures encountered*, such as hazardous materials, loud noise, or extreme heat/cold
 - *Essential physical requirements*, such as climbing, standing, stooping, or typing
 - *Physical effort*, such as: lifting certain weight ranges and distance
- ✓ **Describe the type, intensity (how much), frequency (how often), and/or duration (how long) of physical or mental capabilities required. Tip - describe frequency with descriptors like: occasionally, frequently, constantly.**

Examples

• Work involves regular exposure to various climate conditions outdoors.
• Frequently moves Audio/Visual equipment weighing up to 50 pounds across campus to various classrooms.
• Occasionally ascends/descends a ladder to service lights and ceiling fans.
• Constantly positions self to maintain computers in the lab, including under desks and in server closet.
• Must be able to lift 25 pound boxes to a height of 3-4 feet and load them into trucks.
• Mildly disagreeable working conditions involving working with potentially hazardous chemicals. The job requires significant physical effort and involves manual dexterity and eye/hand coordination needed for chemical preparation work, standing and moving moderately heavy loads more than 75% of the time.

Additional Details, Work Schedule

Guidance

Additional Details

- ✓ Emergency staff designations
- ✓ Term limited (such as grant funded)
- ✓ Location specific

Examples of statements

- This is a temporary, two (2) year position
- Designated as essential personnel

Work Schedule

- ✓ Indicate if such requirements are a regular part of the job:
 - work weekends, nights, or be on-call
 - travel (region, how often)

Examples of statements

- Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
- 43 week contract

Additional Tips:

Salary Information, Special Instructions to Applicants

Guidance

Salary Information

- ✓ Salary Info can be what the position was graded at previously or left blank if a new position.
- ✓ Include a hyperlink to the salary webpage if possible.

Examples

- USA/MTA Grade 13
- Level 27, [PSU Salary Ranges](#)
- Level 26 [Exempt Salary Ranges](#)

Guidance

Special Instructions to Applicants

Example Please upload your current valid electrician licensure

Additional Tips:

Proofread, Edit, Proofread

Guidance

- ✓ Proofread, proofread, and then proofread again
 - What is not concise, clear, consistent, or inclusive?
- ✓ Have a trusted coworker read your finished position description as well
- ✓ Conduct spellcheck
- ✓ Review for grammar and punctuation errors
- ✓ Review for typos
- ✓ For additional assurance, run your post through an online proofreading tool that can find spelling, grammar and punctuation errors before you “submit”

If needed, seek additional guidance from:

- Your department/ division’s Human Resources office
- Talent Acquisition and Compensation, talentmanagement@umass.edu
- Human Resources Business Partner

Additional Tips:

Appendices

Action verbs for ...

Administrative Responsibilities/ Duties pages 28-29

Assisting Responsibilities/ Duties page 30

Creation Responsibilities/ Duties page 30

Leadership Responsibilities/ Duties page 31

Physical Demands Responsibilities/ Duties page 32

Additional Action Verbs page 33

Examples of responsibilities/ duties statements for ...

Administrative Support pages 34-37

Custodial Services page 37

Advancement, Admissions, & Development page 38

Information Technology pages 39-40

Student Services/Affairs page 41

Supervisory page 41

Worksheet page 42

Action Verbs for *Administrative* Responsibilities/Duties

Accepts - Gives admittance or approval to.
Acquire - Comes into possession or control of an item or items.
Adapts - Modifies or changes to fit specific or new situations.
Administers - Oversees the operational details of a process or program (generally requires some additional explanation to show specific detail.)
Advises - Offers an informed opinion or give specialized information to others.
Appoints - Sets, officially, arranges.
Approves - Exercises final and decisive authority, causing action to use money, manpower, materials, or equipment.
Arranges - Make preparations for, to plan.
Authorizes - Approves or commits an act implying subsequent action by others.
Budgets - Plans allotment of funds, time, etc.
Buys/ Purchases - Acquires possession, ownership or rights to the use of services, items.
Checks - Proofs or reviews for errors
Collects - Gathers.
Consults - Considers, asking advice or requests opinion of.
Controls - Directs, regulates, or guides the use of money, methods, equipment, and materials.
Coordinates - Regulates, adjusts or directs the related actions of others in order to attain desired results.
Decides - Select a course of action.
Delegates - Entrusts to another person tasks or duties which require exercise of some of the authority of the person originally responsible.
Deletes - Eliminates or wipes out.
Delivers - Sends or brings a desired object.
Determines - Fixes conclusively, regulates. To decide by choice of alternatives.
Directs - Governs or controls work operations by establishing the implementing objectives, practices and methods.
Distributes - Delivers or hands out to several or many.
Enforces - Effects or gains by force. To carry out effectively.
Establishes - Institutes permanently by enactment or agreement. Executes - Puts into effect or carries out methods, plans, etc.
Exchanges - Gives and receives reciprocally.

