suggest you run copies and pencil in any changes of significance that strike you between what is currently described as job duties and what you know is actually happening.

A very good way to check the currency of these documents – apart from your own knowledge – is to look at the sections of your employees' most recent finalized annual performance reports which indicate the duties of the positions.

Between the organization chart, the official job description, and the statement of duties in the performance report, even if you are a relative newcomer to the particular office you should be able to get a good fix on the current reality of the job packages.

Main Activities of the Unit

The next step in the process is to list the key facts that you know about the jobs. Start with the main activities of the area. List them as short numbered sentences, keeping the goals terse and clear. Have the staff examine their activities in respect to which ones may be superfluous and which ones are not. Ask the questions:

Is what we are doing serving the best interests of our clients?
Are there things we are doing that we should not be doing?
Are there things we are not doing that we should be doing?

Examine whether there is overlap or duplication of activities. A team approach to examine the extent to which this can be eliminated is useful. Discuss the extent to which stress factors in the work process could be eliminated. Would a changed physical layout of the working environment help?

Security

Now turn to security concerns. Are there any? How many classified communications does the area handle? What is the security level of such communications? Make a detailed note.

Present Degree of Computerization

You will be a most unusual office if you do not have at least some computerization. Who has computers and word processors? Are they linked in a Local Area Network? Are they compatible at all, or do you have a grab-bag of machinery acquired over the years that is incompatible and has caused you to create systems to accommodate the need for conversions between incompatible formats? Do you have a fax, and how much is it used?

Make a quick inventory of the hardware and software. This need not be detailed. It could be as simple as "John Smith has a Compaq Deskpro with one hard and two floppy disk drives. Machine is a stand-alone with own printer, not connected to any other machinery. John currently only knows one computer language: Wordperfect 5.0". In a few words you have summed up the hardware, software, and the current competence level of the user.