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PURPOSE OF POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Positions must be classified before employees can be paid. A position description (PD) is an official record of the work assigned by management to an employee. This work is analyzed according to Office of Personnel Management classification standards, resulting in occupation, title, and grade determinations. Employees assigned to a position get paid according to the grade of the position.

Position descriptions also help in setting qualifications used in filling jobs and promoting employees. They can be used to familiarize new employees in their duties. The duties and responsibilities in a PD are also used in developing performance standards for work and in deciding on training courses related to the work.

TYPES OF POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Some position descriptions can be used for only one employee, while others can be used for many individuals. For purposes of assigning employees to positions, there are three basic categories of position descriptions. Understanding the features of each type can save a great deal of unnecessary paperwork. The categories are as follows:

**Standard Jobs**

The term “standard job” refers to a position description that has been established to cover multiple employees in more than one organizational entity. The establishment of a standard job eliminates the need for a separate job description for each employee. But a standard job can only be used in circumstances where actual duties will be consistent with the standard job description.

HRO maintains copies of all approved standard jobs, so there is no need for customers to send additional copies of such descriptions when they are submitting personnel action requests involving such positions.

It’s easy to determine if a previously classified position description is a standard job by looking at the cover sheet (AD-332). If the AD-332 bears the signature of the deputy administrator or comparable official in item 19 and if the classification certification is signed (item 29) by an HRD headquarters official, you are looking at a standard job; otherwise it’s a different type of PD.

If you want to initiate a personnel action to fill a job in your organization that matches an approved standard job description, all you have to do is enter the three or four digit standard job number in the “MR” (master record) field of your personnel action request. You can find that
number in block A4 of the back side of the description cover sheet. The number is also on the front of the cover sheet (usually block 9 or 32) preceded by the letters “SJ.”

The initial approval and revision of standard job descriptions involves coordination between headquarters and field Human Resource Management staffs. Individual managers may, however, suggest the creation of new standard job descriptions through their program management channels or through their HRO classifiers.

**Discrete Positions Not Susceptible to Duplication**

These are unique jobs for which individual position descriptions must be written. The responsibility for writing the description and maintaining its accuracy rests with the position’s immediate supervisor. Each position description can be used for only one employee. The phrase “not susceptible to duplication” means that the classifier has determined that the nature of the duties or other characteristics of the position are such that there can only be one individual covered by the description.

Approved position descriptions for this category of job can be readily identified by the following:

1. The cover sheet bears the supervisory signatures of the job’s actual supervisors, rather than high level headquarters officials.

AND

2. In Item 16 of the front of the cover sheet, the NO block is checked, indicating that the job is for one employee only.

If you are initiating a personnel action to fill an established, but vacant position falling into this category and if the existing position description is accurate, there is no need for the submission of a position description to HRO for classification. But if the established description is incomplete or inaccurate, an updated document should be prepared and submitted for classification, along with the personnel action request.

**Discrete Identical/Additional Positions**

This category of position has some similarities to both of the preceding types of job. It involves the development of a position description by the individual organizational component. But once that position description is approved, it may be used for any number of employees at that organizational entity. (That is what identical/additional means). While these position descriptions can reduce paperwork, it is important for supervisors to ensure that the number of employees assigned to a given job is consistent with the legitimate needs of the organization, and all employees in the job must function in a manner that is consistent with the position description.
Previously classified position descriptions in this category can be readily identified by the following:

(1) The cover sheet has been signed by the supervisors in the individual office or organizational component, as well as by an HRO classifier.

AND

(2) In item 16 of the front of the cover sheet, the **YES** block is checked.

A personnel action request to fill a job accurately described by an already-classified position description in this category does not need to be accompanied by a job description. This is true whether the action involves the replacement of a departing employee or whether you are adding to your staff. All that is necessary is that the position be identified on the personnel action request form, with the position number that appears in Block A6 in the upper right corner of the back of the PD cover sheet.

**SUPERVISORS’ RESPONSIBILITIES**

The primary responsibility for position description accuracy rests with the supervisor. The supervisor is the one who is accountable for the assignment of work to employees, and for the expenditure of public funds used to pay the employee. The significance of this accountability is clearly indicated in the certification that the supervisor makes in signing the position description cover sheet.

The supervisor’s responsibility for a job description does not end when a PD is written. All supervisors should periodically review the job descriptions of all of their subordinates for accuracy and revise them to keep them current. Much of position description updating simply involves making job description changes that keep pace with technology, changes in agency policies, revised program emphasis, and related matters that affect how the agency does business and how the particular position functions. But in some instances supervisors may want to make revisions that document very significant additions or deletions of major responsibilities. Because of possible grade impact and issues concerning merit promotion regulations, it’s wise for supervisors to talk to their classification specialists before undertaking such changes. Furthermore, management should, to the extent possible, delay effecting major changes in actual work assignments until classification action on new PDs is complete.

One final note about position description accuracy concerns standard jobs and discrete identical/additional positions: The use of such documents saves a lot of time. But it doesn’t relieve the supervisor of responsibility for PD accuracy. These position descriptions may be used only when they accurately describe the work to be performed and the manner in which the position will actually function. The supervisor makes and is held accountable for the decision that it is appropriate to use a standard job or one that is discrete identical/additional.
EMPLOYEES’ RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees should have copies of their position descriptions and should be familiar with their content. Employees should assist in the maintenance of job description accuracy by informing their supervisors of inaccuracies or omissions. Employees should also be responsive to invitations from their supervisors to participate in the writing of descriptions.

CLASSIFIERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES

Classification specialists determine the proper title, occupational series, and grade of positions in accordance with Office of Personnel Management classification standards. This involves gathering information from position descriptions, supervisory discussions, audits with employees, reviews of the organizational contexts in which jobs are being set up, and discussions with various subject matter experts. It is the classifiers’ responsibility to evaluate jobs as they actually function, not simply to evaluate the words on position descriptions. Classification determinations are made as a service to HRO customers to help maintain a fair and rational system of compensating employees and effectively managing resources. Consistent with HRO quality objectives, classifiers’ are expected to take a proactive approach with respect to advisory service on a broad range of classification issues and position management objectives of our customers.

In some instances, authority to classify positions may be delegated to supervisors and managers. Under such an arrangement, the role of the classifiers focuses primarily on training to supervisors, technical advisory service, and oversight of the classification program.

WHEN POSITION DESCRIPTIONS MUST BE WRITTEN

Position descriptions are most often prepared and submitted with personnel action requests (SF 52). The linking of PD writing to personnel actions is in many cases logical and appropriate. But not every request to recruit for a position requires the writing of a new job description. And often there is a need to prepare a position description, even if no official personnel action is being planned.

