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### How to Write an Effective PD Position Description Training

The University of Tennessee System

#### **Learning Outcomes**

- Identify the who, what, where, when, why and how of Position Descriptions (PD)
- Apply knowledge learned to write a concise yet descriptive Position Description
- Ability to utilize the new PD and Classification Request Forms

### The Who.

#### Position Descriptions are required

- Regular staff
- Temporary staff
- Positions that are on a Career Path
- Position Descriptions are not required
  - Student positions (Undergrad & Graduate)
  - Post-doctoral Research Associates
  - Faculty
  - Friends

#### The What.

A Position Description documents a specific set of essential functions and qualifications for one unique position.

It is a formal document describing how a position fits within the unit and organization.

#### The Where.

The Role of Compensation

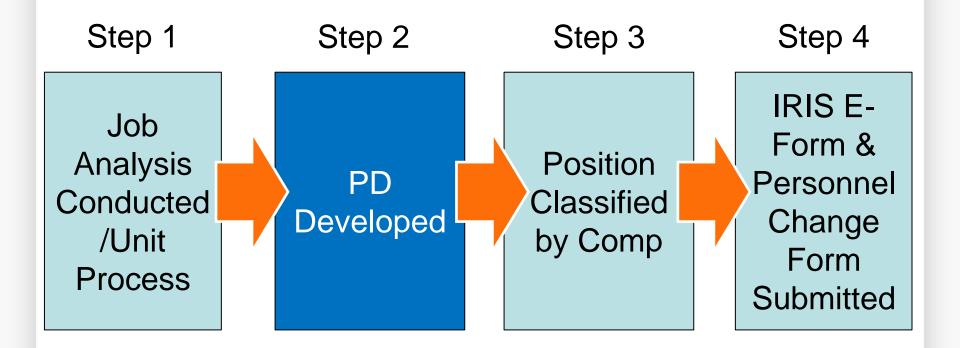
- Classify regular staff positions
- Assist with departmental reorganizations
- Assist departments with creating, implementing, and updating career paths
- Process IRIS position forms

#### The When.

- Vacancies prior to recruitment
- Annual review
- Significant changes to the department structure or work occur
- New work is created establishing a Position
- Establishing a position on a career path & movement on career path
- Every 3 years



#### **The How: Classification Process**



### Pitfalls to avoid

#### Position not Person

- A Position Description should address the needs of the unit – not highlight the incumbent's special skills or interests
- The minimum experience and education needed should be based on duties – not the incumbent's qualifications or capabilities
- A PD does not measure work load, or recognize an employee's performance or longevity
- Classification is not based on incumbent or budgeted salary

# Consequences of poorly written PDs can lead to:

- Recruitment or retention problems
- Miscommunication of
   performance expectations
- Misclassification if importance of position is exaggerated or downplayed



More on **"The How"** 

### **Getting Started**

- Define current business needs
- Identify goals the new position would meet
- Identify type of work necessary to meet goals and competencies needed to successfully perform work
- Identify peer positions even other institutions and gather information
- Identify the relationship and role within the unit, including supervisory relationships
- Identify budget for position

### A Tale of Two Forms

- Position Description a formal document that describes a unique position
- Classification Request Form a form used to request a classification review of a Position Description

Completing the **PD Form** 



RESET FORM PRINT FORM

#### POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION INFORMATION				Effective Date:				
Position Number	Working Title			Campus			Cost Center	
			Choose Or	ne:		L.		
Department		Supervisor's Position Title				Supervisor's Position Number		
IR USE ONLY								
Job Title		Job Key	Pay Grade Ex		Exe	Exemption		
					Choo	se Or	ne:	-

#### **POSITION DETAILS**

Position Summary – Summarize the primary purpose of the position

Position Responsibilities – Total responsibilities must equal 100%. List essential functions in decreasing order of importance.
Similar tasks should be grouped together. Any responsibility totaling less than 5% of the time should be grouped with a greater
percentage of time function.