Action Verbs for *Administrative Responsibilities/Duties* continued

Forwards - Sends goods or information onward.
Furnishes - Provides or equips with what is needed.
Gathers - Brings together or collects parts of a group.
Get - Obtains or receives.
Gives - Grants or yields to another.
Initiates - Sets going or introduces.
Issues - Puts forth or distributes usually officially.
Manages - Plans, organizes, directs, controls, and evaluates operation of an organizational unit, with responsibility for the output.
Orders - Arranges or commands to come to a specified place or decision.
Organizes - Sets up an administrative structure for. Arranges by systematic planning and united effort.
Plans - Designs or plots a scheme or project by means or method devised for doing something to achieve an end.
Procures - Get possession or obtain by particular care and effort.
Prevents - Keeps from happening or holding back.
Provides - Supplies or makes available.
Purchases - Gains or acquires by labor, money.
Receives - Comes into possession of or acquires an item, idea.
Recruits - Increases numbers of a group or brings in new members.
Rejects - Refuses to accept, consider or submit to.
Requires - Asks for by right and authority, requests.
Returns - Goes back in thought or action. Gives an official account to a superior.
Secures - Put beyond hazard or receive lasting control.
Stops - Keeps from carrying out a proposed action.
Submits - Presents or proposes to another for review, consideration, or decision.
Supervises - Personally oversees or controls work performance and conduct of others, where there is opportunity for control or inspection of work performed.
Supplies - Makes materials available for use.
Trains - Teaches, demonstrates, or guides others in the performance of assigned work.

Action Verbs for *Assisting* Responsibilities/Duties

Activates - Sets up or formally introduces with necessary personnel or equipment, to set in motion.

Encourages - Gives help, inspires or pay patronage to.

Expedites - Accelerates the process or progress of a plan, ideas.

Furthers - Promotes or advances.

Implements - Carries out or fulfills by taking action.

Maintains - Keeps in satisfactory condition.

Motivates - Provides incentive or drive.

Action Verbs for *Creation* Responsibilities/ Duties

Creates - Produces through imaginative skill.

Designs - Creates, fashions, executes or constructs a plan or idea.

Develops - Discloses, discovers, perfects, or unfolds a plan or idea, in detail, gradually.

Devises - Forms in the mind by combinations of ideas, new applications of principles, or new arrangement of parts.

Establishes - Institutes permanently by enactment or agreement.

Estimates - Forecasts future quantities, values, sizes, extents, etc., based on either judgment or calculations.

Forecasts - Predicts future events based on specified assumptions.

Formulates - Puts into a systemized expression or statement.

Illustrates - Enlightens.

Initiates - Sets going or introduces.

Installs - Sets up for use.

Originates - Begins or initiates.

Plans - Designs or plots a scheme or project by means or method devised for doing something to achieve an end.

Program - Design a project or activity.

Projects - Plans, figures, or estimates for the future.

Schedules - Appoints a fixed time.

Action Verbs for *Leadership Responsibilities/ Duties*

Achieves - To bring to a successful end.

Advises - Offers an informed opinion or gives specialized information to others.

Aids - Provides with what is useful or necessary for achieving an end.

Approves - Accepts as satisfactory; exercise final authority with regard to commitment of

Assigns - Specifies or designates tasks or duties to be performed by others.

Coaches - Trains by instruction, demonstration and practice. Provides performance feedback.

Cooperates - Acts jointly with others. Acts or works with others to obtain a mutual benefit.

Counsels - Advises or consults.

Directs - To cause to turn, move, or point undeviatingly or to follow a straight course

Enforces - To effect or gain by force. To carry out effectively.

Executes - To carry out fully, put completely into effect

Explains - Make plain or understandable.

Guides - Directs, supervises, or influences the training of people.

Instructs - Teaches, demonstrates, or by other methods imparting knowledge to others.

Manages - To handle or direct with a degree of skill.

Oversees - To manage or coordinate.

