

Bowdoin College

# Sample Job Description Development Guidelines

May 2023

# | Agenda

**Project Introduction**

**Important Considerations**

**Overview of the Job Description**

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# Project Introduction

## *The Importance of Accurate Job Descriptions*

### Benchmarking

Assist in determining the appropriate market comparisons and competitive wages/salaries for jobs

### Salary Grade or Band Assignment

Ensure jobs are assigned to the appropriate salary structure grades/bands

### Compliance

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA)
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

### Internal Equity

Ensure employees with similar responsibilities, performance, knowledge, skills, and experience are paid fairly and equitably

### Performance Discussions

Promote a clear, shared understanding of a job's major responsibilities and clarity in expectations and performance standards

### Recruiting and Promotion

Facilitate development of job postings that accurately reflect a job's major responsibilities, help identify the most qualified candidates, and provide new incumbents with a clear understanding of the job

### Career Development

Facilitate an understanding of job hierarchies, which allows and encourages employees and managers to share how they can create a career plan together

# Important Considerations

# Important Considerations

## *General Overview*

### **When completing the Job Description, make sure to:**

- **Describe what is required to perform your role (you might have some unique skills to offer that may not necessarily be required for your job)**
  - Example: Tom is a bilingual financial analyst; however, his job does not require him to be bilingual. Please do not add bilingual as a requirement in the job description
- **Describe your current job content in a normal operating environment, not based on anticipated changes or prior functions no longer in use**
- **Do not include temporary assignments/responsibilities that will not be a permanent part of the job's responsibilities going forward**
  - Example: Sally is the Assistant Director for Accounting, acting as interim Accounting Director. Please do not include responsibilities related to the interim role in the job description
- **Avoid jargon, spell out acronyms, and define technical terms (when necessary)**
  - Example: Bob is an accountant, and his job requires a CPA certification. Please write out Certified Public Accountant.
- **Use job titles or roles when referring to others at Bowdoin. Use names of people only when specifically required**
  - Example: Instead of “works with Cindy to ensure all local laws and regulations are met,” state “works with Compliance Manager to ensure all local laws and regulations are met”

# Important Considerations

## *What to Include and Not Include?*

### **Include**

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- ✓ Essential and regularly required responsibilities

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- ✓ Expected outcomes within essential functions

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- ✓ Normal expectations of a fully competent person, meeting all job requirements

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- ✓ Clear, accurate descriptions

### **Do Not Include**

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- ✗ One-time, short-term assignments

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- ✗ Exhaustive list of tasks and/or details on “how” work is done

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- ✗ Tasks or expectations designed around an individual (e.g., performance, professional interests, etc.)

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- ✗ Acronyms without explanation, misleading or vague descriptions

**For example,  
instead of writing...**

“Enters the following information into system screens ABC and XYZ: Employee Name, Address, Phone Number...”

**You would write...**

“Enters required data into HRIS module and audits entries for completeness and accuracy”

# Overview of the Job Description

# Overview of the job Description Questionnaire

## *Job Summary*

Sample of brief summaries...

- The Accountant will prepare financial reports to track the organization's assets, liabilities, profit and loss, tax liabilities, and other related financial activities.
- The Accounting Manager will plan and direct the accounting activities of the department.
- The Athletics Coach 1 provides entry-level assistance in coaching one of a variety of ABC College sports programs operating under NCAA Operating Bylaws. Assists with various aspects of the program, which may include activities such as individual recruitment or training and/or strength conditioning for athletic competition. Receives instruction and developmental guidance from more senior coaching staff.
- The Web Developer II designs, builds, and maintains our websites. Works to ensure online tools and websites for internal users and external visitors are effective and meet the College's online standards. In addition, the Web Developer II manages the technical functionality of the College's online tools and websites.



