

JOB ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

1. Importance of Job Analysis and Description

Job analysis and job description are closely interrelated. The information gathered on each job through job analysis is subsequently organized and compiled in a Job Description. The adequacy of the Job Description thus depends largely upon the extent of the information obtained through job analysis.

The importance of these two steps in the job evaluation process is quite evident. They represent the starter for the required action and constitute the input upon which the evaluation decisions are based.

An inaccurate evaluation of a job is often caused by errors in the basic data contained in the Job Description. It is therefore essential to assure proper job analysis and the accurate description of the job duties and specifications.

2. Job Definition

A job is the unit in the organizational structure of AUB. It is defined as follows:

“A job is a logically related group of work functions of the same level of responsibility and difficulty which are required to be performed by one employee or by a group of similarly qualified employees”

3. Source of Information

To accomplish the desired objective, job analysis and job description must be based on factual and accurate information. The information must be in sufficient detail to permit a proper identification of each job, showing how the duties and responsibilities of that job differ from those of other jobs in the AUB.

The information can be obtained from the job incumbent at the appropriate level essentially in professional or supervisory positions. However, in most cases, the job supervisor is the best source for such information since he is responsible for assigning duties and responsibilities and for ensuring their proper performance.

4. Job Analysis

a. Job Analysis of New or Revised Jobs

In every organization of any size, the organization structure, work assignments, job duties and responsibilities are subject to change. New jobs are established and existing jobs may change either abruptly as a result of re-organization, or gradually over time. In such cases, it is necessary to analyze and describe new or revised jobs in order to assure their proper evaluation.

b. Request for Job Analysis

(1) Initiated by the Job Supervisor

When a new job has been established under the approved organization structure or the duties of an existing job have significantly changed, the supervisor concerned will initiate a “Request for Job Analysis” form and submit it through proper channels to the Department Head concerned. In his request, the job supervisor will outline the main duties of the new job or the principal revisions.

(2) Reviewed by the Department Head

The Department Head concerned will review the request, ensure its validity, and forward it to the Human Resources Department for necessary action.

c. Job Analysis Conducted by the Human Resources Department

Upon receiving an approval request for Job Analysis, the Human Resources Department will ensure that the job conforms to the approved organization chart, conduct the necessary job analysis interview and compile the information on the Job Analysis Form.

d. Basic Considerations in Job Analysis

In carrying out the analysis of a job and completing the required form, the following basic aspects must be considered:

- (1) The facts obtained and recorded must refer to the job and not the job incumbent.
- (2) The duties and responsibilities must be for the job, as it exists at present rather than for what the job should be or is thought to be. The minimum requirements must be adequate to support the satisfactory performance of such duties and responsibilities.
- (3) The job facts must, in all cases, be verified to ensure that they are accurate, factual and realistic.
- (4) The duties of each job must be coordinated with the duties of other jobs, above and below, in the organizational unit and with related jobs in other parts of the organization.
- (5) Each duty must be analyzed to ensure that it is essential to the operation of the unit.
- (6) Jobs which are similar in nature and of an equal level of difficulty should be combined, wherever possible, under the same job title to provide uniformity whilst still permitting flexibility in work assignment.
- (7) Where there is more than one incumbent in a job, only one job analysis interview is required.
- (8) Where the job has more than one application, such as Secretary or Clerk, it is advisable to obtain details of the applications in the various units in order to ensure adequate coverage.

e. Job Analysis Form

The Job Analysis Form contains necessary instructions which are self-explanatory.

5. Job Description

The Job Description is necessarily based on the information obtained through the job analysis interview. It is prepared primarily for defining duties and responsibilities and for job evaluation. It is also useful for such purposes as organization analysis, recruitment, employee placement, performance appraisal and training and development.

a. AUB Policy

It is AUB's policy that each approved job should be described on the prescribed form and evaluated under the Job Evaluation Plan.

b. Preparation of Job Descriptions by the Human Resources Department

Job descriptions will be prepared by the Human Resources Department on the basis of the facts indicated on the Job Analysis Form.

In the case of an existing Job Description requiring revision to certain parts of its content, the revision will be made by the Human Resources Department through an interview conducted with the job supervisor. It is not necessary to complete a Job Analysis Form for such revision.

c. Review and Approval by Department Management

Job Descriptions prepared or revised by the Human Resources Department are subject to the review and concurrence of the Section Head and the approval of the Department Head concerned.

d. General Guidelines

In compiling a Job Description, the following general aspects must be carefully considered:

(1) Identification

The Description must be confined to those duties, responsibilities and qualifications specifically relating to the job which distinguish it from other jobs in AUB. This permits a proper comparison of jobs.

(2) Precision

The Description must be precise and use specific terms. Its statements must be clear and in layman's language, aimed at defining each function fully and showing where the duties of the job end and those of other related jobs begin.

(3) Conciseness

Descriptions may vary in length depending upon the content and requirements of the job, but emphasis should be placed on brevity, conciseness and the elimination of tedious details.

(4) Organization

The information contained in the Job Description must be organized and presented in a logical sequence. Related tasks should be grouped under one function. It is always advisable to describe the full cycle of tasks involved in each function.

(5) Coordination

Each job is a part of the organizational structure. Its duties, responsibilities and minimum requirements are related to other jobs in AUB. Accordingly, the Job Description must be prepared, not in isolation, but in close coordination with the other jobs in the organization.

(6) Standardization

Each job must be described in a uniform manner and presented on the Job Description Form. The style and terminology used in each Job Description should conform to an established pattern or standard, wherever possible.

e. Job Description Form

Job Descriptions must be compiled according to a standard format.

f. Basic Considerations

In the preparation of a Job Description, it is necessary to observe certain basic guidelines that ensure the adequacy of the described information in a way which will permit its proper evaluation.