	0					
% of	Job Function/Responsibilities					
Time						
% of	Job Function/Responsibilities					
Time						

## **Components of the PD**

- Position Information
- Position Details including summary and functions
- Competencies/Qualifications (KSA's, education & experience)
- Supervisory/Work Direction Responsibilities
- Independence of Action/ Level of Supervision Received
- Impact of Decisions
- Budget Responsibilities
- Conditions of Employment
- Working Conditions

### **Position Information**

POSITION INFORMATION		Effective	Date:			
Position Number Working Title		Campus				Cost Center
For new positions, Nease leave blank.		Choose On	ne: 4		-	
Denritment	Supervisor's P	osition Titl	le		Supe	ervisor's Position Number
HR USE ONLY						
Job Title	Job Key		Pay Grade	Exe	mptic	on
				Choo	ose On	•e: •

### Working Title

- Should be based on position
- Avoid elevated titles
- Accurately reflect the nature of the job
- Generic yet self-explanatory

## **Position Information**

POSITION INFORMATION			Effective Date:				
Position Number	Working Title		Campus	Cost Center			
			Choose One:				
Department		Supervisor's P	Chattanooga	visor's Position Number			
			Development Foundation	75			
HR USI TLY			Health Science Center				
		Institute for Public Service	on				
			Institute of Agriculture	ne:			
<u> </u>			Knoxville				
POSITION DETAILS			Martin				
			Space Institute				
Position Summary – Summarize the primary purpose of the position			University Administration				

## **Position Information**

POSITION INFORMATION			Effective Date:				
Position Number	Working Title	Campus			Cost Center		
			Choose On	ie:	-		
Department Supervisor			upervisor's Position Title Si			ervisor's Positi	ion Number
HR USE ONLY						42	•
Job Title		Job Key		Pay Grade	Exempti	on	
					Choose O	ne:	-

## HR Use Only

POSITION INFORMATION			Effective Date:				
Position Number	Working Title		Campus			Cost Center	
			Choose Or	ne:			
Department		Supervisor's P	osition Tit	le	Su	pervisor's Position Number	
HR USE ONLY							
Job Title		Job Key	Job Key Pay Grade E		Exempt	Exemption	
					Choose One:		
				Choose (	One:		
POSITION DETAILS					Non-Exe	mpt	
Position Summary – Summarize the primary purpose of the position					Exempt ·	<ul> <li>Administrative Exemption</li> </ul>	
				Exempt - Computer Exemption			
				Exempt - Executive Exemption			
					Exempt -	- Professional Exemption	

Job title, job key, pay grade and FLSA exemption are assigned by the Compensation Analyst. HR completes this section.

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### **Position Details**

#### **POSITION DETAILS**

Position Summary – Summarize the primary purpose of the position

Position Responsibilities – Total responsibilities must equal 100%. List essential functions in decreasing order of importance.
Similar tasks should be grouped together. Any responsibility totaling less than 5% of the time should be grouped with a greater
percentage of time function.

% of Time	Job Function/Responsibilities
% of	Job Function/Responsibilities
Time	

## **Position Summary**

#### POSITION DETAILS

Position Summary – Summarize the primary purpose of the position

- Position Summary
  - What is the main purpose of the position?
  - What does this position exist to do?
  - What is it supposed to accomplish?
  - What is the outstanding feature that makes this position different?
- A position summary statement is a concise statement or "snap shot" that provides an overview of the position.
- Used for job posting.

## **Sample Position Summary**

Under the general direction of the Executive Director, this position conducts institutional research and analysis in support of institutional decision making. 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, student progress, program effectiveness and evaluation.

### **Functions/Responsibilities**

Position Responsibilities – Total responsibilities must equal 100%. List essential functions in decreasing order of importance. Similar tasks should be grouped together. Any responsibility totaling less than 5% of the time should be grouped with a greater percentage of time function.

% of	Job Function/Responsibilities
Time	

### **Position Responsibilities**

Method 1

- 1) Think of the job in terms of major or key responsibilities or functions (shoot for 3-5)
- 2) After establishing these, think about specific job duties for each
- 3) Assign percentage time for each function
- 4) Condense the job duties into concise action statements

### Method 1 example

#### **Budget Management**

- Maintains and reconciles ledgers for four accounts.
- Prepares budget and expense reports and provides to faculty monthly.