# Overview of the job Description Questionnaire

## *Major Duties or Essential Functions*

**Major Duties** (or Essential Functions) are those major ongoing responsibilities/end results that must be achieved in the job. This is the heart of the JD as it outlines what the job is ultimately accountable for—**what, how, and why**

- Describe **up to** eight primary responsibilities (not tasks) the job must achieve, starting with the most important
- Write statements so that someone unfamiliar with the job can understand what the job does
- Highlight “what you do” instead of “what gets done”
- Focus on responsibilities that take >**10%** of time
  - **Note:** The percent of time spent on a task may not necessarily reflect how critical the task is to the job
- Ideally, these tasks would total at least 80%–90% of time and should not exceed 100%

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Job Summary and Essential Functions*

### Describing Essential Functions Clearly

Use the following pattern to write an essential function statement:

**Action Word** + **Subject** + **Activities**

*For example:*

**Action Word**

**Subject**

Review and validate transactions by ensuring completeness and accuracy of the account balances.

**Activities**

For a sample list of action words, please see the *Appendix* of this document.

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Job Summary and Essential Functions*

### Other Examples of Essential Function statements:

#### Maintain audio-visual equipment inventory by:

- Tracking borrowed equipment
- Entering new equipment into the equipment log
- Ensuring the accuracy of the equipment database

#### Provide technical IT support to the College by:

- Responding to telephone calls, email, and personnel requests for technical help
- Troubleshooting user computer problems by documenting, tracking, and monitoring the problem to ensure a timely resolution

#### Prepare monthly financial reports by:

- Collecting and verifying financial data
- Entering current data into spreadsheets
- Running analysis reports
- Consolidating final figures into standard monthly financial reports

#### Identify funding opportunities for the College by:

- Cultivating relationships with potential donors
- Coordinating outreach, fundraising, and other special events

Additional process steps to develop essential functions are provided in the *Appendix* of this document.

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Education Requirements*

- Select the **education level** that best describes the **required** and/or **preferred** level of education to perform the position
  - **Note:** The **minimum** required, and preferred levels of education may or may not be the same as your level of education, either currently or when you started
- Make a note indicating the specific major or discipline, i.e., “mathematics or related fields”
- Make a note indicating if you think that the education requirement could be satisfied with a specific level of experience

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Experience Requirements*

- Select the duration of time that best describes the **required** and/or **preferred job-related work experience** to perform the job
  - The minimum required and preferred levels of job-related experience may or may not be the same as your level of job-related experience, either currently or when you started
- Make a note about the kind of experience you need to do the job, i.e., progressive supervisory experience
- Make a note if you could replace the required experience with some level of education

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Certifications/Licenses*

- Indicate credentials required to do your job
- Indicate other credentials that would make it easier for you to perform in your role – preferred but not required
  - **Note:** if you have credentials that are not required or preferred, there is no need to enter them

# Overview of the Job Description

## *Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities*

- Review the section carefully
- Fill in any required knowledge, skills, and abilities
  - **Knowledge** is the understanding of a set of responsibilities specific to a position that can be gained via formal education and/or position-related training or experience
  - **Skills** are the practical expertise or talent needed to perform the responsibilities of the position or complete a task and achieve specific outcomes
  - **Abilities** refer to the power or capacity to perform an activity or task successfully

# Appendix



# Appendix

## *Glossary of Action Verbs*

**Adjust**—Bring to more satisfactory state; change to enhance a situation.

**Administer**—Exercise and implement control over the performance of specific operations, approved plans, or established policies within the scope of limited and well-defined authority.

**Advise**—Give information or opinion pertinent to a probable course of action.

**Analyze**—Study the factors of a problem to determine a proper solution.

**Arrange**—Put into suitable order or sequence; to make preparations or plan.

**Assist**—Take an active part or give support in performing a function.

**Balance**—Arrange so that one set of elements exactly equals another.

**Calculate**—Work out by mathematical computation.

**Check**—Compare with a source, original, or authority.

**Compile**—Put together a series or group of facts or figures from somewhat related sources into a related whole; usually used in the sense of making a report.

**Compose**—Form by putting together; formulate or write.

**Conduct**—Exercise leadership in a project or study.

**Coordinate**—Combine (through balancing, tuning, or integrating) the efforts of separate groups to accomplish a specific objective; coordination can be exercised without line authority.

