

Job Description Writer's Check List

Answering the following questions will assist the job description writer to produce a more accurate draft job description.

1. Is this sentence as short, simple, and to the point as I can make it?
2. Is every word and phrase necessary? Does each contribute to the description?
3. Does each sentence begin with an action verb? Can the passive verbs be converted to active verbs?
4. Are all verbs in the present tense?
5. Are the HOW and WHY of the duties stated where not self-evident?
6. Have I used "may" where I mean "may", and "occasionally" where I mean "occasionally"?
7. Are all important tools and equipment identified by manufacturer's name, type and model?
8. Are all references to other departments, sections and machines, specific and written with initial capitals, e.g., Personnel Division?
9. Are all references to other job titles given in full and written in full capitals, e.g., PERSONNEL OFFICER?
10. Is all qualifying or incidental explanatory information written in parentheses?

Updating Job Questionnaires and Descriptions

Questionnaires were used extensively during the conversion programme to obtain job information. They were produced in a variety of forms ranging from two to twelve pages according to what was thought suitable for each occupational group. The many thousands of employees who were confronted with the task of completing them gained an appreciation of the intricacies involved in describing their duties and supplying the required supplementary information.

Copies of questionnaires completed for conversion have been retained on position files at headquarters. For some time to come these conversion questionnaires will constitute the major portion of the job description material held in departmental records. Individual questionnaires are superseded and updated by job descriptions whenever a new classification action occurs. However, the number of positions for which updated descriptions have been produced in the post-conversion period is small in comparison with the department's total establishment.

The circumstances which prevailed during the conversion period, such as the limitation of time and the reorganization of programmes, were not always conducive to the provision of lasting job descriptions. Managers would therefore be well advised to examine questionnaires to ensure that they correctly reflect the current authorized duties and responsibilities. When it is found that they do not accurately describe current work, they should be replaced by new questionnaires or descriptions and forwarded through the appropriate Programme Director for classification review.