

**Brandon University Job Evaluation System
for positions within Manitoba Government and General Employee's
Union (MGEU) And Exempt Managers and Professional
Officers (MPO) and
Excluded Support Staff (ESS)**

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INTRODUCTION

The Brandon University Job Evaluation System, which is used to evaluate and classify positions in the Manitoba Government & General Employees' Union (MGEU) (with the exception of Food Service positions) and Exempt MPO and ESS staff, was first adopted in 1993 for Exempt staff positions. The system was then reviewed with MGEU and adopted in 1995 for that group. After having worked with the system for a few years, the University and MGEU began discussions on ways the system could be improved, both in structure and application. These discussions have led to revisions of the process.

The Job Evaluation System is a point rating system that, through formal and systematic analysis, provides equity in the value of each job in the employee group relative to other jobs at the University. The system attempts to relate the amount of an employee's pay to the contribution made by his/her job to the effectiveness of the organization.

Job evaluation begins with the analysis of work to determine its characteristics and requirements. A description of the duties and responsibilities is then written and the duties and responsibilities are evaluated against the selected evaluation method. Effectively performed, job evaluation simplifies pay structure decisions and makes them more rational. It makes job comparisons a more efficient operation.

The job classification/re-classification process is discussed in Article 42 of the Brandon University Collective Agreement with MGEU and in the Reclassification Procedures section of the Exempt Staff Handbook.

DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO THE JOB EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Positions are evaluated on the basis of job content. The position itself is, therefore, the focus of the evaluation and the incumbent and any of his/her specific qualifications or any specific salary level or any performance assessment of the incumbent is ignored in the evaluation process.

A job description questionnaire has been developed to facilitate the evaluation process by focusing on aspects of job content that are involved in the Job Evaluation System. It is crucial that the importance of a complete and accurate job description questionnaire be recognized and that those who are involved in writing them complete the job description questionnaires as meticulously as possible.

THE JOB EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The Job Evaluation Committee - Composition and Role

The MGEU Job Evaluation Committee is composed of five (5) people - the Director, Human Resources, who serves as Chair and a full participating member of the committee, and four other employees appointed by the University. The Exempt Staff Evaluation Committee is composed of three people - the Director, Human Resources, who serves as Chair and a full participating member of the committee, and two members from the exempt staff groups. (Alternates are also appointed to the Exempt Staff Evaluation Committee to serve in the following circumstances.) Committee members may not participate in the evaluation of their own position or in the evaluation of a position that they supervise or where they are in conflict of interest.

Each member of the Committee participates in the evaluation of the position and in arriving at the appropriate point rating of each of the factors and of the position. Final decisions are reached by **consensus**, which means that all members of the Committee must be able to accept the decision.

The meetings of the Job Evaluation Committees are closed and all records of the meetings and associated notes are confidential to the committee and the Vice-President (Administration & Finance), and, in the case of a grievance, to the required MGEU officials. Any questions or concerns are to be directed to the Director, Human Resources.

Initiating a Job Description Evaluation

A Job Description Evaluation can be initiated by the employee (after completing the probationary period) or the employer when there is a view that the job description or job requirements may have changed significantly since the last evaluation, otherwise no more often than once every twelve (12) months. This will typically happen over an extended period of time, through specific changes within the requirements of a unit or when an incumbent leaves and prior to the recruitment of a replacement.

When an MGEU member wishes to apply for reclassification, she/he must include a written statement indicating why she/he is requesting a re-evaluation of the classification.

There will be times when the requirements of a job change for a short and specific period of time. While it is recognized that very temporary reassignments of duties, such as during vacation, are expected within existing classifications, substantive changes for substantial periods of time should be evaluated to ensure that employees are properly compensated for duties and responsibilities assigned. In this case, the employee or employer may initiate a job evaluation request and should specify the temporary nature of the requirements. Any resultant reclassification will be applied for the affected period only. At the end of the temporary assignment, the individual concerned will revert to his/her regular position and classification.

Appeals

Employees who have initiated an evaluation request, and who wish to appeal the decision, may do so by indicating their intention to the Director, Human Resources, within two weeks of receiving the result of the first evaluation. The request for appeal should be provided in writing.

The composition of the appeal committee for MGEU positions is the Classification Review Committee (CRC), which is composed of the Vice-President (Administration & Finance), the President of MGEU Local 135 and a third party, who shall serve as the chair of the committee, selected from within the employees of Brandon University by the Vice-President (Administration

& Finance) and the President of MGEU Local 135. The composition of the appeal committee for Exempt positions is the Exempt Staff Evaluation Committee plus the Vice-President (Administration & Finance).

If the MGEU member is dissatisfied with the decision of the CRC, she/he may ask their Union to take the matter to arbitration, as discussed in the collective agreement. The decision of the appeal committee, in the case of exempt employees, is final.

THE JOB EVALUATION SYSTEM

Point rating job evaluation is one method of determining the relative value of jobs. It is particularly suited to jobs consisting of a variety of tasks.