Since our personnel system requires that we maintain complete and accurate job descriptions for employees, PDs for established positions should be redone and submitted for classification action anytime they become out of date or incomplete, regardless of any need for recruitment, reassignments, or other personnel actions. This focus on position description maintenance as a distinct function doesn’t mean that every minute change requires a new PD. But when there are significant changes, additions, or deletions to major responsibilities, a new PD needs to be prepared and reassessed with appropriate classification standards.
With respect to the submission of personnel action requests, the general rule is that you need to submit a new job description only when you don’t already have an active, established position description that is an accurate and complete description of the work for the subject job.

If an existing standard job meets your needs, all that’s normally required is that you identify the standard job number on the personnel action request. If a discrete identical/additional job has already been established you again need to provide only the number of that position with the request (again assuming that the established document will match the actual responsibilities of the position).

If you already have a discrete one-of-a-kind job (not susceptible to duplication) that is accurate for your needs you can use that position description provided the established position is vacant or is being vacated. On the other hand, if you are initiating an action that involves a brand new set of duties, or if you find that existing documents do not accurately reflect the work you intend for the subject job, a new position description must be written and a classification determination must be made before the personnel action can be processed.

**GENERAL TIPS ON WRITING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

The best approach to writing a position description is to simply concentrate on what the actual duties of the job entail. Describe the responsibilities and related factors thoroughly and accurately in your own words, using the appropriate format. There is nothing wrong with using material already developed for other job descriptions, but don’t copy any material that doesn’t fit the job you are describing. There is no need to consult classification standards in writing job descriptions.

All position descriptions begin with a short introductory paragraph that should provide a good overview of what the job is about. That paragraph should identify the organizational entity, the primary function of the organization, and should briefly explain how the subject position fits into the functions of the organization. The introduction should be general enough and written in sufficiently simple language so that an individual not familiar with the agency can grasp what the job is about.

Throughout the description, use language that can be understood. Minimize the use of acronyms and abbreviations. If you must use them, identify their meaning the first time they appear.

Use verbs that are as precise as possible. Phrases such as “participates in” or “assists with” must be accompanied by documentation that clearly defines the role of the position being described.

While precision in a job description is important, use terminology that is sufficiently broad to avoid rapid obsolescence of the document. Try to produce a description that will remain valid for at least a few years.
After drafting a description, check for consistency of the various components or factors. If contradictions are present, resolve them. For example, documentation indicating that a job requires “expert level” knowledge does not carry much weight if the major duties documented do not support the need for such expertise.

**FORMAT #1: GENERAL SCHEDULE NON-SUPERVISORY POSITIONS**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

This is the appropriate format for all General Schedule positions that do not include supervisory or work leader responsibilities.

**FORMAT OUTLINE**

Introduction

Major Duties (With time percentage for each paragraph)

Factor 1: Knowledge Required

Factor 2: Supervisory Controls

Factor 3: Guidelines

Factor 4: Complexity

Factor 5: Scope and Effect

Factor 6: Personnel Contacts

Factor 7: Purpose of Contacts

Factor 8: Physical Demands

Factor 9: Work Environment

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**Major Duties**

Structure the duties in a logical, coherent way that communicates the interrelationship of specific tasks. Put things that are closely related in the same paragraph. A very large number of very short paragraphs, each documenting one specific task, is difficult for the classifier to assess because
it’s difficult to determine how the parts fit together. Most jobs are best described with about five to seven cohesive paragraphs of greater length.

Be thorough. Provide enough detail so that the reader unfamiliar with the organization can understand what the job is about. But it is not necessary to list every step of every task. This part of the position description is not intended to be a procedural manual for the accomplishment of the work.

Arrange the paragraphs in a sequence that best facilitates a logical flow of information and that emphasizes the key aspects of the job. Often this means putting the most important, time-consuming responsibilities first. Include a notation indicating an approximate time percentage for each paragraph.

The statement “performs other duties as assigned” may be added to cover miscellaneous tasks. However, any duties that are performed on a regular and recurring basis and take up a significant portion of time need to be documented in more specific terms.

**Knowledge Required**

This factor covers the specialized subject matter or area of knowledge required, and the level of knowledge. Do not omit the latter component, particularly in the case of highly specialized fields. In some instances, linking the knowledge to particular functions documented in the Major Duties portion of the position description is helpful. Examples of language that effectively communicate both the type and level of knowledge are as follows:

The position requires a basic knowledge of accounting terminology, processes, and documents as they relate to accounts payable/receivable subsidiary ledgers.

As a recognized agency scientific expert, the incumbent applies knowledge of recent developments in veterinary pathology, parasitology, toxicology, physiology, microbiology, and immunology to develop key components of a national livestock disease surveillance program.

Knowledge of the duties, priorities, commitments, policies, and program goals of the staff sufficient to perform assignments such as reviewing publications, directives, and other materials relevant to division operations; and sufficient knowledge to take appropriate follow-up action. The position requires ability to anticipate and prepare materials the Director needs in order to respond to correspondence or phone calls.

A thorough working knowledge of spelling, punctuation, and document formats is required for the preparation of letters, memoranda, local directives, and related documents.

A comprehensive knowledge of the policies, patterns, and practices of regulated entities as they relate to the compliance program. This knowledge is used to recognize any discrepancies or
inconsistencies between information reported or made available to the agency and the true nature of the activity under review.

Professional knowledge of education principles and practices applicable to a wide range of duties in the broad area of education. Since the purpose of the projects is to seek better education approaches, methods, and practices, the employee’s analyses and recommendations must reflect a good understanding of the current state of the education in relation to defined agency goals and to the specific educational objectives of the particular projects.

Knowledge of budgetary and financial relationships with workloads of organizational components to determine whether funds are being obligated and expended in accordance with goals and objectives of the organization’s annual work plan.

Knowledge of office automation systems to use several types of software for various office needs. The employee must know the processing procedures and function keys for performing a substantial range of functions within each software type. Word processing duties require standard keyboard proficiency of 40 words per minute.

Note that the titling and, in many cases, applicability of special pay rates for positions requiring keyboard or shorthand proficiency are linked to very specific OPM guidelines defining normal full proficiency. That level is 40 words per minute for typing/word processing and 80 words per minute for shorthand. Jobs can be credited with these requirements only if they are clearly documented under this factor and if the **Major Duties** portion of the PD identifies duties that substantiate the need for such skill levels.