These are presented below in the order of the heading appearing on the Job Description Form:

(1) Basic Function

This is a brief statement of the purpose of the job as a whole in order to distinguish it from other jobs in AUB. This should be followed by a general description of the scope or range of activities and the responsibilities assigned on the job.

To ensure adequate coverage, it is advisable to prepare the Basic Function after all the other parts of the Job Description have been written.

(2) Duties Performed

a) Select the main duties and responsibilities of the job. These are normally grouped under seven to ten headings.

b) Describe the main duties of the job in a specific and concise manner indicating WHAT work is done, HOW it is done and WHY it is done, unless these details are self-evident. Examples can be most helpful in clearly describing the work activity, and can be inserted into descriptions of duties by using statements like “such as” or “e.g.”.

c) The duties and responsibilities should be listed in a logical sequence. For example, they may be listed in the exact order of performance following through a complete work cycle, or in order of importance from the highest to the lowest. The lesser duties should be kept to a minimum, as jobs will be rated primarily on the main functions.

d) Indicate briefly the scope and importance of each duty by giving details of the number of personnel, geographical area, size or value of plant, volume of throughput, financial values, etc... involved in each function. Describe what impact the job has on the activities of the unit or AUB as a whole.

e) All paragraphs should begin with action verbs, such as “Operates”, “Recommends”, “Plans”, “Schedules”, or “Advises”, etc. This helps to keep the Job Descriptions brief and emphasizes the nature of the activities of each job.

f) Clarity and accuracy are essential. Quantitative, specific words should be used, rather than vague, general words. For example, the words “assists”, “handles”, “responsible for” are not in themselves sufficient to indicate the nature and extent of the job function and must consequently be qualified to show the specific action involved.

g) Specify for each duty where the incumbent’s responsibility ends and that of the supervisor begins. What decisions does the incumbent make without referring upwards? Note that some jobs in different grades have very similar functions but different levels of responsibility for the work, and also perhaps a different scope, e.g. Accountant I and Accountant II.

(3) Work Contacts

State the principal contacts involved in the job together with the individuals and units outside the immediate work unit. The statement must be specific in terms of the job titles and units contacted by the job. In addition, it must include the nature, frequency and means as well as the purpose and importance of such contacts (e.g. whether for exchange of information, discussion, giving or obtaining advice or negotiation). Does the job represent the Section, the Department, or AUB?

(4) Independence of Operation

Describe briefly the degree of latitude for independent action relating to the job as a whole and the impact of the actions, decisions and recommendations on AUB’s operations and/or relations.

This should cover:

a) Latitude

The nature of instructions, procedures, standards and/or objectives to be followed, the extent of supervision received (e.g. whether the work is fully checked, spot-checked or generally reviewed, etc.), the nature of the matters referred upwards for action or a decision.

b) Impact

The potential effect the incumbent’s actions may have on AUB’s money, facilities, equipment, materials, operations or relations.

(4a) Responsibility for Safety

Indicate the level and nature of such responsibility and the likely effect of the jobholder’s actions on the safety of others (patients, workmates and subordinates).

(5) Supervisory Responsibility & Work Direction

List the titles of the jobs immediately supervised, indicating the approximate number of personnel in such jobs. Also state the total number of AUB personnel supervised by each both directly and through subordinate levels of supervision, based on the authorized manpower for the organization.

Where no supervision is exercised but the incumbent is required to provide work direction and be responsible for controlling the quantity and quality of the work of others, this must be stated and the job titles thus controlled, specified. This includes both work direction provided to other AUB personnel and monitoring of the work of contractors’ personnel.

(6) Physical Effort

State briefly the nature or intensity of physical effort required by the job, as well as the duration of such effort. Indicate the duration of each effort as a percentage of the daily work period.

(7) Work Conditions

Describe the degree of exposure to agreeable or disagreeable work conditions, specifying the intensity of such conditions and the duration of percentage of the daily work period.

(8) Minimum Requirements

Specify the minimum level of education, training and qualifications required to enable a normal incumbent to perform the job satisfactorily. Lebanese standards of education and qualifications should be stated.

Required related experience must also be indicated, specifying the field of work and the minimum number of years in such work.

Wherever alternatives to higher-level qualifications are acceptable, i.e. a lower level academic qualification with more years of experience, these may also be shown on the Job Description Form.

(9) Subsequent Review and Revision

It is recognized that job contents are constantly changing. In order to fulfill their purpose in the job evaluation process, Job Descriptions must be reviewed and updated periodically and/or when changes occur.

(10) Approval of Job Descriptions

Completed Job Descriptions must be reviewed by the Job Supervisor or Section Head concerned, and approved by the Department Head.

6. Common Misconceptions

There are certain misconceptions relating to the preparation of job descriptions which are worth noting:

- a. The job is evaluated on the basis of its difficulty and importance. A full volume of work is assumed in every case. Thus, an increase in the volume of work over current levels does not add to the value of the job unless at the same time it represents a significant diversification of functions.
- b. Each occupation has its own jargon. To ensure a proper understanding of the job contents by evaluators, it is advisable to avoid the jargon of the trade or profession. In cases where unusual terminology cannot be avoided, it is helpful to provide examples illustrating the nature and difficulty of the functions described.
- c. The minimum qualifications and experience may be inflated in one organization and understated in another. In order to ensure consistency throughout AUB, such requirements will be coordinated by the Human Resources Department.
- d. There is a tendency among some supervisors to insist that all jobs in their units are unique. However, in the interests of standardization, it is preferable to combine jobs similar in nature which require essentially the same minimum qualifications and experience.