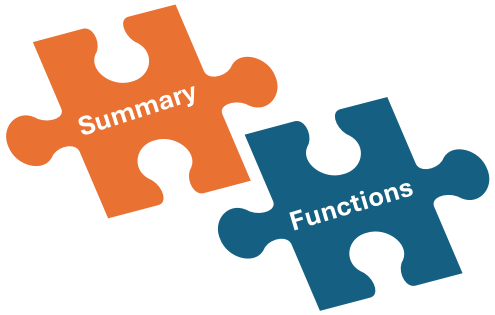
Words That Work

The Art of Crafting the Ideal Position Description

Why Does a Good Position Description Matter?

- **Clarity:** outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations associated with a job for supervisors and employees
- **Performance Management:** serves as a resource for evaluating employee performance
- **Recruitment:** helps attract suitable candidates who possess the required skills, qualifications, and experience
- **Organizational Alignment:** ensures that individual roles are aligned with the overall goals and objectives of the organization
- **Legal Compliance:** ensures that job responsibilities align with employment laws and regulations



Pieces of a Position Description

Summary – A quick 3 to 4 sentence explanation of the position

Essential Functions – List in order of importance details of the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of the position that are the most important to get the job done. Individual essential functions should not exceed 50%.
Marginal Functions – These are10% or less of the job and are the desirable, but not necessary aspects of the job. Essential and marginal functions should total 100%.

Minimum Qualifications – Set qualifications based on classification and benchmarking
Preferred Qualifications – Any knowledge, skill, or ability that would be desirable to have for the position

Supervision Received & Exercised – List the type/level of supervision received and list positions that are supervised

Position Descriptions

What information do you think is important to include in a well-written position description?

Consider These Questions

- What are the primary duties?
- What outcomes are expected?
- What percentage of time each week is spent on each function? (for a 40-hour week, 4 hours a week=10%)
- What materials, equipment or machines are needed?
- Is the position collaborative or independent? What type of interaction occurs?
- What level of supervision is involved?
- Does the position supervise others?

Position Description Do's and Don'ts

DO

- Do use short, direct verbs in present tense
- Do include specific and sufficient detail (outcomes, instruction provided, consequence of actions or errors)
- Do quantify when possible (dollar amounts, number of accounts, number of faculty in department)

DON'T

- Don't copy verbatim from the job profile
- Don't use ambiguous terms such as "handle" when a more specific term applies
- Don't combine responsibilities in such a way that 50% or greater would be assigned to one function (except when mandated by grant)

Factors That Influence Position Classification

Complexity of Work Performed
•Difficulty and variety of tasks
•Development of work methods
•Independence and decision-making

Consequence of Errors
•Responsibility for safety of others
•Financial costs of errors
•Necessity for accuracy

Responsibility for Public Contact
•Level of public interaction, complexity of subject matter, and purpose

Knowledge and Experience
•Technical knowledge, training, education, and certification

Fiscal Responsibility
•Budgeting, record complexity, and purchasing authority
•Type and amount of purchases

Reports and Record Keeping
•Complexity and design of record systems
•Data gathering, inference, and analysis
•Compilation of quantitative reports

Supervision
•Amount of supervision and supervisor's classification
•Number and level of subordinates

https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/hiring/position-planning-and-establishment/how-to-write-a-position-description/

Resources

- How to Write a Position Description

https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/hiring/position-planning-and-establishment/

- TEAMS Title Page

https://teams-titles.hr.ufl.edu/

- ChatGPT Prompt

https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/hiring/position-planning-and-establishment/chatgpt-job-description-template/

UFHR ChatGPT Job Description Prompt Template

- Leverages AI to streamline the job description development process.
- Ensures consistency, clarity, and compliance with HR policies
- Prompt is available at: https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/hiring/position-planning-and-establishment/chatgpt-job-description-template/
- For specifics on how ChatGPT works, please see the May 2024 HR Forum presentation at https://admin.hr.ufl.edu/connect/hr-forum/

ChatGPT Job Description Prompt Template

Copy to Clipboard

Act as an experienced recruitment marketing copywriter. Create a fillable job description template for [INSERT JOB TITLE HERE].

Maintain a clear and direct writing style using simple language, present tense, and descriptive verbs. Avoid abbreviations, acronyms, and gender-specific language. Comprehensively cover the typical and prevalent job description content, drawing from the available knowledge about the position. Include descriptive titles for each essential and marginal function as well as fully listing the minimum and preferred qualifications.

This template is to be filled out by the user. Do not remove or otherwise modify any text included inside brackets below such as: [IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE], [SPECIFY SUPERVISED POSITIONS], [SPECIFY DAYS AND HOURS] and [EXPLAIN VARIATIONS]. These fields should remain in the final generated template for the user to input manually. Any content that the user is required to complete should be added in brackets.

SUMMARY OF POSITION ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES:
Provide a detailed summary of the role's responsibilities.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND TIME ALLOCATION:
List all essential functions in the following format
Essential Function Name:
[Percentage of Time]
Explain in detail, 4 to 5 sentences, the core duties of this function
–
Add more essential functions if necessary.
Note: Identify essential functions under ADA accommodations.

MARGINAL FUNCTIONS AND TIME ALLOCATION:
List all marginal functions in the following format
Marginal Function Name:
[Percentage of Time]
Explain in detail, 4 to 5 sentences, the core duties of this function
–
Add more marginal functions if necessary, not exceeding 10%.
Note: Marginal functions for ADA accommodations.

