

How to Develop a Position Description

The job description contains the following items:

- Position Title
- Department and College
- Position Duties and Responsibilities
- Name and Title of Supervisor
- Position Qualifications (minimum/required and preferred)
- Position Start Date
- Salary or Salary Range
- Background Check Requirement
- Department Description and Website Address
- Additional Information or Special Considerations
- Application Procedures
- EO/AA Compliance Statement

The position description is the fundamental document on which job postings and job interviews will be based. See the [“Position Description Template”](#) for more guidance.

Defining the Position Title & Department:

This should be concise, on average 4-5 words.

Example: Associate Professor of Automotive Technology

Defining the Title of the Supervisor:

List the immediate supervisor and their official title.

Example: Dr. Allen Moore, Chair, Chemistry Department

Position Duties and Responsibilities:

Begin with an overall summary of the position description. State the major responsibility of the individual. Then list of all the essential components of the job. Include the following components: length of appointment (9 or 12 month, etc.), type of appointment (full-time or part-time, temporary or continuing), and whether it is tenure earning or non-tenure earning.

Position Qualifications:

Separate qualifications into two categories: Required and Preferred. Required qualifications are the minimum qualifications necessary for the position. If a candidate does not meet the minimum qualifications for the job, they are not eligible for further consideration. Preferred qualifications are not necessary to perform the job but are highly valued.

Start by establishing the minimum requirements necessary to perform the position competently. Indicate specific degrees, certifications, or licenses required to be considered for the position. Include the experience, knowledge, or skills required to complete the tasks. Only list requirements that correspond to actual duties performed by that position. Indicate what organizational skills are required and what oral and written communications are necessary. If applicable, include the daily physical requirements of the position. Also, include any special conditions involved with the position, such as exposure to the elements, chemicals, or animals.

Example: The successful candidate will have a PhD or MFA from an accredited institution in an appropriate field as well as show evidence of academic leadership and administrative skills. Other requirements include evidence of effective teaching, creative/scholarly productivity, and service complementary with existing faculty in the Art Department.

Example: Academic preparation and credentials in Art Education with K-12 teaching experience preferred.

Salary or Salary Range:

Although not required, stating the salary or the salary range may prevent situations where the applicant's expectations do not correspond with the realities of the funding for the position.

Example: Salary from a base of \$65,000 for a 9 month appointment. Rank commensurate with experience.

Background Check Requirement:

Include the University approved statement if applicable and specify what type of check is necessary. The standard statement is: "Employment will require a criminal background check."

Department Description:

Give an overall summary of the department. Include the website address so candidates can find more information.

Example: The Department of History has seven full-time faculty. The Department is committed to excellence in preparing teachers of history and social studies, supporting non-teaching careers in history, developing the potential of M.A. candidates for further graduate work and providing general education offerings. Located within the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of History has 144 undergraduate majors, 38 undergraduate minors, and 50 graduate students. The Department is a leader in History and New Media. It offers B.A., B.S.Ed., and M.A. degrees. For more information see: <http://www2.pittstate.edu/hist/>.

Additional Information:

Include additional information concerning the work environment of the position. Give an overall summary of the university, its location, its goals, and its accomplishments.

Example: Pittsburg State University is an accredited, comprehensive, state-supported institution in southeastern Kansas, enrolling approximately 7,000 students annually. The institution has Colleges in the fields of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and Technology. For more information: <http://www.pittstate.edu>. Pittsburg has a population of approximately 19,000 residents is located in southeast Kansas, about thirty miles from Joplin, Missouri, which has a metropolitan area population of about 60,000 residents. Kansas City is located 120 miles north; Tulsa, Oklahoma is 125 miles southwest; Wichita is 160 miles west; and Springfield, Missouri is 95 miles east. Air Travel is through Joplin Regional Airport, NW Arkansas Regional Airport, or Springfield Airport. For more information: <http://www.pittks.org>.

Application Procedures:

Give a short explanation of what documents are required. Tell where to submit the application and in what format. Indicate when review of applications will begin and whether or not the position is open until filled.

Example: Submit vita, statement of educational philosophy and relevant experience, unofficial transcripts, and three letters of reference to: Dr. Janet Sullivan, Search Committee Chair, Music Department, 300 McCray Hall, Pittsburg, KS 66762. The position review process begins December 9, 2008 and will continue until filled.

EO/AA Compliance Statement:

Include the university approved statement: "Pittsburg State University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer."

