



Knowledge to lead

Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

A job description is a formalized statement that describes the work requirements of a position – the duties/responsibilities – and the qualifications required to perform a certain job. The job description clarifies the tasks, helping understand the specific responsibilities of a position.

There are two types of job descriptions: traditional job descriptions (TJD) and results-oriented job descriptions (ROJD). TJD are duties-oriented; they provide a list of job tasks. ROJD go beyond describing what the incumbent does (tasks) they describe what the incumbent accomplishes by the duties to be performed – **the results**.

The Results-Oriented Job Description

A well-written ROJD establishes a new philosophy for job actions. It allows the manager to clearly explain why the position exists within the organization and to indicate what the desired results to be achieved by the incumbent are. Writing an accurate, relevant and up-to-date ROJD demands a careful analysis. It demands awareness of changes in the work, the organizational reality of the work, and the evolution of the job. A ROJD is positive and proactive. It provides a key way to focus on and succeed at achieving the organization's mission, benefiting every member of the organization.

As a ROJD clearly defines responsibilities and determines how to achieve the results according to the expectations of the organization, it provides an objective guide – to supervisors and supervisees – of how performance will be evaluated. It therefore helps preparing meaningful **performance evaluations**.

A ROJD is also a relevant tool for the preparation of meaningful **professional development plans**.

ROJD's Characteristics:

- A ROJD is a comprehensive and all-inclusive job description. It builds the connection between the incumbent's work and the mission of the organization, identifying how duties and tasks contribute to the achievement of the organization's mission/goals.
- It creates understanding throughout the system and community (clients) about the value of the work accomplished for the achievement of the organization's mission. It therefore creates a strong professional identity.
- It accurately reflects **what** is done, and **how** it is to be done, while providing an explanation of **why** the job duties are important in the organizational context.
- It facilitates discussion on professional achievements as success can be easily recognized through the **results of the work**.



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

Understanding the Differences between ROJD and TJD

ROJD	TJD
They describe what the incumbent accomplishes by the duties to be performed – the results .	Are duties-oriented; for the most part provide a list of job duties, describing the job as a seemingly endless list of tasks.
The focus is on the results "what does (or should) she/he accomplish?" Thus, it is free of incumbent discipline and behavior references.	The question asked is "what does she/he do?", thus usually oriented towards "behaving well on the job".
The crucial measurement is whether incumbents are able to accomplish the results that the organization needs by overcoming obstacles or taking advantage of opportunities.	The measurement focuses only on those competencies and qualifications necessary to "do the job". The measurement is only on whether the incumbent can perform the tasks, without considering the actual result.
They help to understand how a position fits into the organization's goals. The main responsibilities are within organizational requirements and expectations of performance based on results. With a better understanding of where their job fit into the organization's goals, where they are headed, and how success will be measured, the incumbents can get more involved in their job, make better decisions when faced with unexpected demands and opportunities, and feel more satisfied for their efforts.	The list of tasks does not clarify the results that give meaning to responsibilities. A TJD states tasks to be done such as "Establish, design and develop new projects and activities". The several actions/activities involved in the duty are not clarified. The purpose of performing such duties is not highlighted.



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

What's in it for you in a Results-Oriented Job Description?

- ✓ A well and powerfully written ROJD provides an efficient and consistent appraisal anchor.
- ✓ You will know how your performance will be evaluated. The ROJD provides a direct bridge with the new results-based performance evaluation as it clearly states the results you are expected to deliver.
- ✓ A ROJD provides neutral and objective reference points for appraisals, performance reviews, professional development, and counseling as it raises attention to accomplishing specific key results. Appraisal dialogues can then utilize a very objective ROJD language: job requirements were either accomplished or not.
- ✓ You will improve the communication with your supervisor. Since duties and results are clearly stated, there is no room for misunderstandings on how the tasks were expected to be performed.
- ✓ Goal setting for annual work plans (work objectives) are better structured when grounded in actual job responsibilities.
- ✓ The ROJD provides a tool for planning your participation in professional development programs. Training programs based squarely on customized job responsibilities builds knowledge, skills, and abilities that are directly linked with your needs, establishing a rationale for planning and delivering training programmes that fit those needs.
- ✓ ROJD are a powerful human resource management tool for managers:
 - a) It facilitates performance evaluation processes, including mid-term review dialogues;
 - b) It spares supervisors the situation of having to give an incumbent a good rating for "doing job tasks" event though she/he did not accomplish the required results.
 - c) It is an instrument readily available to evaluate job candidates. Interview questions grounded on concrete job responsibilities add a more dynamic dimension to the conversation and can immediately test a candidate's abilities to overcome obstacles and to take advantage of opportunities.
- ✓ If you have the responsibility of drafting your ROJD use well the opportunity. Writing a ROJD is a good opportunity to frame your role as you would like it to be.
- ✓ Did you receive an empty template? Use the opportunity to reflect on your job as it is at the moment. Carefully analyze what you believe is your current job. The exercise tends to promote useful discussions, clarifying expectations between staff members and their supervisors.
- ✓ When drafting try to think outside of the normal way of thinking. Seek the input of somebody who is less close to things if finding difficulties.