#### **Administrative Support**

- Coordinates committee biweekly leadership meeting by scheduling, preparing agendas and taking minutes.
- Gathers data and prepares ad hoc reports for use in accreditation documentation.

#### **Event Coordination**

- Coordinates departmental events, by booking venues, scheduling speakers and arranging travel and stipends, and preparing invitations.
- Manages event operations by preparing venue set-up and acting as pointof-contact during events.

### **Position Responsibilities**

Method 2

- 1) Brainstorm a list of all the duties include tasks that are daily, weekly, monthly and annual
- 2) Cluster duties into 3-5 like functions/ responsibilities – determine a function title
- 3) Assign percentage time to each function
- 4) Condense the job duties in each group into concise action statements

### Method 2 example

- Manages event operations by prepares venue set-up and acting as point-of-contact during events.
- Maintains and reconciles ledgers for four accounts.
- Coordinates committee biweekly leadership meeting by scheduling, preparing agendas and taking minutes.
- Prepares budget and expense reports to faculty monthly.
- Coordinates departmental events by booking venues, scheduling speakers and arranging travel and stipends, and preparing invitations.
- Gathers data and prepares ad hoc reports for use in accreditation documentation.

## Method 2 example continued

#### **Budget Support**

- Maintains and reconciles ledgers for four accounts.
- Prepares budget and expense reports to faculty monthly.

#### **Administrative Support**

- Coordinates committee biweekly leadership meeting by scheduling, preparing agendas and taking minutes.
- Gathers data and prepares ad hoc reports for use in accreditation documentation.

#### **Event Coordination**

- Coordinates departmental events by booking venues, scheduling speakers and arranging travel and stipends, and preparing invitations.
- Manages event operations by preparing venues, acting as point-of-contact during events.

#### **Step 3: Percentage of Time**

<b>Percentage</b>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Year</u>
5 percent	2 hours	2 1/2 weeks
10 percent	4 hours	5 weeks
15 percent	6 hours	1½ month
20 percent	8 hours	2 ½ months
25 percent	10 hours	3 months

#### **Step 4: Action Statements**

Condense the specific job duties into concise action statements, beginning each with a present-tense action verb. Use Verb/Object/Explanatory Phrase structure. Example:

- Audits documents for mathematical accuracy and policy compliance.

\*See Handout of Action Verbs

#### Keep it simple....



### **Other Language Tips**

- Keep each statement in the position details crisp and clear.
- Since the occupant of the position is the subject of your sentence, it may be eliminated.
- Omit any unnecessary articles such as "a," "an," "the," or other words for an easy-to-understand description.
- Avoid using adverbs or adjectives that are subject to interpretation such as "frequently," "some," "complex," "occasional," and "several."
- Spell out acronyms at first instance.

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#### **Exercise 1**

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#### Management

#### Strategic Planning

#### Budget

- Recruits, selects and trains unit staff to perform day-to-day operations
- Establishes standards and policies for unit operations
- Manages unit by planning, coordinating, and controlling unit work and procedures
- Analyzes long-range impact of decisions and plans for use in management decisions

- Manages strategic plan by creating, reviewing and implementing annually
- Sets strategic direction by collaborating with senior administration
- Conducts comprehensive organizational review to create strategic plan

- Ensures fiscal compliance
- Prepares operating budget for unit annually
- Presents budget request and justification annually

% of Time	Job Function/Responsibilities
40%	Management Recruits, selects and trains unit staff to perform day-to-day operations. Establishes standards and policies for unit operations. Manages unit by planning, coordinating, and controlling unit work and procedures. Analyzes long-range impact of decisions and plans for use in management decisions
% of Time	Job Function/Responsibilities
30%	Strategic Planning Manages strategic plan by creating, reviewing and implementing for unit annually. Sets strategic direction by collaborating with senior administration. Conducts comprehensive organizational review to create strategic plan.
% of Time	Job Function/Responsibilities
30%	Budget Prepares operating budget for unit annually. Presents budget request and justification annually to the board. Ensures fiscal compliance.

