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

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A FUNCTIONAL JOB DESCRIPTION

- **Position summary**
  - Overall summary of job responsibilities including the purpose of the position (i.e. business need).
- **Supervision/direction received:**
  - To whom does this position report?
- **Typical Duties**
  - What are the essential tasks/responsibilities, using “action” verbs (be specific)? Things to consider and include, if applicable:
    - level of independent judgment and decision making
    - level of authority exercised
    - communication (in relation to whom, what needs to be communicated & how)
    - is planning & organizing involved
    - what competencies are required to perform the tasks/responsibilities (observable behaviors)
    - Does the position supervise others? If so, who?
  - Assign percentages of time spent on each discrete duty. Breakdowns should be no more than 20-25% totaling 100%.
- **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?)