

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are vital to ensure that you as a business owner or manager you clearly understand any given position within your business. A job description also defines what is expected of the job applicants and/or job holder.

Why businesses need job descriptions

Job descriptions can improve the way your business manages employees by ensuring that performance and productivity is focused on the needs and goals of the business.

Job descriptions:

- Provide clear expectations of the job functions to both candidates applying for a position and/or an employee performing the position
- Provide a basis for measuring job performance on a daily basis or during the performance appraisal process
- Help to ensure that all functions, duties and responsibilities relate back to the business objectives and strategic business plan
- Identify any gaps in terms of job functions which need to be undertaken to ensure the business runs smoothly
- Enable the identification of clear skill and behavioural competencies required of the job holder
- Help in the process of structuring fair remuneration and reward packages
- Useful in the instances of employee performance management and disciplinary issues
- Provide insight into the training and development which may be required to assist the job holder or develop them further

- Provide information which will support decisions relating to recruitment, training and development, organisational structure, career progression and succession planning

Writing job descriptions

When writing job descriptions, be sure to adhere to relevant NZ employment law and make sure that your job descriptions are not discriminatory.

The most difficult part when creating job descriptions is the Key Performance Indicators and Measures section. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) help businesses define and measure their progress towards the business objectives. KPIs are quantifiable measurements, which reflect the critical success factors for the business. For example a responsibility for a customer services employee in a call centre may be 'resolve customer issues', the KPI may be 'percentage of customer issues that were solved by the first phone call.' For a business development manager the job responsibility may be 'generate new revenue for the business' a KPI may be 'percentage of new revenue generated for the company in a month.'

When working out KPIs for individual employees – the aim is not to have KPIs for every job function, as most are not *critical* to the success of the business but ordinary job functions which should have ordinary job metrics. KPIs are critical to the success of the business and these should be measured.

The process of writing a job description

- Brainstorm all the functions or tasks that you anticipate the ideal job holder doing
- Look at the tasks that you have created, keep the detail succinct – if the job holder is required to answer the telephone, don't then include *how* to answer the telephone (i.e. pick up within 2 rings and say XYZ). This level of detail should be in the operations or procedures manual. Then if the procedure changes you only have to change the manual – not all the job descriptions
- Try to group tasks and responsibilities i.e.
 - o Planning and organising of
 - o General administration support of
 - o Financial budgeting and control of ...

- Maintenance and repair of ...
- Recruiting of...
- Training of

See the following page to view a sample job description template.

Position Description

Receptionist

February 2010

Company	ABC Builders
Location	Auckland
Reports to	Davey Beckin, Director
Staff reporting to role	No direct reports

Company Objective

To build new homes, renovate and add extensions to existing homes. Ensuring that the needs of our clients are fully adhered to and that our clients are 100% satisfied with our services.

Purpose of Position

To provide a professional and friendly welcome to all who visit our office or who call on the telephone. Ensuring that the needs of each individual are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner.

Key Relationships

- Director
- Builders
- Administrators
- Clients
- Subcontractors
- Suppliers

Key Accountabilities

Administration

Accountability and Expected Target

- Answer all incoming calls within three rings and forward to the appropriate person or take a detailed message in their absence
- Assist with the data entry requirements associated with employee timesheets
- Check office supplies (i.e. stationery, forms, catering supplies etc) weekly and purchase sufficient items as required – following approval by the director
- Responsible for sorting all incoming (within an hour of it arriving in the morning) and outgoing mail (ensuring that it is sent out in the post at the end of every day)
- Act as the contact person for the maintenance and repair of all office equipment
- Take an active involvement in the improvement of office processes and systems
-

Client Management

Accountability and Expected Target

- When requested by the director or consultants, organise the delivery of documents to be sent to clients
- Respond to client requests for information (via telephone, email or fax) on the same day as the request

Finance

Accountability and Expected Target

- Responsible for the petty cash and ensuring that this reconciles at all times

Miscellaneous

- Other duties reasonably within the capability of the employee may also be required from time to time. The employee's duties may be altered following consultation with the employee