# **Competencies/Qualifications**

#### **Competencies/Qualifications**

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) <u>required</u> to perform essential job functions. All KSAs should be related to the functions and sponsibilities of the sition. These statements should all contain the word 'knowledge", "skill", or "ability". This is not the perience personny perform the essential functions.

The application of a body of information spec performance of a function. Examples of know statements: Knowledge of proper accounting	ledge	The skills required to perform the position's essential functions. Examples of skills statements: Advanced MS Excel skills. Analytical skills. Basic fiscal skills.			
statements: A		perform a behavior or task. Examples of ability Ability to supervise. Ability to coordinate events. ate and deliver training.			

Preferred knowledge, skills, and abilities

### What are KSAs?

Knowledge is the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.

Example: Knowledge of Lean principles.

Skills are the proficiencies developed through experience and training. Example: MS Access skills.

Abilities are the qualities of being able to do something.

Example: Ability to learn new software.

# **Determining KSAs**

Knowledge, skills and abilities statements should be directly tied to the functions and responsibilities.



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### **Exercise 2**

### **Education/Experience**

equired	Preferred	Level/Type of Education	Field of Study (indicate if a related field may be substituted)
		High school diploma or GED	
		Vocational or technical training	
		Associate's Degree	
		Bachelor's Degree	
		Master's Degree	
		Doctoral Degree	
		Other licenses/certifications	
			cessary to perform the essential functions of the position
		um amount/type of experience ne experience and/or years of experie	
quired l	evel/type of		ence

# **Education/Experience**

Required (minimum)

- Tied to duties
- Specific level or type of experience over years of experience
- Not all jobs require degrees
- Where not required by law, an equivalent combination of training and experience may substitute for education – same for certifications/licenses

Preferred

- Used to narrow the pool of applicants
- What the ideal candidate should possess
- Specific experience
- Preferred degrees

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### Supervisory / Work Direction Responsibilities

Supervisory/Work Direction Responsibilities

This pition has no supervisory responsibilities.

This tion provides work direction to others (includes students).

This position has supervisory responsibilities and is responsible for staff performance management.

Please submit a Divisional Organization Chart. Please include detailed reporting relationships of this position in relation to others. Include subordinate positions, including students, graduate students, and consultants.

- "work direction" May provide day-to-day guidance, training, and direction for staff in addition to other duties. May assign and review work. May make recommendations for corrective action. May lead processes or projects without assigning and reviewing work.
- "supervisory" Provides day-to-day work direction to employees, and review progress. Hire, train, provide feedback, evaluate performance, and initiate corrective action.

### Independence of Action/ Level of Supervision Received

Indep	pendence of Action/Level of Supervision Received
	Work is closely monitored by supervisor/manager; clearly stated instructions and procedures are generally provided; tasks, duties, and responsibilities are generally standardized and routine in nature; instruction, advice, and assistance readily available
	Work progress is generally monitored by supervisor/manager; employee performs assigned tasks, duties, and responsibilities by following established policies and procedures; may set own priorities and organizes work within general guidelines established by supervisor/manager
	Supervisor/manager defines objectives, priorities, and deadlines; existing practices are used as guidelines to determine specific work methods; carries out work activities independently; supervisor/manager is available to assist in resolving problems
	In consultation with supervisor/manager, sets own priorities and goals and determines how to accomplish results with few or no guidelines to follow, although past practices may exist; keeps supervisor informed of progress, potentially controversial matters, or matters with far-reaching implications

#### Close – frequent and detailed review of work

# General – instruction, advice and assistance available as needed

Supervision Received **Broad** – instruction, advice and assistance available upon request

Administrative Direction – advice and assistance limited to accomplishment of broad objectives and policies

# **Impact of Decisions**

Impa	Impact of Decisions						
	Decisions generally impact own job or area.						
	Decisions impact a unit or department. May contribute to business and operational decisions that impact the department. Makes recommendations to manager/supervisor that are generally implemented/accepted.						
	Decisions have substantial impact on management and operations of an area within department, college or broad functional area. May contribute to important strategy, operational and business decisions which impact the department.						
	Decisions have a significant impact on the management and operations of a division/college/campus/institution/system. Contributes to the decisions on the overall strategy and direction of the organization.						