Participates - Takes part or has a share in a project, group.

Protects - Maintains status or integrity of projects, ideas.

Serves - Complies with the commands and demands of a supervisor, group.

Shows - Proposes, presents or demonstrates an idea as workable or desirable.

Suggests - Offers for consideration or action.

Supervises - To be in charge of.

Action Verbs for *Physical Demands Responsibilities/ Duties*

These verbs are helpful in describing physical effort in a job without risking prejudice to qualified persons with disabilities.

Physical Demand Category	Verbs	Physical Demand Category	Verbs
Strength	Moves/transport	Climbing or balancing	Ascends/descends
	Installs/takes out		Works atop
	Positions/places transfers		Traverses
	Puts		
	Removes/replaces	Walking/running/stooping, kneeling, crouching or crawling	Moves (about or to)
	Positions self (to)		
	Traverses		
Reaching, handling, or feeling	Activates, feeds or controls	Talking or hearing	Communicates
	Adjusts		Converses with
	Applies		Conveys
	Attaches		Detects
	Collects		Discerns
	Compiles/retrieves		Discusses
	Creates/fabricates		Exchanges information
	Detects		Expresses oneself
	Diagnoses		
	Drafts/writes		
	Handles/tends	Seeing	Detects
	Inputs		Determines
	Inspects		Assesses
	Installs/places		Compares
	Makes/constructs		Discerns
	Measures		Distinguishes
	Modifies		Estimates
	Operates		Identifies
	Prepares		Inspects
	Removes/replaces		Judges
	Serves/services		Observes
Sets up	Perceives		
Signals	Recognizes		
Uses			
		Other demands	Detects
			Discerns
			Perceives
			Uses

Source: "Non-Prejudicial Language Recommended for ADA- Compliant Job Descriptions" by Kenneth H. Pritchard via UC Santa Cruz "Guide to Writing Job Descriptions"

Additional Action Verbs for Responsibilities/ Duties

Accelerates - To make faster.	Keeps - Preserves or maintains in a good and orderly condition.
Analyzes - Separates into elements and critically examine.	Mails - Sends by postal service or emails.
Activates - To make something reactive or more reactive.	Maintains - To keep in an existing state (as of repair, efficiency, or validity), preserve from failure or decline.
Allocates - Assigns or apportions for a specific purpose or to a particular person.	Notifies - Gives notice or reports on an occurrence or information.
Audits - Examines for purposes of verification.	Obtains - Gains or possess. Collects, learns, gains
Checks - To proof or review for errors.	Participates - To take part in.
Collaborates - Works jointly with; cooperates with others.	Pulls - Demands or obtains advantage by use of exertion or influence.
Compiles - Puts together information or assembles data.	Recalls - Calls back or cancels.
Controls - Exercises restraint or direction over.	Regulates - Fixes or adjusts the time, amount, degree, or rate.
Cooperates - Acts or works jointly with others to obtain a mutual benefit.	Renders - Delivers or hands down.
Corresponds - Communicates with.	Reports - Gives an account or makes a written summary or statement.
Edits - Alters, adapts or refines a written text, concept, or idea.	Researches - Searches or investigates exhaustively.
Enforces - To effect or gain by force. To carry out effectively.	Reviews - Examine something for accuracy, completeness and suitability.
Evaluates - Determines the significance, worth, or condition of usually by careful appraisal and study'.	Sells - Gives up property in exchange for money.
Examines - Investigates in order to determine progress, fitness or knowledge.	Sends - Delivers or dispatches as means of communication or delivery.
Expedites - To speed up.	Solicits - Makes a petition or request for services, money.
Furthers - To help forward or promote.	Solves - Finds a solutions, answer, or explanation for a question or problem.
Implements - To carry out or fulfill by taking actions.	Studies - Applies thought to any subject of investigation in order to arrive at the most suitable conclusion.
Informs - Communicates knowledge to others.	Takes - Gets or seizes into possession.
Inquires - Asks or searches into.	Transfers - Passes over from one person to another.
Inspects - Examines materials, equipment, reports, work, etc., to determine quality, suitability for use, etc.	Verifies - Confirms or substantiates by oath, law, or other documentation.
Installs - Sets up for use.	Withdraws - Backs away or removes.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Administrative Support*