**Supervisory Controls**

This section should begin with a concise identification (by position) of the official to whom the incumbent of the described position reports officially. That will normally be the person who is the rating official for performance appraisal purposes. In some instances, however, supervision exercised by the official supervisor is supplemented by significant technical direction from other members of the organization’s staff. Where that is the case, the situation that exists should be briefly explained. The identification of the supervisor (and others involved in the oversight of the position) should be followed with a description of three distinct aspects of supervisory controls. For most jobs, it’s desirable to write a separate paragraph for each of these components, which are as follow:

An explanation of how work is assigned to the employee is required. Supervisors have direct or indirect controls over the work in the way assignments are made, instructions are given, priorities and deadlines are set, and objectives and boundaries are defined. For example a supervisor might make assignments with detailed instructions concerning how to do the work; with instructions only for new, difficult, or unusual aspects of the work; with general suggestions for procedures; or with information only about the objectives to be achieved, priorities, and deadlines.
Next, describe the employee’s responsibility for carrying out the work. To what extent is the employee expected to develop the sequence and timing of various aspects of the work, to modify or recommend modification of instructions, and to participate in establishing priorities and defining objectives?

The third part of this factor that needs to be described is how the work is reviewed. As an example, there may be close and detailed review of each phase of the assignments. There may be detailed review of the finished work. Review may be limited to spot checks of finished work. Or review may be cursory or limited to occasional checks for adherence to policy and basic program objectives.

For some jobs, signatory authority for certain types of documents reflects significant decision-making and independence that relates to overall supervisory controls over the job. In those situations it’s helpful to explain such signatory authority.

One more point to remember about supervisory controls is that the employee’s PD should “dovetail” with the documentation of supervisory responsibilities on the supervisor’s PD. For example, if the employee’s PD states that the work is accepted as being technically accurate without review, but the supervisor’s PD states that detailed review is given to all work in the unit, one of the position descriptions is wrong.

Guidelines

For this factor, write one or two paragraphs identifying the guidelines that are used to accomplish the work and indicate the degree of difficulty and judgment associated with their utilization.

Guidelines may be operating procedures, policies, and traditional practices. They may also be references such as desk manuals, dictionaries, style manuals, engineering handbooks, and the pharmacopoeia.

Difficulty in using guidelines is related to such factors as the number or volume of relevant guides, how hard it is to locate relevant portions of guides, the presence of conflicting information in different parts of available guides, the relevance and applicability of material to work situations, and the degree of judgment required in interpretation. In some situations there are very precise guidelines that cover every detail of the work. In other cases guidelines are very general requiring a great degree of judgment and interpretation to relate them to the work at hand. Most jobs fall somewhere between these extremes.

One additional component of this factor, for some positions, is responsibility for the development of guidelines for use by other employees. If a job regularly entails such responsibility, it needs to be explained in this portion of the job description.

One area of confusion concerns the distinction between Guidelines and Factor 1, Knowledge. Knowledge should not duplicate Guidelines, but there certainly is a relationship between the
two factors. A good way to view this relationship is to think about **Knowledge** as the basic, underlying knowledge that an individual must possess as a prerequisite to proper utilization of the **Guidelines**.

**Complexity**

This factor is concerned with the nature of the assignment, the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done, and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work. The most common pitfall in writing this component of the PD is to simply repeat duties statements. The challenge with this section is to build on the duties and provide additional clarifying information that summarizes what makes a job difficult or routine. This factor should address the following types of questions:

- Does the job involve one basic process, a few closely related processes, or several unrelated work processes?
- Do work processes involve a few or many steps? Is the work done the same way in all instances or are there significant variations due to the circumstances of individual assignments?
- Does the job involve the resolution of difficult problems previously resistant to solution? Does the job involve new or untried technology, theories, or approaches?
- Is the work complicated by intense controversy?
- Does the job involve long-term projects? Are there intense coordination demands involving other individuals or organizations?
- Is there anything else about the job that stands out as being relevant to its difficulty?

**Scope and Effect**

This component of the job description should clarify and expand on the purpose of the work and its impact. Documentation should explain who is affected by the work of the position. And it should explain the manner and extent to which they are affected. Some jobs may be characterized as simply facilitating work processes of other employees in the immediate work unit. Other jobs may have a large impact on the nature of nationwide programs. Most jobs fall somewhere between these two examples. In describing this factor it’s important to include the impact outside the organizational framework in which the job is located. If a job has an impact on the general public, on other government entities, on businesses, etc., that should be explained.

A common mistake in writing this factor is focusing on the consequences of errors made by the employee. OPM guidance on the Factor Evaluation System prohibits evaluation based on the
consequences of improperly performed work. If you were describing the duties of a medical professional, it would not be proper to write in the position description that mistakes could kill patients. But it would be acceptable to state that successful performance of responsibilities is of critical importance to sustaining the health and life of patients.

**Personal Contacts**

For this factor identify people with whom the job’s responsibilities require regular and recurring personal contact. When contacts are with particularly influential or high level officials, factor language should convey their stature. Also describe any unusual circumstances or conditions such as problems in making appointments, problems in identifying the role or authority of the people contacted, or the presence of different ground rules for different contacts.

Personal contacts encompass interactive face-to-face, telephone, and direct electronic/satellite communication. Communication by correspondence, electronic mail, or voice mail is not considered under this factor because it is not viewed as interactive.

A few examples of groups of people that are appropriate to identify include co-workers in the immediate office, agency employees throughout the region, headquarters officials of the agency, officials of other state and federal agencies, private vendor representatives, high level officials of national organizations, local media representatives, and the general public.

Exclude contacts with the supervisor, as they are covered in the **Supervisory Controls** segment of the position description.

**Purpose of Contacts**

Documentation for this factor must briefly explain what occurs during the contacts that were identified under the **Personal Contacts Section**. A critical aspect of this factor is clear documentation of noteworthy elements that contribute to the difficulty of the contacts.

Typical purposes of contact include: to give or exchange information; to resolve problems; to provide service; to motivate or influence; to interrogate; or to justify, defend, negotiate or settle controversial matters. Special considerations which should be added when appropriate include: dealing with persons who are skeptical, uncooperative, unreceptive, or hostile; and settling controversial issues or arriving at compromise solutions with persons who have different viewpoints, goals, or objectives.

**Physical Demands**

Describe the nature of the physical demands required such as climbing, lifting, pushing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, or reaching. Describe the frequency and intensity of the activity and include any special abilities needed such as specific agility or
dexterity requirements. If a position requires lifting or carrying of moderate to heavy items, it is helpful if you indicate a specific weight range.