**Counsel**—Give advice and guidance to another.

**Demonstrate**—To show clearly; illustrate or explain with many examples.

**Develop**—Advance programs, planning or personnel capabilities to higher state.

**Direct**—Authoritatively define, regulate, or determine the activities of subordinate organizational units to achieve predetermined objectives.

# Appendix

## *Glossary of Action Verbs*

**Distribute**—Give out; divide among several.

**Execute**—Put into effect according to a plan (See "Administer").

**File**—Arrange in order for preservation or reference; place among official records.

**Gather**—Come or bring together into a group mass or unit.

**Initiate**—Start, begin, or introduce a program or action.

**Install**—Set up for use or service.

**List**—Place in a specified category; register.

**Maintain**—Keep in an existing state; to continue or preserve; keep in a state of efficiency or validity.

**Manage**—Plan, organize, and control to achieve coordinated objectives by leading and directing subordinates without giving detailed supervision.

**Monitor**—Watch, observe, or check for a special purpose; keep track.

**Negotiate**—Reach agreement on specific proposals through discussion with others of a different viewpoint.

**Obtain**—Gain or attain by planned action or effort.

**Operate**—Perform a function.

**Organize**—Set up plans and procedures for achieving objectives.

**Participate**—Take part in and share responsibility with others for action but without individual authority to take action.

**Perform**—Carry out, accomplish; to do in a formal manner or according to a prescribed method.

**Plan**—Devise or determine a course of action to achieve a desired result.

**Provide**—Furnish necessary information or services.

**Post**—Transfer an entry or item from one record to another.

# Appendix

## *Glossary of Action Verbs*

**Prepare**—Make ready for further action or purpose.

**Process**—Perform a series of actions or operations leading to an end.

**Prove**—Determine extent of agreement or disagreement with intended relation between results.

**Recommend**—Offer for acceptance and support a course of action to persons responsible for approval or authorization.

**Record**—Register, make a record of.

**Repair**—Restore by replacing a part or putting together what is torn or broken; to fix.

**Report**—Give an account of; make a written record or summary.

**Research**—Careful or diligent search; investigate or experiment with the aim of discovery and interpretation of facts.

**Review**—Critically examine (completed work, reports, performance) with a view to amendment or improvement.

**Schedule**—Plan a timetable; to set, appoint, or designate for a fixed time.

**Sort**—Put in a certain place or rank according to kind, class or nature.

**Supervise**—Oversee or watch with authority work, proceedings, or progress; control employment status, including hiring, salary adjustment, promotion, termination; implies day-to-day concern with details of operation.

**Tabulate**—Arrange figures or items in rows and columns; computing by means of a table.

**Transcribe**—Make a written copy; dictated or recorded information in longhand or on a typewriter; transfer from one recording form to another.

**Verify**—Determine the accuracy of one thing or figure in relation to other things or figures known to be accurate.

# Appendix

## *Essential Functions Development Process Steps (Optional)*

### Using the Essential Functions Worksheet

- Use the Essential Functions Worksheet example below to organize your thoughts
- List all activities, duties and tasks of the job in the “Duties and Tasks” column
- Cluster related activities together under the “Related Groupings” column
  - Eliminate duplicates
  - Clarify language
  - Delete extraneous statements
- Review each grouping to develop an Essential Function Statement

Duties & Tasks

Related Groupings

Essential Functions Statements

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

The sample worksheets on the following slides show activities for the job “Administrative Assistant,” but the process can be used for any job.