<p>Acts as the lead negotiator and liaison between the University, funding agencies, and contract entities; researches, drafts, and approves formal responses to requests for proposals, quotations, contracts, and agreements.</p>
<p>Advises and assists researchers in the application of archival materials in research activities; interprets requirements and supplies and consults on archival information.</p>
<p>Analyzes and evaluates awarded proposals, contracts, and subcontracts for compliance with funding agency, state, and University policies and procedures.</p>
<p>Analyzes revenue and expenditure trends for the funding monitored by this position; recommends appropriate budget levels and ensures expenditure control.</p>
<p>Analyzes, reconciles, balances, and maintains accounting records; develops budgets and special financial reports.</p>
<p>Assists in facility and space usage planning; advises administration on the application of institutional policy, regulations, and standards relating to the management of physical resources.</p>
<p>Assists in responding to customer inquiries; serves as customer service representative. Approves all large dollar volume acquisitions for compliance with appropriate regulations. Manages purchasing programs.</p>
<p>Compiles and analyzes financial and statistical data for contract negotiations, administrative reporting, and program evaluation.</p>
<p>Conducts outreach recruitment activities with University and community groups and offices to establish rapport, maintain employment referral contacts, and enhance opportunities for members of protected groups.</p>
<p>Coordinates receipt of awards and contracts with principal investigators and post-award contract and grant accounting administration; maintains proposal and funding records in database systems and</p>
<p>Coordinates the preparation of regularly scheduled and special billings, costs reports, analyses, studies, inventories, and financial statements for local, state, federal, and private funding sources.</p>
<p>Designs and implements programs and services that assist individual applicants, enhance career opportunities for current employees, and strengthen the quality of applicant pools.</p>
<p>Designs complex accounting and database applications for personal computers; balances and maintains ledgers for the automated financial and human resource management systems.</p>
<p>Develops and implements policies and procedures consistent with those of the organization to ensure efficient and safe operation of the department.</p>
<p>Develops and implements procedures for the acquisition, processing, and preservation of archival materials.</p>
<p>Develops and implements systems to maintain records on employees, equipment, and compliance activities.</p>
<p>Develops and maintains emergency/disaster preparedness and recovery plans.</p>
<p>Develops and manages annual budgets for the organization and performs periodic cost and productivity analyses.</p>

Directs activities of staff to ensure that manufacturing, construction, installation, and operational testing conform to functional specifications and client requirements.
Directs and evaluates the development of valid assessment tools, scoring and rating standards used in evaluating job applicants' training and experience, and researches and applies valid selection criteria.
Ensures compliance with all environmental health and safety standards promulgated by all local, state, and federal agencies through development and implementation of on-site inspection and monitoring programs.
Ensures proper care in the use and maintenance of equipment and supplies; promotes work place safety.
Ensures that development and execution of administrative policies governing employee benefits comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.
Ensures that purchasing business practices are compatible with University policies, state, and federal laws.
Formulates processes and procedures to effectively and efficiently negotiate contract and grant pre- and post-awards to meet University requirements within policy parameters.
Instructs department members in unrestricted and restricted funding requirements and methods and provides information for budget development.
Interacts with internal and external auditors, participates in auditing projects, and provides information and access to accounting records as required.
Keeps abreast of University policies and procedures, current developments in accounting and auditing professions, and changes in local, state, and federal laws, as applicable.
Maintains key unrestricted and/or restricted fund ledgers and provides specialized accounting for the maintenance, control, and reporting of revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities, equities, and payroll.
Manages and administers a variety of employee benefits programs, including group life insurance, health and accident insurance, flexible spending accounts, and retirement programs.
Manages multi-craft activities involved in preventive, scheduled, and emergency maintenance, cleaning, repair, and renovation of buildings, mechanical systems, physical plant, and grounds.
Monitors and maintains appropriate revenue levels by actions such as letter of credit draw downs and cost reimbursement or fee-for-service billings; oversees major liability accounts for the organization.
Monitors and reviews accounting and related system reports for accuracy and completeness; prepares and reviews budget, revenue, expense, and payroll entries, invoices, and other accounting documents.
Monitors contracts for compliance and controls costs; monitors general expenditures of unit. Maintains compliance with departmental security, audit procedures, and University policy.
Monitors revenue and expenses for departmental or unit accounts; ensures expenditure control and compliance with funding and reporting requirements, University policy, and standard accounting procedures.
Oversees activities of contractors, vendor personnel, and suppliers.