For some office positions a simple statement that the work is primarily sedentary is adequate; but many USDA jobs do have significant demands in this area that warrant careful attention.

**Work Environment**

Describe the kind of environment in which the employee works. Examples include: a typical office setting, a laboratory, a classroom, outdoors in a desert region with very high temperatures and rugged terrain, aboard ships, outdoors on farms and ranches, etc. Mention in the documentation any risks, discomforts or unpleasantness to which the employee is exposed, as well as the nature of safety precautions, and protective clothing or devices that are used.

**Sample Position Description**

Classification Project Coordinator

**Introduction**

The primary role of this position is to oversee the accomplishment of major projects of integral importance to the operational position classification program of APHIS and partner agencies. Such projects typically involve multiple major agency components, and are defined primarily in terms of broad personnel regulatory requirements and human resources program objectives. The secondary role of the job is to coordinate various aspects of position classification training for HRO employees and customers.

**Major Duties**

Responsible for administrative coordination and technical leadership in the implementation of new classification standards. Develops project strategies and plans. Facilitates resolution of difficult technical issues that emerge in the course of the projects. Monitors progress of staff classifiers to assure that projects are completed on a timely basis. (20%)

Analyzes draft classification standards developed by OPM. Identifies shortcomings, inconsistencies, and other problems in the documents. Assesses the potential impact of the classification standard on positions in APHIS and partner agencies. Facilitates the involvement of the other HRO classifiers whose responsibilities are potentially impacted by the draft standards. Drafts the agency’s official comments on the new documents which are submitted by APHIS’ human resources policy staff to USDA Office of Personnel. (10%)

Plans, coordinates, and oversees the accomplishment of varied endeavors affecting the operations of the classification and position management program, including the handling of administrative personnel matters that are auxiliary to position classification, such as position sensitivity,
financial disclosure, drug testing, FLSA, etc. Such projects may be driven by new regulatory requirements, new program initiatives, or by the incumbent’s initiative with respect to improving the agency’s personnel program. (50%)

With respect to HRO employee training, the incumbent works with the organization’s self-directed work teams to identify training needs in the area of position classification. Working with management and the teams, the incumbent develops recommendations and plans to best meet those needs and assists in various administrative coordination functions to assure that training efforts are accomplished. Personally plans and conducts selected portions of classification training. (10%)

Performs a variety of coordination responsibilities with respect to classification-related training for HRO customers. Collaborates with HRO self-directed work teams and management to plan training strategies to effectively meet the needs of customers, and to improve service delivery through increased customer knowledge. Participates in the development of course outlines and, with other classifiers, plans the presentation of courses. Personally conducts selected portions of training. (10%)

Knowledge Required

Assignments require an in-depth knowledge of the theories and principles of position classification and position management, including substantial knowledge of new approaches and concepts.

Work of the position requires good project management and analytical skill. Substantial writing ability and oral communication skill is also required.

A good understanding of the mission and organizational structure of APHIS and partner agencies is required to coordinate projects and assist in the resolution of complex classification and position management issues.

Training responsibilities require a practical grasp of varied instructional approaches.

Supervisory Controls

The position is under the administrative and technical supervision of the branch chief/mentor. As a member of a self-directed team, however, works under a non-traditional, innovative situation where there is substantial involvement of all team members in a wide range of matters which may include work planning and organization, resource planning, establishment of performance goals, personnel management decisions, and related matters.

The evolving and dynamic nature of self-directed teams is such that the role of the mentor and degree of self-management of the team is in a state of change. Teams are expected to function
with increasing autonomy and the incumbent of this position is expected to fully participate in the development of the SMT concept.

The mentor will monitor team progress, serve as facilitator and problem solver, and make major decisions affecting the development of the SMT. The mentor also retains authority to make final supervisory decisions, as appropriate, concerning the broad management of the programs and the team.

**Guidelines**

The primary guidelines for the work are basic government-wide policies and principles which are documented in Title 5, U.S. Code and the Code of Federal Regulations, USDA personnel guidelines, and directives of APHIS and partner agencies provide limited supplemental guidance. In addition, some projects involve OPM classification standards that apply to specific categories of positions.

The application of these guidelines by the incumbent presents considerable challenge. There is frequent difficulty in locating relevant material. Often references to a particular topic are widely scattered. Despite the volume and complexity of this reference material there are often large gaps requiring extensive interpretation. Furthermore there are often apparent contradictions in the available guidelines that require resolution. Classification standards are the most specific guidelines with which the incumbent works; but even here there is frequent controversy regarding interpretation.

Some project work of the incumbent entails the development of rather informal written guidelines that are used by the HRO classification staff. In other instances, project efforts include participation with headquarters staff personnel in the development of agency-wide formal policy and procedural guidelines.

**Complexity**

Primary responsibilities are defined in terms of complicated, multi-faceted projects with time cycles covering several months to a couple years. The incumbent must carefully plan such endeavors, which are often carried out with the involvement of other classification specialists. The work is complicated by the need to identify, establish, and maintain necessary linkages between classification projects and other areas of personnel management. The training responsibilities, while a secondary function of the job, do significantly expand the overall range of duties.

**Scope and Effect**

The position directly influences the quality and integrity of the operational position classification program of APHIS and partner agencies. Project work done by the employee in some instances
results in products that influence policy and program management decisions made elsewhere in
the APHIS human resources organization.

Personal Contacts

Regular and recurring contacts are with classification specialists, management officials and other
personnel specialists and assistants at HRO. In addition, there are frequent contacts with
headquarters human resources personnel and occasional contacts with program officials at
various levels throughout APHIS and client agencies.

Purpose of Contacts

Contacts involve the exchange of information, facilitating the resolution of controversial issues,
planning long-term endeavors, and coordinating the efforts of others.

Physical Demands

The work is primarily sedentary.

Work Environment

The work is performed in an office setting.

FORMAT #2: SUPERVISORY GENERAL SCHEDULE POSITIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This format is designed for positions in which the primary responsibility is supervising the
accomplishment of work by other federal employees, cooperative agreement employees,
contractor personnel, and/or other non-federal subordinates. The presence of some non-
supervisory work does not preclude the use of this format, provided the supervisory
responsibilities represent the primary role of the job.

BASIC OUTLINE

Introduction

Program Scope and Effect

Organizational Setting

Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised
Personal Contacts

Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

Other Conditions

Non-Supervisory Duties (With time %)

Supervisory Controls Over Position

Other Significant Facts

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

The introduction should very briefly note the kind of operations supervised. It should indicate the type of work force supervised (i.e. federal employees, state cooperative agreement employees, private sector contractor employees, etc.) There should be a general indication of the size of the work force. If supervision is carried out through subordinate supervisors, work leaders, state officials, contractor supervisors, or similar officials, such facts should be noted.