A point rating plan defines a number of factors, which are common to the jobs being evaluated (job difficulty, accountability, job knowledge, supervision given, contacts and working conditions). Each factor is divided into two elements (i.e. job difficulty is divided into complexity and judgement elements). The plan then provides progressive degrees of definition within each element and allocates a number of points to each degree. The combined factors do not necessarily describe every aspect of a job. They may deal only with those characteristics that are useful in determining a job's relative value within the University.

In order to evaluate a job, information about the factors that determine the value of the job must be gathered. This is done through the completion of the Job Description Questionnaire. In order to ensure equal treatment for each position being evaluated and to ensure concise information, it is imperative that each questionnaire be completed **using the prescribed form only, using ten (10) point Arial font, and conforming to the space size provided for each question. Job descriptions provided in any other format will be returned for revision.**

The questionnaire reflects the major duties and responsibilities of the job. It is not intended to represent a detailed working procedure or a list of infrequent or miscellaneous duties occasionally assigned to the job. **Duties and responsibilities must be complete and grouped into categories that comprise not less than 10% of the job.** The Job Evaluation System does not have the ability to evaluate duties or responsibilities that represent only a relatively small part of the job. Only when the smaller duties are grouped and described with other similar duties can the system determine the value.

The Evaluation Committee determines the total point value of the job by reviewing the questionnaire and the appropriate organizational chart, assigning point values to the factors and totaling those point values. The total point values fall within ranges, which represent classifications (i.e. 100-200 might be A, 201-300 B, and so forth). Jobs within a particular classification might bear little resemblance to one another and might have different ratings for particular factors because of the classification point range. For this reason, there are no standard specifications for each classification and, consequently, the system allows a wide variety of jobs to be valued against each other throughout the University.

Based on the classification, the job's rate of pay is determined. The salary range assigned to each classification (point range) is determined through collective bargaining in the case of MGEU, and assigned by the Board of Governors in the case of MPO and ESS positions.

The Evaluation Committee may use internal relevant jobs to verify results and assist in the final evaluation process. These provide comparisons throughout the University for the job being evaluated.

Although the System is being used only to evaluate the MGEU, MPO and ESS positions, the full scope of the rating matrices could accommodate every administrative position within the University from entry level positions to the President.

The Job Evaluation System Summary

Factors

- 1) Job Difficulty

This factor is used to measure the difficulty of the job in terms of the complexity of the work and the amount of independent action, initiative and creativity necessary to make decisions and judgements. The elements evaluated are complexity and judgment. This factor is worth 25% of the total value.

2) Accountability

This factor is used to measure the responsibility for results and the magnitude of those results. The magnitude of the impact is measured against the achievement of the entire University's objectives, not the objectives of the work unit or department. It considers the nature of commitments made, reversibility or impact of decisions or actions in the event of error, and the availability of guidance and direction. The elements evaluated are impact of actions and guidance received. This factor is worth 20% of the total value.

3) Job Knowledge

This factor is used to measure the education and experience required to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the job. It is intended to represent knowledge that is acquired through independent study, formal education, professional/technical courses and the practical experience gained on other related jobs in this or other organizations. The job knowledge factor is the basic entrance qualification required for the job. **University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards.** The elements evaluated are education and experience. This factor is worth 20% of the total value.

4) Supervision Given

This factor measures the degree of responsibility for supervising (formal and informal) and managing employees. It includes the nature of supervision given, the level of those supervised, and the size of the group or groups supervised. **University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards.** The elements evaluated are nature of supervision and level of positions supervised. This factor is worth 15% of the total value.

5) Contacts

This factor measures the requirement for exchanging information, providing explanations, influencing actions or reaching agreement with others in either oral or written format. It considers the reason for the contact, the level of person contacted and the requirement for exercising tact, self-control, diplomacy and persuasiveness in oral or written communication. Only those contacts that occupy a significant portion of time and are a regular and integral part of the job will be taken into consideration. The elements evaluated are purpose of contacts and level of person contacted. This factor is worth 10% of the total value.

6) Working conditions

University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards.

a) Work Environment

This factor is used to measure job conditions that are considered disagreeable or unpleasant and the frequency of exposure to such conditions. It considers excessive travel and absence from home, unpleasant work surroundings such as noise, dirt, exposure to the elements or potentially hazardous conditions associated with the job.

Only those job conditions that are present for a significant portion of time and are a regular and integral part of the job will be taken into consideration. The elements evaluated are work environment and prevalence.

b) Physical Effort

This factor is used to measure job conditions that require different degrees of physical effort and the frequency of those requirements. It considers the amount and degree of physical exertion associated with the job. Only those job conditions that are present for a significant portion of time and are a regular and integral part of the job will be taken into consideration. The elements evaluated are physical effort and prevalence.

c) Visual Strain

This factor is used to measure job conditions that require different degrees of visual strain and the frequency of those requirements. It considers the amount and degree of visual strain associated with the job. Only those job conditions that are present for a significant portion of time and are a regular and integral part of the job will be taken into consideration. The elements evaluated are visual strain and prevalence. University standards have been determined for these factors.