SUPERVISION:
Reports to [IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE], supervises [SPECIFY SUPERVISED POSITIONS]

Generative AI can be used for:

- **Introductory text**

help generate engaging opening description to pique interest

- **Language Corrections**

assist in proofreading and grammar

- **Overall Structure**

organize the job posting in a coherent and logical manner

- **Formatting**

to make job descriptions appealing and easy to read

- **Standardized Content**

ensure consistency in language and formatting across multiple job descriptions

Generative AI can NOT be used for:

- **Personal Names**

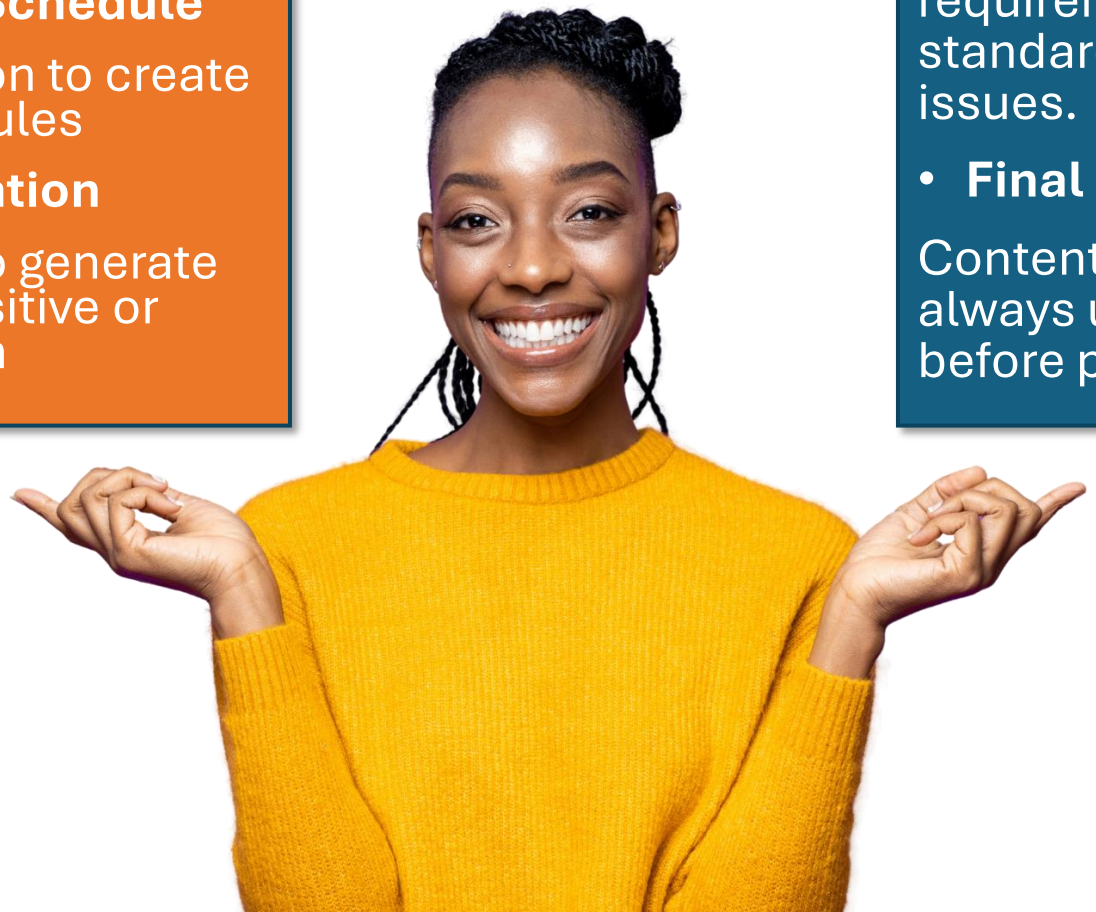
AI should not generate names of people associate with the position

- **Working Hours and Schedule**

AI should not be relied on to create or communicate schedules

- **Confidential Information**

AI should not be used to generate content containing sensitive or confidential information



- **Legal or Compliance Matters**

AI should not be used to generate content pertaining to legal requirements, compliance standards, or any other regulatory issues.

- **Final Content Publication**

Content generated by AI should always undergo human review before publication.

The IFAS Review and Approval Process

Submit new or updated position description for IFAS HR review through SalesForce
ifas-hr@ifas.ufl.edu
Jackie will collaborate with department and/or UFHR Class & Comp for review

Is this for a reclassification with pay change?

NO

YES

Jackie will submit the RPC Form to IFAS Finance for funding approval

Jackie will notify the department when everything has been approved and the ePAF may be entered

Tips for a Smooth Review Process

DO

- Do add details that are specific to that individual position in essential functions
- Do complete all relevant fields of the position description template (policy making or interpretation, program direction or development)
- Do add 5% other duties as assigned to marginal functions
- Do use the Empowering Change Guide

DON’T

- Don’t put all the details of the position in the summary
- Don’t indicate that a driver’s license is required and not include justification in the essential functions
- Don’t send incomplete position descriptions through SalesForce – use the template
- Don’t wait until the last minute to update prior to posting

UF/IFAS HR Contact Information

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