Program Scope and Effect

This section builds on the introduction by providing a substantially more detailed explanation of the program activity of the organization supervised. If there are distinct components of the organization’s operations, a brief, concise paragraph on each is recommended. Documentation should indicate whether the organization’s activities are state-wide, region-wide, agency-wide, etc.

Organization Setting

This section of the PD covers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management. Generally the level of responsibility and degree of authority is related to the location of a position in the organizational structure. Position descriptions for jobs at different levels should reflect these differences.

Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities which are exercised on a recurring basis. This includes:

- Assigning work to subordinates
• Explaining work requirements and answering technical questions
• Reviewing work
• Informing employees about procedures and policies
• Setting performance standards

Again, be sure to include supervision over all types of subordinates and explain the scope of responsibility and level of authority.

**Personnel Functions**

Document the following types of responsibility, once again explaining level of authority:

• Initiating recruitment requests
• Effecting promotions, reassignments, etc.
• Interviewing and selecting new employees
• Responsibility for awards and step increases
• Approving attendance and leave
• Writing position descriptions
• Handling employee complaints and grievances
• Overseeing employee training and development
• Evaluating performance
• Disciplinary matters
• Dealing with union stewards and officials
• Administering EEO program
• Informing employees of personnel matters
• Informing employees of management policies and goals
Non-supervisory duties

Since this format is used when supervisory duties are of paramount importance, it is unnecessary to provide, in this section, the same degree of detail that is required under Major Duties in Format #1. However, it is necessary to write one or two concise paragraphs covering technical responsibilities that are clearly separate from the job’s supervisory functions, when such non-supervisory assignments are part of the job. It’s also necessary to indicate the time percentage (percentage of total work time) for each paragraph in this section.

Supervisory Controls over Position

The focus here is on controls exercised by higher level supervisors over the total position, but particularly over the supervisory components of the job. Documentation should address guidance received from higher level management concerning the assignment and accomplishment of work, and should address how higher level management evaluates the success of the incumbent in supervising his/her organization. This component of the PD must be logically consistent with the Organization Setting of the position description. For example, if the Organization Setting documentation indicates a high degree of decision-making authority, Supervisory Controls Over Position wording should indicate a corresponding degree of independence.

Personal Contacts

This factor assesses the nature and purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities

Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization directed as well as other staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility, either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders or others.

Other Conditions

This factor measures the extent which various conditions contribute to the difficulty and complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. Conditions affecting work which the supervisor is responsible may be considered if they increase the difficulty of carrying out assigned supervisory of managerial duties and authorities.

Sample Position Description

Introduction
The incumbent manages an operations-oriented human resources organization responsible for the
delivery of a wide array of personnel services to headquarters and field components of APHIS, as
well as client agencies. Through two subordinate branch chiefs, manages a moderately large staff
of Human Resource specialists, assistants, technicians, and clerks.

**Nature and Scope of Operations Supervised**

The primary facets of operations managed are as follows:

**Classification and Position Management:** This program encompasses responsibility for the
classification of all GS, GM, and Wage System positions in APHIS, Grain Inspection, Packers,
and Stockyards Administration, and Agricultural Marketing Service. It also includes
comprehensive position management advisory service to all levels of management in the serviced
agencies.

**External Recruitment:** HRO is responsible for a multi-faceted, innovative program to recruit
personnel for an exceptional variety of positions. This involves the development and execution of
long-range recruitment strategies and utilization of varied appointment authorities to meet the
needs of APHIS, GIPSA, and AMS.

**Internal Recruitment:** This program encompasses a comprehensive merit promotion program for
APHIS, plus the organization’s four client agencies. It involves the planning and execution of a
heavy volume of merit promotion activity plus the technical oversight of limited merit promotion
work carried out by administrative personnel in Ames, Iowa.

**EEO and Upward Mobility:** Through coordinated efforts in the areas of external recruitment,
internal recruitment, classification, and position management, the HRO personnel management
program leads agency efforts to achieve EEO and upward mobility objectives. Specific functions
include researching trends and barriers and developing innovations to overcome them. This
includes position restructuring and the development of innovative career path opportunities, in
addition to intensive recruitment efforts aimed at diversifying the agencies’ workforce.

**Pay Administration:** HRO is responsible for proper administration of policies and regulations
concerning pay. This includes the administration of the PMRS system, oversight of the
transmission of the time and attendance data to facilitate timely salary payment, and the provision
of advisory services covering a wide range of issues such as tours of duty, premium pay, pay
while in a travel status, special allowances, allotments, and related matters. This program
encompasses the resolution of pay errors and problems, requiring extensive coordination with
USDA’s National Finance Center. It also involves the resolution of overpayment cases through
collection action and the evaluation of waiver requests.

**Employee Benefits:** The personnel management program of HRO includes the delivery of a full
range of employee benefits to employees in APHIS, plus its four client agencies. Specifically this
includes health insurance, life insurance, and retirement, as well as coordination of payments
related to workers’ compensation cases. The HRO assures that all employees receive benefit counseling services through telephone contact with HRO, the distribution of written guidelines, and through contact with HRO-trained administrative officials throughout APHIS and partner agencies. Special counseling to family members is provided in employee death cases. Responsibility for the administration of health insurance, life insurance, and Thrift Savings Plan open seasons is also a component of this program.

**Reductions in Force:** HRO is responsible for the administration of reductions in force necessitated by program cutbacks. The staff provides extensive counseling service to affected employees to assure their benefits and rights are protected and that their opportunities for continued employment in the federal government are maximized. More importantly, HRO provides proactive management advisory services aimed at personnel management innovations and long-range planning that minimizes the need for utilization of reduction-in-force procedures.

**Personnel Processing and Records:** The organization is responsible for the processing of an extremely high volume of personnel actions for APHIS and partner agencies. Maintenance of official personnel folders is a corollary responsibility.

**Work Planning and Organization:** The incumbent’s primary concern is with the formulation and achievement of long-range goals to maximize the quality of personnel services delivered to customers throughout APHIS and partner agencies; and to support the broad human resources goals of the agencies. The development and execution of strategy is accomplished through extensive consultation and negotiation with top level managers in all serviced agencies. It also requires extensive coordination with other human resources organizations.

The Chief of HRO develops the organization’s budget and staffing proposals and is accountable for the allocations received. The incumbent has full authority for structuring the organization and managing all resources in whatever manner best enables the accomplishment of the HRO mission.

