

JOB DESCRIPTION DEVELOPMENT & RELEVANCE

GOALS

1. Define a job description in management.
2. Explain the purpose of a job description.
3. Explain how effective leaders determine the type (Specific or Complex) of a job description.
4. Describe how to use organizational group sharing to teach, support, and encourage effective job description behaviors and attitudes.

FORWARD

A job description in management is a formally written document outlining the expected and required work behavioral and experiential qualifications, responsibilities/duties, reporting structure, and attitude for a specific role in an organization.

Job expectations are intended to control and stabilize organizational harmony. Therefore, job expectations control the Universal Law of Entropy. Entropy occurs naturally as everything in the universe moves in the direction of randomness, disarray, and decay unless controlled and stabilized in some way. Hence, all organizations need to develop and require employee compliance to organizational job descriptions as a significant control of Entropy.

An effective organizational job description, whether Specific or General by title and design, clearly defines each employee's work and behavioral requirements, including the positive attitude expected on the job. Developing, implementing, and requiring the consistent following of job-related expectations promote workplace harmony, employment security, and employee pride.

Successful organizational leaders find ways to align job-description expectations with the organization's standards--mission, purpose, long-term goals, and short-term objectives. This successful alignment between the organization's standards and each job description promotes organizational success. Also, the outcome promotes a shared and clear understanding between leaders and prospective or current employees regarding job performance as the organization's stabilizing force. When both organizational leaders and employees share an understanding of the organizational job-description expectations as a steadying force, the organization benefits from strong job performance, improves employee retention, and supports mutual (organization and personal) job satisfaction.

Absent, random, or ill-defined work/job expectations (job descriptions) cause inefficient and ineffective work behaviors and attitudes. The organization's definition, purpose, philosophy, goals, and objectives of the organization become blurred if employees must struggle to find the intended meaning of their existence within the organization. This lack of organizational control in the absence of job descriptions results in untoward and uncontrollable organizational outcomes. The result is an undermining of organizational success. Therefore, the appropriately written job description category (Specific or General) becomes necessary for a successful organization!

Leaders may not explicitly include in writing *unacceptable* job performance/behaviors in a job description. Conversely, clearly stated expectations of *acceptable* job performance/behavior help employees understand the performance/behaviors that provide a valid basis for their recognition and reward.

Once employees read, have an opportunity for clarification, approve, sign, and date a documented job description, it becomes a consistent future reference for expected job behaviors and employee agreed-upon compliance. When employees meet the job expectations and their positive behaviors are recognized through an administrative evaluative process, the job description provides a valid basis for job retention, recognition, and possible reward. Noncompliance with a signed and dated job description by an employee can, also, provide a legitimate reason (grounds) for job dismissal.

SPECIFIC VERSUS GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS

There are at least two degrees of job description categories--Specific and General. There are criteria that intellectually determine the development, use, and expected related behaviors and attitude.

***A Specific Job Description**

Example:

Behavior: Place the new cans of product on the appropriately labeled shelf as directed.

Attitude: Present a courteous and helpful demeanor in the performance of all requested/required employment activities.

Note: A Specific Job Description states in writing the expected easy-to-understand comprehensive behaviors and positive attitude. The beginning word represents a simple

behavior-- (“Place” as one example). The job description is usually most appropriate for the new, inexperienced, and/or historically non-compliant employee.

***A General Job Description**

Example:

Behavior: Evaluate each driver’s behavior and car response on the highway to determine a possible hazardous behavior and/or condition.

Attitude: Present a professional, knowledgeable, courteous, and helpful demeanor in the performance of all self-determined job behaviors.

Note: A General Job Description states in writing the expected, professional, self-determined, comprehensive behaviors, and positive attitude. The beginning word represents a complex behavior-- (“Evaluate” as one example). The job description is usually most appropriate for the mature, intellectually astute, experienced in a similar or related job, and/or a historically compliant employee with recognized successful employment outcomes. The ability to recognize and understand variables that require a quick and appropriate decision or judgement is a necessary requirement—as some decisions might involve a “do or die” outcome.

TEACHING LEADERSHIP BY SHARING

Group sharing of verbally stated job-related experiences is an educational opportunity for employees.

The result of group sharing can often result in one or more of the following:

1. Ego and Personal Pride Enhancement
2. Problem Solving related to Challenging Situations
3. Support for Unfortunate Outcomes
4. Improvement Ideas for Future Work Situations and Outcomes
5. Positive Change for Improvement of Personal Work Behaviors

Listening to such verbal sharing regarding job-related successes, challenges, failures, and individual comments increase the leader’s understanding and awareness as to the current appropriate or inappropriate job description (Specific or General) status of each employee. Therefore, there might be a job description category change in order!

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