# Impact of Decisions

Division/College Campus/Institute System

Department, College, or Broad Area

Unit or Department

Job or Area

# **Budget Responsibilities**

Budg	Budget Responsibilities				
	No Budget Responsibilities				
	Monitor/maintain budgets – Processes transactions, monitors balances, and reconciles accounts				
	Managerial/signature budget authority – Approves and commits funds for salaries, and to acquire materials, resources, supplies, services, etc.				
	Full budgetary oversight – Establishes budget and has full authority to implement budget initiatives				

# **Conditions of Employment**

gnated personnel for emergencies – Is this position required to report to their designated work location to re operation of essential campus functions or departments during an emergency, or when the University uspended or delayed operations? uired – Select any additional background checks this position requires in addition to the basic
uspended or delayed operations?
uired – Select any additional background checks this position requires in addition to the basic
red Programs Check
it Check
Screening
rity Clearance Check
equent
Weekends
Evenings
Overnight Travel

# **Conditions of Employment**

CONDITIONS OF	EMPLOYMENT							
Choose One: -	Designated personnel for emergencies – Is this position required to report to their designated work location to ensure operation of essential campus functions or departments during an emergency, or when the University has suspended or delayed operations?							
Choose One: _	Shift							
Choose One: First Shift	k Required – Se	elect any additional background checks this position requires in addition to the basic						
Second Shift	Covered Progr	rams Check						
Third Shift	Credit Check							
Rotating Shift	Drug Screenin	g						
	Security Clear	ance Check						
Work Schedule								
Occasional	Frequent							
		Weekends						
		Evenings						
		Overnight Travel						
		t required to perform essential functions of this position (i.e. the employee would lose their meet these conditions.) e.g. Valid Driver's license, pesticide application certification						

# **Conditions of Employment**

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT								
	Designated per	ersonnel for emergencies – Is this position required to report to their designated work location to						
Choose One: -	ensure operation	on of essential campus functions or departments during an emergency, or when the University						
	has suspended	or delayed operations?						
Choose One: 💽	Shift							
Background Chee	ck Required – Se	lect any additional background checks this position requires in addition to the basic						
background chec	k							
	Covered Progra	ams Check						
	Credit Check	Required if this position will work with minors per UT Safety						
	Drug Screening	Policy SA0575.						
	Security Cleara	nce Check						
Work Schedule	•							
Occasional	Frequent							
		Weekends						
		Evenings						
	Overnight Travel							
Other Conditions	of Employment	required to perform essential functions of this position (i.e. the employee would lose their						
job if at some po	job if at some point they didn't meet these conditions.) e.g. Valid Driver's license, pesticide application certification							

# **Working Conditions**

#### WORKING CONDITIONS

#### PHYSICAL DEMANDS

	Amount of time				
	Not required	Seldom	Often	Frequent	
Stand					
Walk					
Sit					
Talk or hear					
Seeing					
Use hands to finger, handle or feel					
Reach with hands and arms					
Repetitive motion					
Climb or balance					
Stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl					
Driving					
Lift up to 10 lbs					
Lift up to 25 lbs					
Lift up to 50 lbs					
Lift up to 100 lbs					

# **Working Conditions**

WORK ENVIRONMENT				
	Not required	Seldom	Often	Frequent
Work near moving mechanical parts				
Work in high, precarious places				
Fumes, smoke, or airborne particles				
Toxic or caustic chemicals				
Hazardous Materials				
Risk of electrical shock				
Risk of radiation				
Operate power tools/machinery				
Operate light or heavy equipment				
Confined Spaces				
Exposure to vibrations				
Explosive or flammable materials				
Personal protective equipment required				
Outdoor Environment				
Extreme heat (non-weather)				
Wet or humid conditions (non-weather)				
Potential exposure to infectious agents or blood borne pathogens				
Work with human blood or cells				
Work with animals				
Work with animal blood or cells				
Office Environment				

