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Career Growth and Job Descriptions [1]

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The Compensation Team at System Administration is committed to supporting and enabling career advancement. Career growth can take many forms—from promotions and in-range compensation adjustments to engaging in new projects, rotational learning opportunities, or attending conferences for continued development. One impactful way to support these opportunities is by keeping job descriptions current. Accurate and up-to-date job descriptions help ensure employees are recognized for their contributions and are well-positioned for growth within their roles.

To help support career growth through job descriptions (JD), it is recommended that job descriptions are reviewed and updated (every 1-2 years) to reflect changes in the role, organization, or industry. Set a schedule for review, such as annually or biannually, to ensure job descriptions remain accurate and relevant. If significant change has happened with the role, team, or department, it is recommended that the JD be reviewed at that time. You can access the CU System Administration Job Description template [3] on the Compensation Team's SharePoint site. The Compensation Team is available to assist with updating job descriptions and ensuring that the job description meets the level intended for the organizational needs.

What are Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are a useful tool that summarizes and explains tasks, duties, functions, responsibilities, and expectations of a position and are the tool that is used when a position is being posted and recruited for. They can also help with defining soft skills required for success in the role. The purpose of a job description is to provide clarity and guidance to both current employees and potential candidates about what is expected in the role, helping to align individual and organizational goals, facilitate recruitment efforts, support performance management processes, and determine the career level of a position as well as its pay range.

What makes up a Job Description

Purpose: This is universal language used on all System Administration JDs.

Position Information: Captures basic elements of the job.

Position Summary: A 1-3 paragraph written summary of the role, information about the team (optional), any reporting relationships, or other context about the role.

Duties: A bulleted list of the high-level expectations of the role, written as action-oriented points, and sometimes split into 2-3 major sections.

Knowledge Skills & Abilities (KSAs): A list of things that someone fully oriented and up-to-speed in the position should be reasonably expected to know or do. Candidates or employees typically meet most or all of these as they start the role and should meet all of them around 6 months into the role.

Minimum Requirements: A list of requirements absolutely needed to be reasonably expected to learn and perform the role. (Note: if hiring for the role, the recruiter will screen out anyone that does not meet ALL the Minimum Requirements)

Preferred Qualifications: A list of desirable experiences, certifications, or education that if someone has some or all they will be more likely to excel in the role.

HR Use Only: This section is used by HR after the JD is finalized to indicate the level, pay range, and other classification elements.

Writing Job Descriptions

To write a job description, begin first by gathering information and collecting input from others that will interact with the role. Ensure that it is clear and concise, using straightforward language that is easy to understand to describe the job duties. It is important to focus on the key responsibilities of the role and to align the job description with organizational goals. To ensure that job descriptions are free from bias and help promote diversity and inclusion, it is encouraged to use gender-neutral language and focus on qualifications and skills that are relevant to the job and not the performance. The Compensation Team will also assist with this, and all JDs are run through Textio, a tool that helps eliminate unconscious bias and gender tone.

Job Descriptions as a tool for Success

Job descriptions are more than just hiring tools—they're strategic documents that support employee development, career growth, and System alignment. By keeping them accurate, up to date, and thoughtfully written, job descriptions can serve as a foundation for promotions, lateral moves, and professional learning opportunities. Regularly reviewing and maintaining job descriptions ensures they reflect the evolving nature of roles and helps employees and managers stay aligned. The Compensation Team is available to support the process of developing and updating job descriptions.

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