

What's In a Position Description?

Developing Position Descriptions
with
Position Management

Question or Comment?

Press the lever on your push to talk
microphone and then...

"Excuse me Floy, this is
[*your name*] at [*your location*]
I have a question (comment)."

Objectives

- Understand the purpose and legality of a position description (PD)
- Prepare to develop & write a PD
- Understand the role of position management
- Explain the purpose of the OF-8

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Objectives (cont'd.)

- Use established PDs correctly
- Explain to your employees the basic procedures for filing appeals

Competencies

- **Results Driven**
Accountability, Problem-Solving
Technical Credibility
- **Business Acumen**
Human Resources Management
- **Leading People**
Vision
- **Leading Change**
Strategic Thinking

Position Description

The official record of duties and responsibilities assigned to a position, or group of positions, by management in order to accomplish a specific job.

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Position Description (cont'd.)

- It describes the skills and knowledge needed to perform the duties, and
- it describes the complexities of those duties.

At your site...

“What do you want to know about position descriptions?”
5-6 questions

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Reasons for PDs

1. Create permanent record of duties and responsibilities
2. Serve as legal basis for pay
3. Provide recruiting information (KSAs)
4. Develop performance standards
5. Set training requirements

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Reasons for PDs (cont'd.)

- 6. Document duties for promotion
- 7. Determine budget costs for personnel
- 8. Improve work methods
- 9. Organize and assign work

When Is a New PD Necessary?

- 1. A new position is established
- 2. Duties, responsibilities or organizational relationships materially change
- 3. New classification standards are issued

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Supervisors/Managers

- Determine the duties and responsibilities of each position
- Write the position description
- Add, remove, or change assignments
- Ensure that PD is current, adequate, and accurate
- Initiate classification actions

Employees

- Perform assigned duties
- Notify supervisor when duties change and become regular and recurring
- May write or help write updated description

Classifiers

- Provide technical advice on assigning duties and developing PDs
- Validate PDs
- Help managers carry out legal and personnel responsibilities

Before You Write...

1. Is the position necessary?
2. Do I have the FTE and funding?
3. Can the position be structured differently?
4. How does the position fit into the work area or park?
5. Does the position serve employee needs?

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GS vs. WG Positions

Different laws & different workforce

- GS – Professional (requires college degree), administrative, technical, clerical
- WG – (Federal Wage System)
Crafts, trades, labor

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GS vs. WG Positions

Grade based on different percentages

- GS/GL – Grade based upon highest level of regular, recurring duty performed at least 25% of time
- WG – Grade based on highest level of regular, recurring duty performed, no minimum percentage required, but usually look for 10% of time

GS vs. WG Positions

Pay Determinations Differ

- GS/GL – Salaries based upon nationwide scale
- WG – Hourly rate based upon locally-determined wage survey

Definitions

TASK – A distinct, identifiable activity that constitutes one of the logical and necessary steps an employee performs in the position.

DUTY

- Series of closely-related tasks
- Requires same or closely-related knowledge, skills, and abilities

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Definitions

MAJOR DUTY

- Describes why position exists
- Requires specific qualifications, e.g., experience, education, training

OTHER DUTIES – Responsibilities required by the position but not the primary reason for the position's existence.

Case Study Assignment

- Identify the major duties
- List the tasks that make up the duties
- Be ready to report out after break

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Major Duties and Tasks

Title: GS-025 Park Ranger (Interp)

- Interpretation
- Museum Technician Support
- Lead for Temporaries (Seasonals)

Major Duties and Tasks

Interpretation

- Research & write critical stories
- Provide interpretation service to visitors
- Respond to requests for research information

Major Duties and Tasks

Museum Technician Support

- Assession artifacts
- Catalog and inventory
- Perform limited restoration
- Assist with archival records

Major Duties and Tasks

Lead for Temporaries (Seasonals)

- Provide oversight & evaluate Guides
- Train temporary Park Guides
- Ensure Guides have critical stories for presentation

Steps in Developing a PD

1. Determine tasks and duties to be performed
2. Make logical outline of major duties
3. Assess the position's relationship to other positions within the work area
4. Set the supervisory chain of command
5. Determine performance requirements

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Tips for Developing PDs

- Use active, expressive verbs to describe duties and responsibilities.
- State duties in clear, picture-creating terms.
- Avoid: cliches, vague terms.