Oversees all facets of the daily operations of the organizational unit, ensuring compliance with University, state, and federal laws, policies, and regulations.
Oversees daily processing and accounting for revenue and expenditures by departments; audits and reports financial transactions to funding sources; ensures accuracy, completeness, and compliance.
Oversees processing of all documents necessary for implementation of various benefits programs and maintenance of such records as required for compliance with COBRA, and other applicable regulations.
Oversees the new employee orientation program.
Oversees the supervision of assigned personnel, which includes work allocation, training, and problem resolution; evaluates performance and makes recommendations for personnel actions.
Participates in special projects and performs associated administrative duties as assigned; may provide functional direction to lower level technicians on assigned work.
Performs quality control inspections to ensure adherence to contract specifications and industry standards.
Plans and develops archival collections, including participation in the establishment and implementation of policies and standards for the archive.
Plans, coordinates, and oversees the production and distribution of all employee tax statements and notifications as required by law.
Plans, develops, recommends, negotiates, and administers complex contracts and proposals; evaluates and awards bids and proposals.
Prepares descriptions and reference aids for use of archives, such as lists, indexes, guides, bibliographies, abstracts, and microfilmed copies; cross-indexes materials as required.
Prepares financial data for input into the institution's automated financial and human resources management systems and generates reports; performs calculations, which may include interest and depreciation.
Prepares scheduled and special reports, studies, and analyses; recommends approval or rejection of deviations from contract specifications.
Prepares, reviews, and processes budget, revenue, expense, payroll, and related correcting entries and may prepare bank reconciliations of intermediate complexity.
Provides guidance to managers and staff regarding employment practices, policy interpretation, problem resolution, and compliance with University regulations and state and federal law.
Provides information, resolves problems, and trains customers on products and services, ensuring customer satisfaction.
Requests and/or recommends pertinent materials available in libraries, private collections, or other sources for inclusion into archives.
Researches, designs, constructs, and tests electronic systems and equipment to support the specific and immediate research needs of faculty members of the department.

Responds to and resolves employee concerns regarding University benefits programs; advises, approves, or denies exception requests.
Reviews and approves expenditure, personnel, and purchasing documents for availability of funding, mathematical correctness, and compliance with University policy and state and federal funding requirements.
Serves on designated committees and advisory boards as appropriate in order to maintain open communications with faculty, staff, healthcare providers, insurance carriers, and other constituent groups.
Supervises development and preparation of research proposals, contracts and subcontracts, including assistance in budget and form preparation and interpretation of funding requirements and regulations.
Supervises professional and administrative support staff; assigns work and special projects; monitors workload and productivity; evaluates performance; promotes staff training and development.
Supervises the maintenance of search, applicant, and employee personnel files and the accurate entry of data to human resources information systems and databases to achieve the optimal use of available technology.
Writes requests for proposals, negotiates with insurance carriers and contractors, and oversees administration of contracts or other agreements involving employee benefits.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Custodial Services*

Conducts routine maintenance of assigned building areas; including replenishing bathroom supplies, maintaining hard floor surfaces, carpet, and exterior paths and entryways.
Performs the manual tasks of cleaning and sanitizing public areas, including interior building surfaces, furniture, bathroom fixtures.
Loads and unloads delivery trucks; unpacks and stores supplies and equipment in stockrooms and takes periodic inventories of supplies and equipment.
Empties and cleans waste receptacles, garbage cans and other garbage barrels in assigned areas and for special campus events.
Locks and unlocks buildings at designated times, and ensures areas are properly secured throughout shift.
Reports security problems to the Director of Facilities or other campus officials as appropriate.
Cleans campus property such as; classrooms, offices, restrooms, corridors, kitchens; typical items within these spaces requiring cleaning are walls, all types of floors, windows, furniture, woodwork, toilets, sinks, and appliances.
Employs the following cleaning methods: washing, waxing, buffing, sweeping, polishing, dusting and vacuuming.
Operates all types of cleaning equipment required to clean floors, carpets, drapes and furniture.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Advancement, Admissions, & Development*