# Appendix

## *Essential Functions Development Process Steps (Optional)*

### Step 1 Make a list of the Duties & Tasks

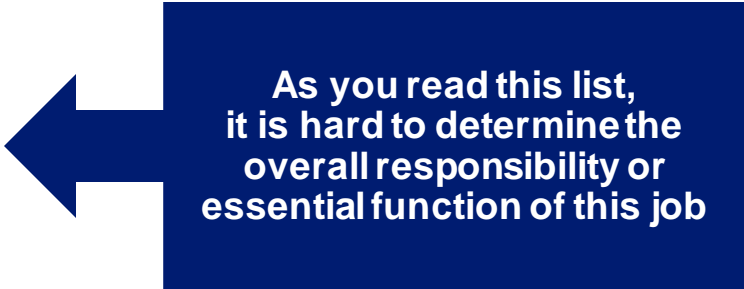
Job Title: Administrative Assistant

#### Duties & Tasks

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Prepare and plan for meetings  
Secure space for meetings and conferences  
Plan and coordinate program orientation  
Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time  
Distribute agendas  
Track and monitor program budget  
Draft and type correspondence  
Run reports  
Assist in conducting program assessment  
Serve as on-site liaison for program events  
Coordinate program implementation, including outreach, selection, and enrollment  
Maintain program records and key materials

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**As you read this list,  
it is hard to determine the  
overall responsibility or  
essential function of this job**

# Appendix

## Essential Functions Development Process Steps (Optional)

### Step 2

### Sort the Duties & Tasks into Related Groupings

Job Title: Administrative Assistant

Duties & Tasks	Related Groupings	Essential Functions Statements
Prepare and plan for meetings and events Secure space for meetings events Schedule meetings and events Plan and coordinate program orientation Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time Distribute agendas Track and monitor program budget	Schedule meetings and events Prepare and plan for meetings and events Secure space for meetings and events Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time Distribute agendas Serve as on-site liaison for program events	
Draft and type correspondence Run reports Assist in conducting program assessment Serve as on-site liaison for program events Coordinate program implementation, including outreach, selection, and enrollment	Plan and coordinate program orientation Coordinate program implementation, including outreach, selection, and enrollment Assist in conducting program assessment Run regular program reports	
Maintain program records and key materials	Track and monitor program budget Draft and type program correspondence Maintain program records and key materials	

# Appendix

## Essential Functions Development Process Steps (Optional)

### Step 3

### Transfer the Essential Function Statements to the Job Description

Job Title: Administrative Assistant

Duties & Tasks	Related Groupings	Essential Functions Statements
<p>Prepare and plan for meetings and events</p> <p>Secure space for meetings events</p> <p>Schedule meetings and events</p> <p>Plan and coordinate program orientation</p> <p>Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</p> <p>Distribute agendas</p>	<p>Schedule meetings and events</p> <p>Prepare and plan for meetings and events</p> <p>Secure space for meetings and events</p> <p>Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</p> <p>Distribute agendas</p> <p>Serve as on-site liaison for program events</p>	<p>Coordinate all aspects of meetings and events by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling meetings and events and informing participants of location and time</li> <li>• Securing space and working with key stakeholders on logistics</li> <li>• Sending soft-copy agendas to participants before the meeting and distributing hard copies during the meeting</li> <li>• Serving as on-site liaison for program information, questions, and concerns</li> </ul>
<p>Track and monitor program budget</p> <p>Draft and type correspondence</p> <p>Run reports</p> <p>Assist in conducting program assessment</p> <p>Serve as on-site liaison for program events</p> <p>Coordinate program implementation, including outreach, selection, and enrollment</p> <p>Maintain program records and key materials</p>	<p>Plan and coordinate program orientation</p> <p>Coordinate program implementation, including outreach, selection, and enrollment</p> <p>Assist in conducting program assessment</p> <p>Run regular program reports</p> <p>Track and monitor program budget</p> <p>Draft and type program correspondence</p> <p>Maintain program records and key materials</p>	<p>Support specific program activities and initiatives through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and coordinating orientation</li> <li>• Coordinating implementation, outreach, selection, and enrollment for program</li> <li>• Conducting program assessment</li> <li>• Running regular program reports and diagnostics</li> </ul> <p>Provide logistical and operational support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracking and monitoring program budget</li> <li>• Drafting and typing correspondence</li> <li>• Maintaining program records and key materials</li> </ul>