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

General Guidelines to prepare a Results-Oriented Job Description

- A ROJD has a concise list of essential responsibilities (main duties). It is in essence a list of 8-12 duties, which cover the essential responsibilities of the job and must be presented in a simple, clear and concise language.
- In small organizations managers generally cover a wide range of responsibilities. In such cases, job descriptions might contain a greater number of essential responsibilities. The number should not exceed 15-16 though or the job description becomes unwieldy and ineffective.
- In case you perform a great number of responsibilities try to be bold in the way you describe what you do, using the sort of adequate terminology that reflects the essence of your responsibilities.
- Do not under-estimate the strategic nature of some responsibilities.
- The statements under the various sections of the ROJD must be coherent. They should be in harmony with the duty statements and other parts of the job description, such as the summary of assigned duties, as well as the goals and objectives of the post.
- Provide background information on the organizational setting, including information on the mandate of the organizational unit in which the post is located.
- Submit an organizational chart, reflecting the position of the incumbent within the organizational structure.



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

Step by Step Drafting Exercise

Step 1 Job Purpose

The overall job purpose is the mission of the position within the organization. Explain why the position exists within the organization, identifying the main customers served by the incumbent, and connect the position to relevant outcomes. Each incumbent enhances the organization's mission by a combination of essential responsibilities, which can be defined by one broad, all encompassing phrase.

Example: Sales and Marketing Executive: *To plan and carry out direct marketing and sales activities, so as to maintain and develop sales of SNP ABC machinery range to UK major accounts and specifiers, in accordance with agreed business plan.*

In this section explain also where the position is located within the organizational structure, who supervises and/or gives work direction to the position, and what positions the incumbent supervises (if applicable).

Step 2 List of Tasks

Dedicate some time in this step. It will facilitate your way through the next one, normally more complicated.

- Prepare a list of tasks; write down in a random fashion all aspects of the job. The task list should include all work, activities, and services performed. Pay attention to add services and additional work that are not included the current job description.
- The TORs will normally provide you with a good overview of the tasks; use it as starting point, but update as needed. Remember that this list needs to be all-inclusive. Consider: processes, planning, executing, monitoring, reporting, communicating, managing (people, resources, activities, money, information, inputs, outputs, communications, time, etc.).
- Finished your random list? Go back to the beginning and double check that everything is genuinely important and achievable. Rank your revised task list roughly in order of importance.
- Next you should group logically related tasks. You will find out that you can cluster most of the tasks of your initially very long list into a list of far fewer broad – but still specific tasks.

Example: *Clarify customer complaint; determine the cause of the problem; select and explain the best solution to solve the problem; expedite correction or adjustment; follow up to ensure resolution – are all tasks that potentially can be grouped together under a heading.*



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

Step by Step Drafting Exercise

Step 3 The Essential Responsibilities

In step 2 you have:

1. Identified, initially, a big a list of tasks that you have to do in your job;
2. Ranked your task list roughly in order of importance;
3. Clustered logically related tasks, reducing the big list to one with far fewer broad tasks.

Step 3 is the most difficult part. This step shifts the **focus** of the work from the tasks to be performed into the **expected results**.

You have to identify the set of **essential responsibilities** of the job. Essential responsibility is a heading that describes an area of work that usually requires several individual tasks to be completed. An essential responsibility is what is to be accomplished (the result) in the specific way the organization wants: the tasks described – how the incumbent is expected to accomplish the results.