The need to integrate personnel operations carried out by HRO personnel with the supporting roles of a very large number of managers and administrative personnel at widely scattered locations greatly complicate work planning processes. The implementation of such matters as shifts in delegated authorities and specific types of work often require the development of complex new procedures and can only be accomplished through well-orchestrated training efforts.

As a member of the agency’s human resources top management team, the incumbent of this position provide extensive input on the formulation of new policies covering a broad range of personnel issues.

**Work Assignment and Review:** Through a multi-faceted quality service program, the chief of HRO oversees the accurate identification of customer needs and the delivery of innovative, proactive personnel services that support the missions of the agencies serviced. The incumbent
oversees the development, utilization, and modification of comprehensive work measurement and customer surveys accompanied by analytical review of work processes. The employee has full authority to effect changes in work processes, work assignment, position structure, etc. to improve customer service, efficiency, and productivity. Authority to approve formal operating guidelines for use by HRO employees and customers is vested in the position.

Personnel Functions: Through subordinate supervisors, the incumbent manages a workforce of approximately 60 personnel primarily human resource specialists, assistants, technicians, and support clerks. The employee exercises authority to approve/disapprove a full array of personnel actions including new hires, retention actions, terminations, promotions, reassignments, demotions, disciplinary actions, etc. To a large extent, however, the resolution of such matters is delegated to subordinate personnel, with the incumbent’s personal involvement focusing on problem situations, actions involving subordinate supervisors, and the overall administration of personnel systems such as merit promotion and performance management. Internal management responsibilities also include the development and management of a comprehensive training and employee development program.

The incumbent is responsible for the management of HRO’s formal internal EEO program. This includes, but is not limited to the establishment of organizational goals, development of strategies to meet those goals, the education of personnel, and the continuous development and nurturing of an organizational culture based on appreciation for diversity and fair treatment for all employees.

Non-supervisory Duties

Not applicable. (0%)  

Supervisory Controls Over Position

The employee has broad authority for managing personnel operational programs within the parameters of very general policies and goals of APHIS, partner agencies, USDA, and the Office of Personnel Management. Work is reviewed in terms of the organization’s success in meeting long-range objectives and the level of satisfaction reported by top managers in APHIS and partner agencies.

Other Significant Facts

The missions of the five serviced agencies are diverse; the occupations represented in the workforces include an exceptional variety of scientific, technical, and administrative fields. Furthermore, the need to deal with five different management structures with divergent management philosophies places exceptional demands on the incumbent. An added complication to the job is constant pressure to respond to changes in program emphasis, meet the personnel needs of emergency programs, effect major reorganizations, and respond to a variety of related factors that create a very unstable organizational environment.
Human Resources Operations has provided agency leadership in instituting self-directed work teams. The Chief is a recognized expert in this organizational innovation and is called upon to provide expert advice to managers wishing to pursue this option.

**FORMAT #3: MIXED SUPERVISORY/NON-SUPERVISORY GS POSITIONS**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

This format is for supervisory positions which include very significant technical, administrative, or professional duties that are outside the realm of basic supervisory functions. An example is a position of engineer that involves supervising a workforce of engineering technicians, but also includes, for a significant portion of time, the personal performance of professional engineering work. In such instances, the non-supervisory component of a job may be grade controlling. Because the classification process typically involves separate evaluations of the supervisory and non-supervisory component of such jobs, this format is somewhat complicated.

**FORMAT OUTLINE**

Introduction

Work Planning and Organization

Work Assignment and Review

Personnel Functions

Management Controls over Supervisory Duties

Other Considerations Regarding Supervisory Functions

Non-supervisory Duties (With time % for each paragraph)

Knowledge Required for Non-supervisory Duties

Supervisory Controls over Non-supervisory Duties

Guidelines for Non-supervisory Duties

Complexity of Non-supervisory Duties

Scope and Effect of Non-supervisory Duties

Personal Contacts for Non-supervisory Duties
Purpose of Non-supervisory Personal Contacts

Physical Demands for Non-supervisory Duties

Work Environment for Non-supervisory Duties

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORMAT

Introduction

Be sure that the dual role of the job is communicated.

Work Planning and Organization, Work Assignment and Review, and Personnel Functions

In these sections, write only about the supervisory component of the job. Follow all instructions provided for Format #2 for these elements.

Management Controls over Supervisory Duties

There is typically a very different set of managerial controls over the technical work than exists over the supervisory component of the job. This section is concerned only with the supervisory component of the job. Follow Format #2 instructions for Supervisory Controls Over Position.

All Other Factors

Follow all instructions set forth in Format #1 for non-supervisory responsibilities.

Other Considerations Regarding Supervisory Functions

Follow the instructions for Other Significant Facts in Format #2.

FORMAT #4: GENERAL SCHEDULE WORK LEADER POSITIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Leaders perform coordination, technical assistance, and oversight duties to help assure that the work assignments of other employees are carried out. While leader positions are set up to assist supervisors, the scope of leaders’ authority is limited and falls short of supervisory authority and level of responsibility. To be categorized as a leader position, a job must have three or more subordinates performing clerical or other one-grade-interval work. In addition to their coordination and oversight duties, leaders perform non-supervisory work that is usually of the same kind and level as that done by the employees led.
Introduction

The introduction should mention both the work leader role and responsibility to perform non-leader functions.

**Leader Responsibilities**

Briefly identify the leader duties present in the job. Typical examples are:

- Distributes and balances the workload among employees in accordance with established work flow or job specialization.

- Assures timely accomplishment of the assigned workload, and assures that each employee has enough work to keep busy.
• Monitors the progress of work, making day-to-day adjustments in accordance with established priorities. Obtains assistance from the supervisor on problems that may arise, such as backlogs, which cannot be disposed of promptly.

• Estimates and reports on expected time of completion of work. Maintains records of work accomplishments and time expended. Prepares production reports.

• Instructs employees in specific tasks and job techniques. Makes available written instructions, reference materials and supplies.

• Gives on-the-job training to new employees in accordance with established procedures and practices.

• Answers questions of other employees on procedures, policies, directives, etc. Obtains needed information or decisions from supervisor on problems that arise.

• Checks on work in progress or spot checks completed work to assure that the supervisor’s instructions on work sequence, procedures, methods and deadlines have been followed.

• Amends or rejects work not meeting established requirements, referring to the supervisor significant questions or problems not covered by the established standards.

• Monitors working conditions such as seating, ventilation, lighting, safety, etc.