This factor, in total, is worth 10% of the total value.

Organizational Charts

A standard set of dated organizational charts, comprised of every administrative support position within the University, will be available to the Job Evaluation Committees for purposes of understanding the relative positioning of each job in the University in relation to supervisors, area heads, subordinates and other similar positions in the University. The chart is updated as necessary from time to time and is available in Human Resources to any employee to assist with the job description questionnaire.

Completing the Job Description Questionnaire

The following notes will assist you in completing the job description questionnaire. Before beginning to complete the questionnaire, **it is important to read the information in the section “Writing the Job Description” about getting organized**, gather the relevant data, and express the duties and responsibilities in an appropriate manner.

I JOB SUMMARY

This is a brief and very broad statement that provides insight into the reason for the position’s existence or for its establishment. It describes why the job exists in the first place, and what role it plays in the overall scheme of things. This section will normally be completed after having completed the rest of the questionnaire and should be approximately two sentences or 30 words.

II DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This is a point-by-point outline of the main areas of activity for which the position is responsible and describes the various things the position is supposed to do. List the most important responsibilities and those requiring the majority of your time first and continue in descending order of priority. Although it is recognized that every job has many complexities, it is **imperative** that responsibilities that take less than 10% of your time be grouped and summarized (consider that a work year is approximately 1650 hours excluding vacation for those with a 35 hour workweek).

Then approximate the percentage of time you spend on that duty or group of duties and indicate that in the appropriate column.

III COMMUNICATION

Describe who, and reasons for, the contacts that are a normal part of your duties. Contacts may be verbal or written. Internal contacts are those within the University, including students. Indicate the frequency of the contacts on a regular basis. Daily means nearly every day. Infrequent may be daily for one week twice in the year.

IV JOB DIFFICULTY

This section provides information about the difficulty of the job in terms of complexity and judgement. Be sure to indicate the types of decisions and judgements that you are **required** to make and the type of support you provide for decisions and judgements that your supervisor is required to make. Also be sure to include the frequency of the requirement to resolve the problems listed in the first section.

V ACCOUNTABILITY

This section provides information to measure the impact of the actions you are required to take and the responsibility for, and magnitude of, the results of those actions. It provides information on the guidelines and direction you receive in the course of your work, either from your supervisor or from documented policies and procedures and reference documents.

VI JOB KNOWLEDGE

University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards. It is the responsibility of the supervisor and the Director, Human Resources to determine the appropriate standard for positions. This section provides information on the minimum required formal academic training and minimum required work experience expressed in time.

VII SUPERVISION

University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards. It is the responsibility of the supervisor and the Director, Human Resources to determine the appropriate standard for positions. This section provides information on the degree of responsibility the position has for the supervision (formal and informal) and management (directly and indirectly) of employees. It includes the nature of the supervision and the types of jobs supervised. Students performing duties for the University for compensation are considered employees.

VIII WORKING CONDITIONS

University master standards have been determined for this factor and each position has been assigned a rating from within those master standards. It is the responsibility of the supervisor and the Director, Human Resources to determine the appropriate standard for positions. This section provides information to measure job conditions that are considered unpleasant or hazardous and the frequency of exposure to such conditions. It considers unpleasant work surroundings such as noise, dirt, and exposure to the elements or potentially hazardous conditions associated with the job. Only those job conditions that are present for a significant portion of time and are a regular and integral part of the job are taken into consideration. It is important to recognize that the conditions considered unpleasant are in relation to conditions found in jobs outside of the University as well as those found within the scope of Brandon University jobs.

NOTE: Any proposed changes to the standards that have been assigned to each position should be brought through the supervisor. Determinations will be made by the supervisor and the Director, Human Resources.

IX SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

A well-written job description questionnaire for a relatively standard type of job should require no further comment. This section is intended to provide information that is not readily captured in the document, especially for unusual jobs, to enhance understanding. It is not intended to simply add emphasis.

Authorizations and Timelines

An employee and/or supervisor wishing to have a job evaluated will access the Job Description Questionnaire form on the Brandon University web site. The employee and/or supervisor will then draft the job description questionnaire by responding to the questions on the form.

Three of the areas on the Job Description Questionnaire have been standardized by the University to ensure consistent expectations across the University. In the case of MGEU jobs, these standards have been developed in conjunction with the Union. The standardized sections

are Job Knowledge, Supervision and Working Conditions. It is expected that the vast majority of jobs will conform to those standards.