DON'T: confuse the list of essential responsibilities with the individual tasks that must be performed to accomplish the essential responsibility (the result to be accomplished). To distinguish, ask and answer the following questions:

- Why are we doing this job (the result)
- What must be done to produce the desired result (the task)

Think of the **essential responsibilities** of your job. A junior position will not need more than 8; a managerial position in a small organization might need 15 – but never more than this! The result will be a list with various headings of key responsibilities. Once various headings that describe results are developed, the tasks can be sorted logically under the appropriate essential responsibility.

Help needed? Consult the group of tasks you produced in the previous step. As they were logically clustered you should easily identify a key responsibility where a group of tasks belong to. So:

- Consult the clusters of tasks you have (the ones you have logically grouped together before);
- Associate each cluster of tasks with an essential responsibility;
- Produce a list of essential responsibilities (8-15, according to the case) and
- Place the clusters under each essential responsibility heading.

Note: a key responsibility may require various tasks to be performed!



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

Step by Step Drafting Exercise

Step 4 The writing method

You have to describe each essential responsibility with a results-by-task three-five-line formula – the **Results Statement** – describing expectations for successful performance. They are the general statements of what the incumbent is intended to accomplish. They connect the intended outcome to the clients and provide a sound basis for structuring work and personal development plans.

The method of writing the results statement involves the use of the connector word “**by**”. The sentence starts with a general active verb stating the result. It is then followed by the specific tasks to be performed (what must be done to achieve the desired result). Thus, the verbs describing the tasks appear all in “ing” form.

Changing verbs from passive to active clarifies the job function. It demonstrates that accomplishing each essential responsibility (the result the organization desires) involves performing a series of tasks. Thus, the job function is elevated with a strong professional identity.

The essential responsibilities must appear in order of importance. The sense of priority demonstrates to the incumbent what she/he should not do when put under time or other resource pressure.

Step 5 An example of putting it all together

A three-five-line structure with the essential responsibility in bold type, followed by the expected results, is the final product you need to get – the **results statement**:

Resolves product problems by clarifying customer complaint; determining the cause of the problem; selecting the best solution to solve the problem; expediting adjustment; following up to ensure resolution.

Implement new projects to expand the organization’s portfolio by identifying new opportunities; providing technical guidance into priority activities; maintaining contacts with clients and stakeholders; assuring a service oriented approach to clients;

Process information by reading incoming mail, obtaining background materials, highlighting important points, retrieving and attaching related documents, routing mail to concerned parties; drafting standard correspondence; filing documents.



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

References:

1. National Education Association, What is a ROJD?, www.nea.org, 3 February 2009
2. Articles Base, Management Articles, How to Write a Results-Oriented Job Description, www.articlesbase.com, 3 February 2009
3. Helium, Writing a job description that works for your employees, www.helium.com, 4 February 2009
4. Business Balls, Writing Results-Oriented Job Descriptions, www.businessballs.com, 4 February 2009



Knowledge to lead



Results-Oriented Job Descriptions (ROJD) Job Aid

Annex

Illustrative example of some usually common essential responsibilities/duties

No doubt, in every job description, the level of authority affects the extent of responsibility for determining strategy, decision-making, managing other people, deciding direction, policy, delivering corporate performance, etc. Notwithstanding, there are some essential responsibilities/duties that would normally feature in one or another ROJD. Below you have some illustrative examples:

- Communicating (in relation to whom, what, how)
- Planning and organizing (of what, how)
- Managing information or general administration support (of what, how)
- Monitoring and report (of what, how)
- Evaluating and decision-making (of what...)
- Communicate, liaise, and negotiate internally and externally to facilitate (what...)
- Financial budgeting and control (of what...)
- Producing things (what...)
- Maintaining/repairing things (what...)
- Creating and developing things (what...)
- Self-development (almost always present in job descriptions of a given grade).

If applicable:

- Recruiting (of direct-reporting staff)
- Assessing (direct-reporting staff)
- Training (direct-reporting staff)
- Managing (direct-reporting staff)

In the case of a senior role the job description will include more executive aspects:

- Developing policy
- Formulation of direction and strategy
- Launch and implementation
- Appropriate administration
- Self-development and continuing personal development

Moreover, for senior roles, it is useful to break essential responsibilities/duties into sections that would cover, for example: **Functional**, **Managerial** and **Organizational areas**.