• Approves leave for a few hours or for emergencies.

• Informs employees of available services and employee activities. Resolves simple informal complaints of employees. Refers other complaints to the supervisor.

• Reports to the supervisor on performance, progress and training needs of employees, and on disciplinary problems.

• Makes informal suggestions to supervisor as requested concerning promotions, reassignment, recognition of outstanding performance, and personnel needs.

Leader functions tend to be quite standard and generally don’t vary nearly as much as the work of supervisors. Therefore, writing this section of the PD does not involve, in most instances, a lot of original writing. A simple listing of the above items, with minimal editing, will often be sufficient to document leader duties.

Additional Duties

Follow all instructions for Major Duties, Format #1.
FORMAT #5: NON-SUPERVISORY WAGE SYSTEM POSITIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Federal Wage System is a distinct system of categorizing positions in the areas of trades, crafts, and manual labor. While there are some common principles shared by this system and the General Schedule, significant differences in job grading rules and principles exist, and a different type of job description format is required. If there is doubt as to whether a position belongs in the Wage System or General Schedule, please consult with your classification specialist before selecting a position description format.

FORMAT OUTLINE

Introduction

Duties

Skill and Knowledge

Responsibility

Physical Effort

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Duties

Use the same basic approach that is used for **Major Duties** in Format #1, including the documentation of time percentages. But, also keep in mind that for Wage System positions it is particularly important that any responsibility performed on a regular and recurring basis be specifically documented, regardless of the amount of time it takes.

Skill and Knowledge

Describe the nature of the skill, knowledge, and mental application required in performing assigned work. Include the amount and depth of knowledge and skills needed, as well as the manner, frequency, and extent to which they are used.

Responsibility
Describe the nature and degree of responsibility involved in performing the work. Include the complexity and scope of work assigned, the difficulty and frequency of judgments and decisions made, the kind of supervisory controls, and the nature of work instructions and technical guides used.

Physical Effort

Describe the physical effort exerted in performing assigned work. Include the nature, degree, frequency, and duration of muscular effort or physical strain experienced in work performance. If heavy lifting is required be sure to include it with a specific weight figure.

Working Conditions

Describe the hazards, physical hardships, and working conditions to which workers are exposed. Include the nature of the work environment; the extent to which it includes unpleasant, disagreeable, or hazardous conditions; the frequency and duration of exposure; the extent to which protective clothing and gear, safety devices, and safe trade practices afford hazard protection; and the possible affects on the workers.

Sample Position Description

Introduction

This position is located in the Glassware Preparation Area of Technical Support, Scientific Services Laboratory, National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL), Ames, Iowa. This area is responsible for the preparation and distribution of glassware and equipment for the laboratories of NVSL. The incumbent performs the full scope of duties as outlined below.

Duties

On a daily basis, unpacks, washes, and dries new non-disposable and disposable glassware, plasticware, instruments, utensils, etc. Places these items in storage cabinets. (10%)

Makes scheduled daily rounds with hand-operated cart to pick-up decontaminated items from individual laboratory autoclaves and other designated locations. This includes materials received from laboratory facilities outside NVSL. Disposable items are delivered to a designated location and discarded in an appropriate waste receptacle, Garbage cans and pans to be cleaned and materials to be incinerated are delivered to a designated location. Reprocesses non-disposable items by removing media, solutions, labels, markings, and pipette plugs, and also soaking, washing, and drying. (20%)

Disassembles, cleans and reassembles various instruments and equipment including automatic pipetting syringes, bleeding flasks, blender blade assemblies, and filtering flasks. Disassembles,
cleans, and returns to Media Preparation equipment and dispensing apparatus, including membrane and depth filter holders, stainless steel pressure vessels, pouring flasks, and aspirator bottles. Washes small, medium, and large stainless steel pans and containers by hand or machine. (40%)

Receives and fills daily requests for processed glassware, plasticware, instruments, and utensils of numerous sizes, shapes, and types according to user instructions and needs. Processing includes placing these items in racks, baskets, pans, bags, cans, boxes, and trays. Items often require wrapping or sealing in an appropriate material and sterilizing by autoclave, dry heat or gas. Delivers processed glassware, plasticware, instruments, and utensils to individual laboratories and other designated locations. (30%)

**Skill and Knowledge**

Skill to operate and make adjustments to controls of work area equipment including glassware washers and dryers, autoclaves, dry heat sterilizers, heated soak tubs, pumps, and oxygen torches. Operation of equipment requires adjustment of controls including timers, valves, gauges, dials, switches, and regulators to assure proper operation. Must possess the skill to load glassware washer spindle headers so they fit the glassware washer and permit all items to receive an equally efficient amount of washing and rinsing.

The operation of an oxygen torch requires skill for heating, bending, and shaping various items of glass to the specifications of the user.

Skill to properly operate a mechanical glass cutter for cutting glass rods to the specification and needs of the user.

Knowledge of various labware cleaning compounds, e.g., high alkaline detergents, acid base detergents, protein dissolvents, etc. and their dilution factor for proper soaking and washing of glassware, plasticware, instruments, and utensils.

Knowledge of the scientific and generic nomenclature of glassware, plasticware, instruments, and utensils so that requests for processed labware are completed in a proper and timely fashion.

Knowledge of the thermal stability of glassware, plasticware, instruments, utensils, and wrapping material to determine the proper method of sterilization to be used, (autoclaving, dry heat, or gas).

**Responsibility**

General supervision is provided by the Head, Technical Support Section. More detailed instructions are provided by the work leader in the glassware section. After receiving initial oral and written instructions and demonstrating successful performance, the employee performs the work routinely in accordance with established procedures and previous training. The incumbent
is expected to report any actual or potential malfunctions of work area equipment to the work leader. Work is periodically checked by the supervisor to see that appropriate procedures are followed and that production standards are met.

Physical Effort

Active walking, moderate to heavy physical exertion, prolonged standing, and muscle strain occur frequently throughout the workday. Duties require the daily lifting and carrying of moderately heavy (5 to 60 pounds) pans, racks, cases, etc. of glassware and related materials in approximately 15% of the work cycle and pushing or pulling similar objects in approximately 20% of the job cycle. Moderate physical dexterity is required.

Working Conditions

Work is performed in a kitchen type atmosphere where there are frequent disagreeable odors, the possibility of scalds and burns, hazard of infection, and frequent fluctuation in temperature due to steam and heat. Is subject to cuts, bruises, and burns from broken glassware, detergents, hot water, and steam. Work area temperature is usually 15 degrees and higher above normal room temperature and humidity is high. Floors are damp and slippery. The employee is expected to comply with instructions, policies, and procedures related to safety precautions in the work area, including the wearing of appropriate laboratory attire. Safety precautions reduce but do not eliminate the hazards of the job.