Once the questionnaire has been completed, both the employee and the supervisor must agree with the information on the questionnaire and signify so by signing the document. It should take no longer than four (4) weeks to acquire all of the required signatures without a valid reason. If the parties cannot agree, the matter should be referred to the Director, Human Resources and the area head for resolution. If the parties still cannot agree within two (2) weeks, the University shall make the determination. That decision is final to all parties. Disagreements that cannot be resolved with the assistance of the Director, Human Resources, for Exempt positions, will be referred to the Vice-President, Administration & Finance, for decision.

The questionnaire is then sent to the area head who, in most cases, will be the budget unit head. Again, the document is reviewed in detail and, if agreeable to the area head, signed and forwarded to the Director, Human Resources. If the area head feels that further revisions are required, the document is sent back to the employee and supervisor with an explanation. In the case of disagreements, the above-mentioned process is followed.

The Director, Human Resources, upon receipt of the questionnaire, date-stamps the document. This is the date to which any resultant salary adjustments will be applied retroactively after the job is evaluated. The Director then reviews the document in detail to ensure that the standards have been applied, that the document is complete, and that the employee and the supervisor and the area head have been fair and reasonable in describing the job requirements. If the Director is satisfied, the document is signed and prepared for the Job Evaluation Committee. Any concerns identified by the Director, Human Resources, will be referred to the area head with a detailed explanation that, in turn, will be referred to the employee and supervisor. Disagreements will be resolved in the above detailed manner.

Master Standards

Job Knowledge

1. Grade 12 + 3 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (basic reception, filing, keyboarding).
2. Grade 12, additional courses/training + 3 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify additional technical or job related courses required), includes 1 year certificate program.
3. 2-3 year post secondary education/diploma program + 1 year related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify education or diploma program required), includes library technician program (i.e. reference positions in library).
4. 2-3 year post secondary education/diploma program + 3 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify education or diploma program required).
5. 2-3 year post-secondary education/diploma program + 5 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience, specify education or diploma program required (applied to senior roles with supervisory/administrative responsibilities).

6. University degree + 1 year related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify specialty/major that is required for position).
7. University degree + 3 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify specialty/major that is required for position).
8. University degree + professional designation + 5 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify specialty/major and designation required).
9. Graduate degree/designation + 7 years related experience, or comparable combination of education and experience (specify specialty/major/designation required).

Supervision

1. No supervisory responsibilities integral to position, may provide guidance and training to other employees.
2. Informal supervision through assignment and checking of work is integral to position.
3. Formal supervision of employees being responsible for assignment and review of work is integral to position.

Working Conditions

A. Work Environment

1. Generally agreeable working conditions such as those found inside offices or equivalent work areas for more than 70% of the time.
2. Slightly disagreeable working conditions, exposure to somewhat noisy, hot or cold conditions for less than 20% of the time.
3. Slightly disagreeable working conditions, exposure to somewhat noisy, hot or cold conditions for between 20% and 40% of the time.
4. Slightly disagreeable working conditions, exposure to somewhat noisy, hot or cold conditions for between 41% and 70% of the time.

B. Physical Effort

1. Work requires minimum physical effort and strain in a variety of normal positions (e.g. intermittent standing, sitting, walking, ordinary office tasks) for more than 70% of the time.
2. Work requires light physical effort and extension (e.g. prolonged standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, using light tools, handling light weight materials) for less than 20% of the time.

3. Work requires light physical effort and extension (e.g. prolonged standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, using light tools, handling light weight materials) for 20% to 40% of the time.
4. Work requires light physical effort and extension (e.g. prolonged standing, sitting, walking, climbing stairs, using light tools, handling light weight materials) for more than 70% of the time.

C. Visual Strain

1. Normal visual concentration required for more than 70% of the time.
2. Moderate visual concentration required. Required to concentrate on small areas or objects for short periods of time (i.e. up to one hour) for less than 20% of the time.
3. Moderate visual concentration required. Required to concentrate on small areas or objects for short periods of time (i.e. up to one hour) for between 20% and 40% of the time.
4. Moderate visual concentration required. Required to concentrate on small areas or objects for short periods of time (i.e. up to one hour) for between 41% and 70% of the time.

Writing the Job Description*

This process is best done in three progressive stages. First, use your discretion on format and content to develop a fairly structured outline of just what key information should be included in the job description questionnaire. Discuss the information with your supervisor to ensure that all of the relevant information is included.

Second, develop the outline by referring to your raw materials: the notes, comments and general data you've compiled. These should fill out the job description with the important information.

In the third stage, you fill in some gaps, but mostly you insert key words and polish phrases and sentences so you get an action-oriented, objective job description that reflects the distinct flavor of the job.

Once you've completed the first draft, put it aside for a couple of days. Come back to it with a fresh perspective, and you'll see things you didn't notice the first time around. Continue your editing process. Keep cutting. Discuss the draft with your supervisor to ensure that nothing has been missed and that the duties and responsibilities are expressed in a way that reflects the requirements of the unit and the University. A good test is to ask whether, if you left, the job requirements would be the same for the new recruit.