Completing the Classification Request Form



#### CLASSIFICATION REQUEST

RESET FORM PRINT FORM

-

An updated Position Description and Organization Chart should accompany this request

CURRENT POSITION INFORMATION					Date of Req	uest:		
Position Number	Incumbent		Personnel Number Campus					
						Choose One:		
Job Title			Department			Cost Center		
Supervisor's Name		Sup	upervisor's Position Number Phone			Email		
Department Contact Ph		one Email						

#### **REASON FOR EVALUATION**

Choose One:

#### JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ACTION

Proposed Job Title	Proposed Working Title				
Provide a brief summary of the reason for this request. If this request involves the assignment of new duties or re-					
delegation/removal of current duties, include the position information for the other position(s) affected by the change.					
Affected position descriptions should also be updated and reviewed.					

PEER POSITIONS				
Position Number	Title	Department		

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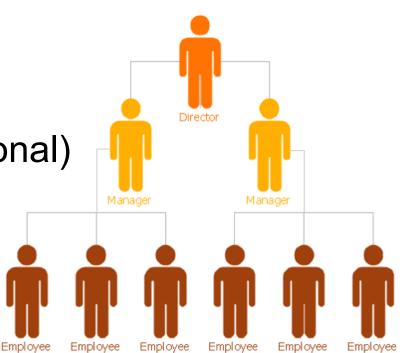
# Components of the Classification Request Form

- Organization Chart
- Current Position Information
- Reason for Evaluation
- Justification for the Action
- Peer Positions

# **Organizational Chart**

Include:

- Every position in the unit/department
- Show where they are in the organization up to the division level
- Titles for each position
- Position number
- Incumbents' name (optional)



# **Current Position Information**

CURRENT POSITION INFORMATION			Date of Request:	
Position Number Incumbent	Incumbent Pe		Campus	
			Choose One:	•
Job Titter For new position Please leave blank.			Chattanooga	
2 ·		-	Development Foundation	
Supervisor's Name	Supervisor's Position N	Number Phone	Health Science Center	-
			Institute for Public Service	
Department Contact	Phone	Email	Institute of Agriculture	-
·			Knoxville	
			Martin	
			Space Institute	
REASON FOR EVALUATION		System Administration		
Choose One:				-

# **Current Position Information**

CURRENT POSITION INFORMATION			Date of Req	uest:					
Position Number	Incumbent		Personnel Number Campus		·				
				Choose One:				•	
Job Title	Department					Cost Center			
								$\overline{\mathbf{N}}$	
Sup sor's Name		Su	perviser s Position I	Number	Phone		Email	47	
Department <b>S</b> tact		Ph	one √		Email		•		
45									

# **Reason for Evaluation**

REASON FOR EVALUATION	
Choose One:	-
Choose One:	
Career Path	-
Classification Review	1
New Position	
Standard Review Cycle	

Career Path

- Establishing a new position on career path
- Each move on career path

**Classification Review** 

- Reclassification
- Reorganization Temporary to Regular Conversion
- Update
- Vacancy

New Position – Creating a new position Standard Review Cycle – Statewide review

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# **Justification for the Action**

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ACTI	ON
----------------------------	----

**Proposed Job Title** 

Proposed Working Title

Provide a brief summary of the reason for this request. If this request involves the assignment of new duties or redelegation/removal of current duties, include the position information for the other position(s) affected by the change. Affected position descriptions should also be updated and reviewed.

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# **Peer Positions**

If applicable, please identify positions performing similar work within your department or within the College/Campus/University.

PEER POSITIONS					
Position Mber	Title	Department			
41					

For review submit:1. Position Description2. Classification Request Form3. Organizational Chart

### What we covered:

- The who, what, where, when, why and how of Position Descriptions (PD)
- How to write a concise yet descriptive Position Description
- How to complete the new PD and Classification Request Forms

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# Thank you for your participation!

# Questions?