GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A FUNCTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION

The functional job description is one of the best tools for identifying the discrete and unique duties, responsibilities and accountabilities associated with the position. The functional job description is not a “form” or a “task” but rather a part of an ongoing process throughout the entire employment relationship that should track and reflect changes in organization structure, tasks, accountabilities, skills and requirements. It is the foundation for recruitment, selection, performance management and work flow and succession planning. Functional descriptions are also important documents if we are required to defend the assignment of a particular classification and/or pay or salary grade.

ASSESSMENT
- Assess your overall operational needs, including future needs.
- Review current processes and business practices to ensure efficiency and high quality.
- Review the current functional job description for the position. Has it changed over time?
- Typically input from and discussion with the incumbent(s) is strongly encouraged

QUESTIONS TO ASK
- What are the responsibilities:
  - For communication (in relation to whom, what, how)?
  - For planning and organizing?
  - For managing information or administrative support?
  - For monitoring or reporting (of what?)
- What level of decision-making does this position require?
- How much authority is exercised in the job?
- Who are the customers? (internal/external)

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A FUNCTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION
- **Position summary**
  - What is the purpose of the position? (business need)
- **Supervision/direction received:**
  - To whom does this position report?
  - What is the level of independent judgment?
  - What is the level of decision making (latitude)?
- **Typical Duties**
  - What are the essential tasks/responsibilities, using “action” verbs (be specific)?
  - What are the percentages of time spent on each discrete duty (typically 5-7 duties which total 100%)?
  - What are the competencies required to perform the tasks (observable behaviors)?
  - Is this position responsible for supervising others? Which employees?
- **Machines and Equipment Used**
  - Office equipment, scientific equipment, computer hardware/software
- **Requirements**
  - What are the MINIMUM job requirements and preferred qualifications (education, experience, licenses, certificates, physical requirements, and work day/hours?)