Getting Down to Basics

No matter what your expertise in writing job descriptions, there are a few basic rules to keep in mind at all times.

1. **A good job description takes time to prepare and write.** While the process may look painful, it's not. But to do a correct job, it takes time. Even if you think you have all the raw material that you'll need in front of you, you'll still run into problems if you rush the process. So, if you're working on deadlines, make sure they're attainable. Give yourself and your supervisor plenty of time to alter words, make corrections, and delete and add material.
2. **You're writing a job description, not a recruitment advertisement.** This means you shouldn't fall into the trap of writing copy that makes the job sound "exciting, challenging and a real opportunity for a self-starter." Go into the specifics of the job itself in an impersonal, quantitative, objective manner.
3. **A good job description format makes organizing the information fairly simple.** The "Duties and Responsibilities" section presents more of an organizational task. If the duties are numerous and complex (and for most jobs they are), you'll want to decide ahead of time how to organize them. Here are some of the available alternatives.
 - **The "sequence of operations" approach.** One of the simplest ways to organize job information is to follow the sequence in which the job activities are carried out (if there is such a sequence). This approach is best suited to jobs where tasks tend to be more repetitive and are usually performed in a particular sequence over and over again.
 - **The "major duty" approach.** Many jobs, particularly those of a supervisory or administrative nature, have no daily sequence of duties. In this case, the information

* Adapted from "The Complete Portfolio of Prewritten Job Descriptions" by Richard H. Wolff. Asher-Gallant Press, Brentwood, New York and "How to Write Job Descriptions -- the Easy Way" by Bureau of Law & Business, Inc. Madison, CT

can be organized into major job segments or duties, with specific duties outlined below each of these broader headings.

- **The "relative importance" approach.** This approach organizes information about job duties and responsibilities on the basis of their relative importance (as judged by the incumbent and the supervisor). A variation on this idea would be to arrange the duties in order of the amount of time spent on them.

These are only a few of the organizational frameworks that you can follow. The most appropriate choice depends to a large extent upon the job analysis method used and on the nature of the job in question.

4. **Use language that communicates clearly, concisely, and completely, so the individuals involved don't have to be job experts in order to comprehend what the job entails.** Keep in mind that the job description questionnaire is going to be handled and read by a lot of people on the job evaluation committee who may not be familiar with your particular job. That's why it's up to you to melt away the technical jargon and substitute crisp, comprehensible material.
5. **Be tight with your editing.** Avoid long, flowing prosaic pages of narrative that confuse the issues and make the task of reading and understanding a job description that much more difficult. Use numbers or bullets when possible to highlight and segment each area or responsibility. Make brevity a priority.
6. **Choose your words with care.** You should ensure that the words used in the text are specific in scope and action-oriented. Because you want your job description to be succinct and precise, it's essential that you choose your words judiciously.

The following checklist contains a number of suggestions and guidelines for working with words in job descriptions. You'll find more help in the glossary at the end of this Appendix.

- Always use the simpler word rather than the complicated one. It will cut verbiage, shorten your description, and enhance understanding. Anyone at the University should be able to pick up a job description and come away with concise knowledge of what the job entails.
- When you edit, make a conscious effort to replace long words with shorter ones. One danger in multi-syllabic words is their multiple meanings. You're not trying to impress, but to communicate. Make that your number one priority.
- Do the same with phrases. Remove the deadwood, those long expressions that a single word can replace, and those single words that just aren't needed. "*Involves the use of*" becomes "*uses*", "*for the purpose of*" is shortened to "*for*", "*it is evident that*" turns into "*evidently*".
- Economize whenever possible. Drop out articles (a, the, an) and other shorter words when the intent or subject is understood. You might not need "their" if it's a given, and repeating "must" or the preposition "to" in certain circumstances can be dropped.
- Adjectives almost never make the last rewrite. If they aren't specifically necessary, cut them.

- Stay alert for grammatical clutter. For example, “*handles distributing of reports*” can easily become “*handles report distribution*” or, better yet, “*distributes reports*”. That’s the kind of surgical analysis you need to apply to your words, phrases and sentences.
- Clarify vague or imprecise words, even when they sound right. “*Situation*”, “*circumstance*” and “*facilitate*” just don’t paint a clear enough picture. Explain them or define them or even choose a stronger action word from those in the Glossary at the end of this Appendix.
- Start as many phrases as you can with an active verb. Use the present tense, and ordinarily stick with the third person to emphasize objectivity.
- If at all possible, use words that have only one connotation, one interpretation. Again, clarity is a major goal. And use words that specifically spell out the way you want the work accomplished. See words in the Glossary at the end of this Appendix.
- When possible, also specify terms like “*may*” and “*occasionally*”. To avoid confusion or misunderstanding, assign a number or percentage to them. “*Daily*”, “*weekly*”, “*monthly*” are preferable because they are more precise than *often* or *periodic*. And use quantitative terms to indicate frequency or degree such as “*travel seven days per month*”.
- Beware of generalizations. Indicating that a Manager “offers direction and guidance to subordinates” is too open-ended. What kind of direction? To whom? How is it offered? A better statement would be, “Conducts regular meetings on a _____ basis with departmental staff to review and discuss activities in _____ and _____ areas, as well as future goals and objectives.”
- While you’re keeping a tight rein on wordiness, do the same for sentences. Tight structure. Spare in length. Compact at all times. Use parentheses to indicate qualifying numbers or comments, and even to insert explanatory details.
- Refer to job titles rather than people. For example, “Reports to Director of Personnel” instead of “Reports to Elliott Simpson.”
- Stress what you do instead of attempting to explain the procedure that must be used. For example: (Secretary) “Records appointments” rather than “A record of appointments must be maintained.”
- Watch your ego. The aim in the job description is to describe job duties comprehensibly. Being succinct and using job-specific terminology doesn’t leave a lot of room for the writer’s personality to shine through. It shouldn’t.