Acts as principal liaison with the Financial Aid Office in the provision of financial assistance for students and in the resolution of financial aid problems.
Advises prospective and accepted students on a broad range of issues pertaining to admissions/acceptance standards and requirements, and financial and administrative assistance programs and resources.
Assists in short- and long-range strategic planning activities to create and implement fundraising goals and objectives.
Assists in the development and implementation of a variety of special events and promotional activities. Develops and manages a promotional display and signage program.
Assists in the development of and manages production of publications, including season brochures, direct mail promotions, and other marketing support materials.
Conducts media relations efforts; establishes and maintains contacts with key media personnel; develops and implements press conferences, photo sessions, and press/media events.
Coordinates and produces a range of financial, budget, and ad hoc reports, proposals, and analyses for management.
Designs and produces promotional materials including brochures, newsletters, and flyers.
Develops and administers operating policies and procedures pertaining to student admissions, which comply with related federal/state regulations and guidelines.
Develops and publishes various student recruitment and admissions materials; responds to external inquiries from a range of constituencies with regard to admissions and financial aid.
Edits and proofreads documents to check for adherence to standards of usage and publishing style.
Identifies, solicits, cultivates, and stewards, donors and donor prospects including corporations, foundations, and individuals.
Interacts with donors and prospective donors to cultivate and increase support.
Keeps abreast of current national and regional trends and data in student admissions and financial assistance programs; prepares and presents comprehensive written reports.
Maintains database files and records including those used to track contributions and maintains accurate mailing lists.
Maintains official records of endowments, scholarships, major gifts, and other contributions; prepares a variety of financial, statistical, and analytical reports for management and departmental use.
Oversees and coordinates the student applications process, and the development of applicant data; reviews and screens first-year, transfer, and visitor applications.
Oversees the maintenance of database records and files, including those used to track donor and gift information.
Oversees, coordinates, and administers financial aid function for the school, includes grant aid and merit awards; interprets and implements financial aid policies, regulations, and procedures.
Plans, develops, and implements student recruitment strategies, goals and objectives, and administers and evaluates all recruitment activities for the school.
Plans, develops, and presents seminars, publications, and information materials regarding student admissions and financial aid programs.
Reads and summarizes research materials that have bearing on higher education to maintain information as a reference resource for articles.
Represents the organization at various community and/or business meetings; promotes existing and new programs and/or policies.
Writes solicitation proposals, reports, press releases, and communication materials.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Information Technology*

Collaborates with faculty and staff to research, design and produce highly complex computer media development and multimedia projects for use in instruction.
Consults and coordinates with University officials on matters of policy, interdivisional interaction, and capital improvement issues.
Consults with and advises manager with regard to project status, client budgets, and special requirements.
Designs and oversees the implementation of software applications as appropriate to meet specific information requirements; oversees the development of programs and generation of reports.
Develops alternate designs to resolve problems in input, storage, and retrieval of information, utilizing knowledge of electronic data processing principles, mathematics, and computer capabilities.
Develops and establishes policies and objectives consistent with those of the organization to ensure efficient operation of individual departments.
Develops and maintains emergency/disaster preparedness and recovery plans.
Develops and manages annual budgets for the organization and performs periodic cost and productivity analyses.
Develops bid specifications, obtains project estimates from contractors, and coordinates work in progress.
Develops specifications for data capture and input; monitors input to ensure consistency, quality, and integrity of data.
Develops, installs, manages, and services the local area networks for the entity; performs file maintenance, responds to calls for assistance, and coordinates maintenance and repairs.
Directs departmental operations and supervises employees directly and through lower level managers and supervisors.
Ensures that computers, printers, film recorders, and other specialized equipment are in working order; arranges for repairs as necessary.
Establishes and implements short- and long-range goals, objectives, policies, and operating procedures.
Establishes and maintains website directory structures, configuration and content files; oversees testing and troubleshooting of website systems and applications software and hardware.
Estimates costs and provides detailed records of procedures, time worked, and billing information. Designs and edits printed publications and curriculum.
Evaluates requests for system enhancements and develops schedules for completion.
Evaluates, procures, and coordinates installation of computer hardware, software, and associated supplies in accordance with operational requirements and budget restraints.
Evaluates, recommends, and administers Internet search systems and programs; designs interactive authoring language forms to support on-line information exchange.
Identifies training needs, prepares, and delivers technical training to contributors and others on the use of authoring language, conversion tools, and other Web site methods and techniques, as appropriate.
Instructs, assigns work, and functionally supervises staff and/or student employees engaged in similar work activities.