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Tips for Developing PDs (cont'd.)

- Don't write for grade justifications
- Put it in your own words.
- Eschew using ponderous, phraseology to impress.

Leader Position Descriptions

General Schedule (GS/GL)

- Must have 3 people minimum
- Input into standards, evaluations
- Works beside coworkers
- Passes on instructions
- Usually one grade higher than those led

Leader Position Descriptions

Federal Wage Service (WL)

- Must lead several coworkers
- Input into standards, evaluations
- Works beside coworkers
- Passes on instructions
- Grade equal highest level work led, e.g. WG-08 = WL-08

Notes of Special Consideration

- WG positions can perform FMSS duty.
- FLERT PDs require certain language AND percentage on each major duty performed.
- WG Supervisor (WS) must perform this work 80% of time to be FLSA exempt.
- COTR positions require special training.
- OF-8s are official statements.

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OF-8 Validation—Supervisor

"I certify that this is an accurate statement ... the position is necessary ... made with the knowledge ... information is to be used for statutory purposes ... payment of public funds... that false or misleading statements may constitute violations or their implementing regulations.

OF-8 Validation—Classifier

"I certify that this position has been classified/graded as required by Title 5, U.S. Code, in conformance with standards published by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or, if no published standards apply directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards."

Benchmark PDs

- Must perform 80% of duties in PD
- Must be validated by supervisor and authorized classifier
- Must align with organizational structure
- If proposed upgrade, requires desk audit
- Must be approved by WASO for Servicewide use

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Standard PDs

- Generic PDs that may be used Regionwide
- Require verification of duties for given park
- Approved at Regional level for use within that Region only
- Most are found in WG Series or general clerical field (GS)

“Identical Additional” (IA) PDs

- Can only use PD from same park performing same duties
- Requires new OF-8 to validate new position number and duties
- Does not require new classification if copy is attached to original

PD Amendments

- DI-625, Position Classification Amendment
- Collateral duties
- More than 2 amendments, consider rewrite

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Exercise

- Write a brief outline (bullet form) of major duties for a PD;
- Develop the first paragraph for the Major Duties Section; Or
- Use one you are currently working on developing within your section

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Desk Audits - What They Entail

- A desk audit is an in-depth review of the duties performed by the incumbent
 - May be conducted on-site
 - May be completed by telephone

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Desk Audits - What Is Needed

- Updated org chart
- Current PD
- Revised PD

Employee should review current PD

- Make list of changes in duties
- Be ready to explain/show work examples

Employees May Appeal...

- Grade
- Series
- Title
- Pay schedule (GS / WG)

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May Not Appeal...

- Content or accuracy of the PD
- Agency's proposed classification decision
- Classification of a position to which employee is not assigned
- Classification of a position to which employee is temporarily detailed for less than 2 years

Appeals System - GS

- GS employees may appeal to:
 - NPS or DOI, or
 - Directly to OPM
- No further appeal from OPM decision

Appeals System - WG

- WG/WS employees may appeal to:
 - NPS or DOI
 - OPM only after NPS or DOI
- No further appeal from OPM decision

Helpful Web Sites

- www.opm.gov/fedclass
- <http://165.83.62.205/ahr/classification/classify2.htm>
- www.nps.gov/renew/forms.htm

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Helpful Web Sites

- www.opm.gov/classapp/main.asp
- www1.nrintra.nps.gov/careers/
- <http://flert.nifc.gov>

To receive credit for this course

- Take the on-line evaluation at:
www.nps.gov/training/tel
- Click on the DOI Learn tab
 - Go to the link under Class Evaluations for *What's In a Position Description?*

To receive credit for this course

- Please complete the evaluation within 2 weeks of the course, by April 10
- Sign the Attendance Roster