Glossary of Job Description Terms

Another key to creating successful job descriptions is the ability to use the right word at the right time. This means having strong action terms at your fingertips for consistency and accuracy. This glossary is designed to give you these advantages.

Accountable	Responsible for an action, goal or result.
Act	To exert one’s powers in such a way as to generate a result; to carry out a plan or project (see Execute, Perform).

Adaptable	Can perform a variety of tasks, change assignments on short notice, achieve results in different areas simultaneously.
Administer	To manage or direct the application, execution or conduct of; to administrate (see Control).
Adopt	To take and apply or put into practice; to accept as a proposal.
Advise	To offer advice and opinions; to recommend a course of action or strategy.
Affirm	To confirm.
Amend	To change or modify.
Analyze	To study the factors or circumstances of a situation or problem in order to determine the solution; to study various unrelated facts, fit them together, and arrive at a conclusion (see Appraise).
Anticipate	To foresee events, trends, consequences or problems to prepare in advance for future occurrences.
Apply	To put into practical use; to employ.
Appraise	To evaluate as to quality, status, effectiveness; to analyze.
Approve	To officially sanction; to accept as complete or satisfactory; to ratify, assuming responsibility for; used in situations where individuals have ultimate authority.
Arrange	To place in deliberate order; to set up, as an event.
Ascertain	To find out or learn with certainty.
Assemble	To pull or gather together in a distinct order; to collect in a set pattern; to fit together the parts or pieces.
Assign	To delegate specific duties or tasks to others to perform.
Assist	To lend aid or give support for a job or undertaking; to help.
Assume	To undertake; to take it upon oneself to fulfill a responsibility or assignment.
Assure	To confirm; to make certain of; to declare with confidence; to guarantee.
Attend	To be present for the purpose of contributing.
Audit	To examine in depth; to look into a situation or problem and report the findings (see Analyze).
Authority	The power to act, command, influence.
Authorize	To empower; to permit; to establish by authority.

Balance	To arrange so the sum of one group equals the sum of another; to play off one option against another.
Batch	To group into a quantity for one operation.
Calculate	To make computations; to apply mathematics; to decide logically.
Chart	To draw or exhibit in graphic form.
Check	To examine; to compare for verification; to make certain of an outcome; to monitor.
Circulate	To disseminate; to distribute in accordance with a plan.
Classify	To separate into groups; to systematically arrange.
Clear	To obtain the opinion or agreement of others prior to acceptance or conclusion.
Collaborate	To work or act jointly with others.
Collect	To gather facts or data; to assemble; to accumulate.
Communicate	Write and read written material with a high degree of accuracy and comprehension; good oral skills.
Compile	To collect into one source; to compose out of materials from diverse resources.
Compose	To arrange in proper order; to command the efforts of others so as to produce desired outcome.
Consolidate	To combine into a whole; to bring together in one place.
Consult	To seek the advice of others; to confer; to exchange viewpoints, facts, opinions (see Discuss).
Control	To exercise authority; to have power over.
Cooperate	To act or operate jointly with others; to collaborate.
Coordinate	To bring things together for common actions or conditions to exist; to make things run smoothly together.
Correct	To rectify; to make right.
Correlate	To establish a mutual or reciprocal relationship.
Customer Service	Helpful and responsive to customer; displays patience and consideration; never curt or disrespectful; promotes image of company at every opportunity.
Decide	To choose from among alternatives or possibilities; to take a course of action.