Interacts with department faculty and staff to determine and interpret information requirements; acts as primary point of liaison with user departments.
Maintains a broad knowledge of state-of-the-art technology, equipment, and/or systems.
Makes recommendations for on-line program enhancements; assists in testing and implementation of modifications and enhancements.
Oversees all facets of the daily operations of the organizational unit, ensuring compliance with University, state, and federal laws, policies, and regulations.
Oversees the supervision of assigned personnel, which includes work allocation, training, and problem resolution; evaluates performance and makes recommendations for personnel actions.
Participates in development, implementation, and maintenance of policies, short- and long- range planning; develops tracking and evaluation programs to assist in accomplishment of established goals.
Performs needs assessment activities and works with other information systems personnel to determine feasibility of development of new databases or enhancements or modifications to existing databases.
Performs various traffic tests to determine cabling needs; consults with University administrators to plan network additions, renovations, and expansion.
Provides technical assistance and training to department personnel in the use of personal computers, standard software packages, and on-line information systems.
Recommends and participates in the development and establishment of University policies and procedures; may serve on University planning and policy-making committees.
Researches and documents existing conduits, cabling, and/or campus data communications networks; keeps charts and records to show location of all cables.
Reviews and evaluates computer software to meet media design needs.
Sets up and maintains staff security access codes; manages departmental local area and/or wide area networks.
Trains and assists campus faculty in computer-based applications for use in web publishing and instruction.
Utilizes new software and instructs internal staff and institutional clients in software applications as expertise is achieved.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Student Services/Affairs*

Conducts scheduled counseling sessions with each first-year student for the purpose of monitoring progress toward individual goal achievement.
Coordinates the assignment of apartments and individual rooms within the residence halls in order to ensure high levels of resident occupancy, safety and security.
Counsels undergraduates on all facets of career planning and placement so that students will have clear understandings of available career paths after graduation.
Creates and distributes a range of resource and promotional materials designed for the recruitment and retention of targeted groups.
Establishes and maintains residence life programs and services for University single student residence halls.
Plans and implements life and study skill workshops and special orientation sessions to enhance student's university experience.
Plans, organizes and implements class reunions using direct mail, telephone, and personal solicitations to ensure optimum participation.
Prepares reports and proposals and responds to inquiries from students and external agencies.
Promotes communication among various University offices, which aid new students in the transition to the University in order to coordinate related services.

Examples of Responsibilities/ Duties Statements for *Supervisory*

Directs via project managers the software, knowledge base, data base and customer support
Empowers employees to identify innovative approaches to enhance organizational performance.
Evaluates, appraises, and implements improved workflow procedures and better staff utilization.
Leads and coaches the team to recruit and retain high caliber staff.
Manages a team of professionals and unionized staff.
Provides leadership and guidance for the office's personnel; plans and administers the unit's annual operating budget.
Provides effective and highly visible leadership to the department's team to capitalize on the full potential of this most critical resource.
Responsible for personnel administration by overseeing interviewing and hiring; developing/revising performance objectives.
Serves as team leader for organization's efforts to understand its constituent data by guiding analysis and segmentation efforts.
Supervises and coaches office manager on a weekly basis.
Trains and instructs staff in new and more efficient work procedures; ensures quality control objectives are realized.

WORKSHEET to help you draft a position description

Job Title *≤ 4 words*

Job Summary *2-4 sentences*

Essential Functions *(4-6) and include 1-3 duties max per function*

1.

-
-
-

2.

-
-
-

3.

-
-
-

4.

-
-
-

Other Functions

- *Performs other duties as assigned.*
-

Minimum Qualifications (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Education, Experience, Certifications, Licensure)

<i>Knowledge</i>	
<i>Skills</i>	
<i>Abilities</i>	
<i>Education</i>	
<i>Experience</i>	
<i>Certifications, Licensures</i>	

Preferred Qualifications (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Education, Experience, Certifications, Licensure)

<i>Knowledge</i>	
<i>Skills</i>	
<i>Abilities</i>	
<i>Education</i>	
<i>Experience</i>	
<i>Certifications, Licensures</i>	

Physical Demands/Working Conditions

<i>Type</i>	<i>Intensity (how much)</i>	<i>Frequency (how often)</i>	<i>Duration (how long)</i>

Additional Details

<i>Emergency staff designations</i>	<i>Term limited (such as grant funded)</i>	<i>Location specific</i>	<i>Other</i>

Work Schedule

<i>Work weekends, nights/ evenings?</i>	<i>Start–end time?</i>	<i>On-call (how often)?</i>	<i>Travel (region, how often)?</i>

Salary Information

Special Instructions to Applicants