FORMAT #6: WAGE SUPERVISOR POSITIONS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This format is for positions established to supervise others in the performance of trade, craft, or manual work.

FORMAT OUTLINE

Introduction

Nature and Scope of Operations Supervised

Planning Responsibilities

Work Direction Responsibilities

Administration Responsibilities

Non-Supervisory Duties (with time %)
Supervisory Controls Over Position

Other Significant Facts

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

Establish the framework for the position description by briefly identifying the organization and type of operations supervised. Include information on the number of subordinates and their occupations. Also note if there are subordinate supervisors or work leaders.

Nature and Scope of Operations Supervised

Build on the introduction by providing a more detailed explanation of the work activity of the organization supervised. If there are multiple phases or segments of the operations supervised, a brief paragraph on each component is recommended. Documentation in this section of the PD should accurately place the job in the proper organizational context and clearly convey to the reader an accurate picture of the magnitude of operations for which the supervisor is accountable.

Planning Responsibilities

Write one or two cohesive paragraphs covering the following kinds of responsibilities:

- Planning the use of resources including workers, equipment, facilities, materials, and tools
- Establishing and revising work plans, priorities, and project schedules
- Tracking progress on projects and effecting changes in work schedules, use of overtime, etc.
- Establishing and revising work procedures
- Coordinating work with other organizational entities

The description of the planning responsibilities must, in addition to identifying areas of responsibility, explain the level of involvement and degree of authority. Lower level supervisors tend to make recommendations and focus more on short term issues. Higher level supervisors have more authority to make decisions and they are more concerned with long-term issues. Also, higher level supervisors may carry out duties through and with the involvement of subordinate supervisors. If such a situation exists it needs to be explained. For example, a higher level
supervisor may exercise approval authority over work plans developed by lower level supervisors.

**Work Direction Responsibilities**

Write a paragraph or two on responsibilities related to the following:

- Assigning work to employees; establishing deadlines and operational sequences
- Providing technical direction on difficult processes
- Developing qualitative and quantitative work standards
- Investigating work-related problems such as excessive cost or low productivity
- Performing detailed reviews of work accomplishments, cost control, and employee utilization issues
- Maximizing effectiveness of work operations by shifting assignments and resources
- Inspecting completed work for quality and work order requirements

As is the case with **Planning Responsibilities**, it’s necessary to communicate the level of involvement and degree of authority. Documentation must be tailored to the particular job you are describing. Again remember to mention any utilization of subordinate supervisors in carrying out this aspect of the job. One or two cohesive, well-written paragraphs are needed.

**Administration Functions**

As with the two preceding sections, it’s necessary to identify both the kind and scope of responsibilities, including any relevant information regarding the utilization of subordinate supervisors. Write one or two concise paragraphs covering the following types of duties:

- Explaining management programs and policies to subordinates
- Establishing or revising employee performance standards; evaluating employee work performance
- Counseling workers on performance improvement
- Determining and meeting training needs of staff
- Effecting disciplinary actions
• Effecting promotions and reassignments of subordinates
• Establishing or revising performance standards
• Selecting applicants for job vacancies
• Investigating and resolving grievances and/or complaints
• Representing management at hearings, meetings, and negotiations with unions
• Monitoring housekeeping and safety practices
• Preparing work and administrative reports
• Planning leave schedules

Non-supervisory Duties

Write one or two concise paragraphs documenting the personal performance of work that is clearly distinct from supervisory functions. For each paragraph indicate the percentage of the employee’s total duty time that is devoted to the described work. If there is virtually no non-supervisory work, this section should be omitted.

Supervisory Controls over Position

Compose a concise paragraph explaining the controls exercised by higher level management over the position, particularly the supervisory components of the job. Documentation should address guidance received from higher level management concerning the assignment and accomplishment of work, and should address how higher level management evaluates the success of the incumbent in supervising his/her workforce. This component of the PD must be consistent with the PD components that describe the extent of supervisory authority.

Other Significant Facts

Follow Format #2 instructions.

**FORMAT #7: WAGE LEADER POSITIONS**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**
This format covers Wage System positions with responsibility for the performance of trade or labor work and with responsibility for leading the work of three or more other employees. Wage Leader positions are not supervisory but do involve limited oversight and coordination functions.

FORMAT OUTLINE

Introduction

Trade or Labor Duties

Leader Duties

Skill and Knowledge

Responsibility

Physical Effort

Working Conditions

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

Include a specific reference to the work leader role of the job, noting the number of subordinates led and their occupation.

Leader Duties

Briefly identify specific work leader functions such as the following:

- Communicates supervisory instructions to subordinates
- Sets pace for projects while working with subordinates
- Demonstrates proper work methods
- Assures availability of needed materials and tools
- Obtains decisions on problems from supervisors
- Answers workers’ questions on procedures and directives
• Assures that all subordinates are kept busy
• Checks for adherence to supervisor’s instructions
• Assures that safety/housekeeping rules are being followed
• Reports status of work and any problems to supervisor

All Other Sections

Format #5 instructions apply.

POSITION DESCRIPTION COVER SHEETS (AD-332s)

An AD-332 is an essential part of any position description. Without a cover sheet signed by the supervisor, no PD is an official document.

While the position description cover sheet contains a large number of blocks, supervisors need only be concerned with a few items on the front of the form. The most crucial requirement is that the Supervisor's Certification portion be completed. Block 19 must be signed by the position’s supervisor. A higher level supervisor should sign in block 24, if possible. Individuals not in the position’s supervisory chain should not sign the supervisory certification.

The Organizational Structure portion of the cover sheet (Block 18) should also be completed to ensure that the HRO staff understands the location of the job.

While it is not necessary for supervisors to complete any other portion of the form, they are invited to share with the classifier their opinions on the position’s correct classification by filling in the RECOMMENDED section (blocks 4-7). But, supervisors must keep in mind that completing these items does not ensure that a job will be graded at a particular level or given a particular title. Jobs must always be classified on the basis of the OPM standards, not on the basis of what the supervisor wants.

Supervisors are also reminded that, while they need only complete certain portions of the front side of the cover sheet, the document is a two-sided form. The back of the form consists of many data items that must be completed by the classifier. Please don’t use photocopies of the form that don’t include the back side.

Multiple cover sheets and position descriptions are not required for the establishment of a position at different grade levels (i.e., for situations in which lower graded developmental versions of a position are established).