Decision-maker	Identifies problems, obtains pertinent information, develops and analyzes alternative courses of action; utilizes logical assumptions and all available information resources to make timely moves and enact necessary strategies.
Delegate	To entrust responsibility for action to the care or management of another.
Delegation	Assignment to another of the responsibility and authority to accomplish an objective or achieve a goal.
Design	To conceive and plan a specific condition; to create or execute; to construct according to a plan.
Detail-oriented	Accomplishes a task thoroughly; pays attention to all aspects, no matter how small.
Determine	To fix conclusively or authoritatively; to decide; to make a decision; to find out.
Develop	To evolve; to make available; to make more usable.
Devise	To develop something, especially by combining known ideas or principles.
Direct	To regulate the activities or course of; to govern or control; to guide or command.
Discover	To find out something not known before as a result of exploring or investigating (see Research).
Discuss	To exchange views for the purpose of arriving at a conclusion or expressing a convincing argument.
Disseminate	To spread out information or ideas.
Distribute	To pass around; to allocate; to deliver to specific places or persons.
Draft	To write or compose papers or documents usually in preliminary form prior to final form; often for clearance, revision or approval by others.
Edit	To revise and prepare written material, usually for publication.
Energy	Maintains a high level of activity.
Establish	To set up; to illustrate; to develop for use.
Evaluate	To appraise; to ascertain the value of; to judge.
Examine	To investigate; to scrutinize; to subject to inquiry by inspection or test (see Discover).
Execute	To act on; to follow through to the end; to complete.
Exercise	To bring to bear or employ actively, as in exercising authority faster.

Facilitate	To make easy or less difficult.
File	To arrange papers, materials, etc., in some methodical manner.
Flag	To mark distinctively, as in flagging a discrepancy.
Flexible	Able to change course when necessary, modify plans and behaviour to meet new goals (see Adaptable).
Follow-up	To monitor the progress of; to see if results are satisfactory.
Forceful	Commands attention and respect; shows an air of confidence.
Formulate	To establish a system; to develop or devise a plan, policy or procedure.
Furnish	To provide, supply or give.
Goal	An objective; a result to be achieved.
Guidance	Conduct or direct others along a course of action; offering assistance.
Image	Displays professional appearance and conduct; makes a good impression on individuals inside and outside the University.
Implement	To carry out; to perform acts essential to the execution of a plan, project or program.
Independence	Takes action based on professional experience and individual initiative; doesn't rely solely on the opinions or directions of others.
Inform	To instruct; to communicate knowledge.
Initiate	To originate; to begin; to introduce a plan, policy or procedure for the first time.
Initiative	Actively tries to influence people and events to achieve goals; self-starter; works well without supervision; targets goals beyond minimal level of performance.
Inspect	To examine carefully and critically; to review for conformance to specifications.
Instruct	To impart knowledge; to supply direction, give information (see Train).
Instructions	Directions, information; methods for operating.
Integrity	Committed to traditional standards of ethics and conduct; obeys organizational policies in job-related activities; strong sense of personal and professional ethics.
Interpersonal Relations	Works toward maintaining strong relationships with others; uses tact; sensitive to feelings and needs of colleagues and subordinates.
Interpret	To explain the meaning of; to elucidate; to clarify.

Interview	To question in order to obtain facts or opinions.
Inventory	A count or list of items; stock.
Investigate	To inquire into systematically.
Issue	To distribute systematically.
Job Specifications	Description of physical characteristics, knowledge, skill, experience, and education requirements of a person who would be suited to perform a specific job.
Judgment	Makes decisions and formulates strategies based on pertinent information and logical conclusions; develops alternate courses of action; takes steps after considering facts and opinions.
Leadership	Guides subordinates in reaching goals; displays characteristics that instill confidence; uses appropriate methods to encourage wishes and duties to be carried out.
Learning Capacity	Ability and desire to quickly learn new job-related material and expand personal and professional horizons.
Maintain	To hold or keep in a certain condition; to keep up-to-date or current, as records or machinery.
Management Planning	Establishes strategies for action for self and others; allocates resources and assigns personnel to achieve set goals and objectives.
Measure	To find the quantity or amount of; to ascertain dimension, number, etc.
Merge	To combine; to bring together.
Monitor	To observe or check periodically; to maintain close watch on (see Follow-up).
Motivation	Takes personal satisfaction in superior performance and accomplishment; self-starter; pushes self to strive to achieve full utilization of abilities (see Leadership).
Negotiate	To exchange views and opinions in order to reach agreement; discussing pros and cons of proposals.
Notify	To give notice; to inform.
Objective	A desired result; a goal or standard of achievement.
Observe	To perceive or notice, watch; to monitor.
Obtain	To gain possession of; to acquire.
Operate	To conduct or perform an activity.
Organization	Individuals working together in related ways within a specific structure to a common end.

Organizational Awareness	Familiar with the organization; keeps aware of changing situation to anticipate internal problems and opportunities; understands how activities and decisions will affect other parts of the organization and responds accordingly.
Organize	To arrange interdependent parts; to systematize.
Organized	Develops a manner of managing or working that is systematic and logical; creates a step-by-step structure for personal and corporate activities (see Detail-oriented).
Outline	To make a summary of the important features.
Participate	To take part in.
Perform	To carry out; to accomplish; to execute.
Persuasiveness	Uses appropriate methods and styles of communication to gain acceptance of an idea, plan, activity or product; leads others to adopt his/her opinion.
Physical Capability	Able to physically perform specific required duties.
Plan	To devise a project, method or course of action.
Policy	A definite course of action selected from among alternatives to guide and circumscribe present and future decisions and activities.
Position description	A description of the purpose, scope, duties, responsibilities, authorities, and working relationships associated with a position or job.
Prepare	To make ready for a particular purpose.
Principle	A governing law of conduct; a fundamental tenet serving as a responsible guide to action; a basis for policy.
Procedure	A specific method for accomplishing a set of actions; a series of steps followed in a regular, definite order; a standardized practice.
Process	To subject to some special treatment; to handle in accordance with prescribed procedures.
Program	A series of steps planned toward an objective; a system.
Propose	To offer for consideration or adoption.
Provide	To supply for use; to furnish.
Purchase	To buy or procure.
Receive	To take something that is offered, to accept.
Recommend	To advise a course of action; to counsel on strategy.

Record	To register; to make a record of.
Render	To furnish, contribute.
Report	A presentation of organized information; compilation of results; presentation of recommendations or fact.
Represent	To take the place of; to substitute for.
Require	Demand that something be accomplished.
Requisition	Make a request for something.
Research	Inquiry into a specific subject; to review sources.
Resilience	Takes adversity well and bounces back; counter-attacks with new strategies and tactics when faced with roadblocks to desired results.
Responsibility	Accountable for decision, action, results, as in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete responsibility - individual has complete authority to take whatever action is advisable or necessary; subject to policies or general rules. • Delegated responsibility - individual has the authority to take action based on authority of supervisor. May initiate and carry out actions, but is required to advise superiors of the action taken. • General responsibility - individual is required to gain approval of supervisor before proceeding with the action.
Review	To go over or examine critically; analyze results for the purpose of giving an opinion.
Revise	To make a new, improved or up-to-date version of.
Routine	Part of a regular procedure, course, or normal course of business or official duties (non-routine-irregular or infrequent situations that arise).
Safety	Observes company safety standards; helps maintain safe conditions for all members of the organization.
Salesmanship	Develops plans to accomplish specific sales goals; uses time efficiently and is personally well organized so as to achieve highest possible sales results; gets others to come over to his/her way of thinking.
Scan	To examine point by point; review (see Observe).
Schedule	To plan a timetable; to set specific times for.
Screen	To examine closely so as to separate one item, group or class from another.
Search	To look over or through for the purpose of finding something (see Discover).
Secure	To gain possession of; to obtain.

Select	To choose from a number of similar objects, items, proposals, etc.
Selling	Can effectively use appropriate communication methods to gain agreement and acceptance both inside and outside the University.
Stimulate	To excite, rouse, or spur on.
Stress tolerance	Maintains stability under pressure or opposition; doesn't bring office problems home or vice versa.
Study	To consider attentively; to review closely.
Submit	To present for decision; to offer information for judgement by others.
Subordinate Development	Uses available training and development resources to improve subordinates' skills and abilities; helps subordinates qualify for expanded job opportunities; contributes to creation of work force with superior skills.
Supervise	<p>To oversee; to guide with directions; to inspect with authority; to instruct with immediate responsibility for purpose of performance; to superintend; to lead. Types of supervision include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct - involves guidance and direction over individuals who report to and are directly responsible to the supervisor. • Close - individual does not use own initiative, but is instructed by supervisor as to selection of proper procedures to follow. • Limited - individual proceeds on own initiative in compliance with policies, practices, and procedures set out by immediate supervisor. • General - involves guidance and direction from supervisor. • Training - involves advice, information and guidance on specialized matters, instruction in regard to procedures.
Survey	To determine the form, extent, or position of a situation, usually in connection with gathering information.
Task organization	Can establish priorities and a course of action for handling multiple assignments; arranges in advance for appropriate resources, equipment and supplies to be available.
Technical prowess	In-depth knowledge of technical aspects of job; ability to perform necessary equipment service for specific problem; working knowledge of how to handle certain machinery (e.g., computers).
Train	To increase skill or knowledge by capable instruction.
Typing	Types a minimum of _____ words per minutes. Familiar with, or can learn, _____ word processing equipment.
Verbal (external)	Effectively describes and explains products and services for customers; communicates clearly to all segments of target audiences.
Verbal (internal)	Effectively expresses ideas and concepts when talking with individuals and groups inside the University.

Verbal (presentation)	Effectively prepares formal presentations of ideas and proposals; clearly expresses same to groups and individuals.
Verbal (understanding)	Extracts pertinent information through verbal contacts with others.
Verify	To prove to be true or accurate; to confirm or substantiate; to test or check the accuracy of.
Work standards (personal)	Sets high personal standards of performance; not satisfied with average or traditional results.
Work standards (general)	Completes work to specified requirements, using accepted procedures; strives for best job results possible.