

## **JOB ANALYSIS**

### **Jobs Are:**

#### **Basic Units of Organisation Structure**

Every organisation has a purpose, a reason for its existence. The purpose may be complex, or carried about as a general idea rather than set down and defined, but nonetheless it is there. To achieve its purpose the organisation adopts a strategy, a plan of campaign. Its strategy shapes the structure of the organisation, both as it is now and as it will evolve and, in turn, the structure of the organisation shapes the jobs which will have to be done.

This simple model summarised overleaf illustrates the central point: that jobs exist because in some way they help the organisation to achieve its purpose. There are organisational objectives which people are able to achieve by carrying out their main duties and responsibilities. Jobs are the basic units of organisation structure - the building blocks of organisations. Ultimately all jobs should combine to achieve the purpose of the total organisation. It follows that jobs are the link between the individual as employee and the organisation as employer. They provide the bridge between people and the work to be done.

#### **Belong to the Organisation**

It further follows that a job exists to be done independently of the person undertaking it at any point in time. People can and do shape the way in which jobs evolve over time, but jobs are ultimately distinct from their holders. Style, approach, performance are characteristics of people. Purpose and accountabilities in the organisation are characteristics of jobs. They will, if a job is real, remain to be fulfilled when any individual job holder moves on.

#### **Results-Oriented**

In this model jobs are created to contribute to the achievement of organisational objectives - they exist to achieve some sort of desired end results.

People tend to see jobs from the inside: they speak of tasks, activities, duties and of the difficulty of doing jobs. But because a "job" is an organisational concept, having no meaning outside the context of an organisation of some kind, this view is only half the picture. The other half is to do with the importance of jobs as seen from the outside in terms of

how they contribute to the organisation. Tasks and activities - the "how" of a job - need to be considered because they are the means by which the job holder achieves what has to be done. But it is the "why", the end result, which ties activity together and makes it meaningful to the organisation. This distinction between tasks and end results is, for smaller jobs, fairly unimportant. However, for large jobs, where individuals are given the freedom to decide "how" the job will be done, such a distinction is central to job understanding.

## **Dynamic**

As organisation strategy and structure change, then jobs will also change. Many organisations are moving towards less hierarchical, flatter structures and more project or process-based work meaning that "jobs" have become more fluid and rapidly changing. This does not invalidate the need to describe jobs, on the contrary there is often even more of a need for clarity of accountability if the organisation is to avoid duplication and wasted resources.

## **What is Job Analysis?**

Job Analysis is the process of understanding a job and presenting this information in a format which will enable others to understand the job. Job Analysis normally comprises the following stages:

- Gathering of information about the content and context of jobs and the relationships between them. This information may be obtained by interviewing a manager or job holder, from existing job descriptions, from statistical or financial data, organisation charts, etc.
- Analysing and organising the job information. The skill of job analysis is about really understanding the job in order to break it down into its key components.
- Presentation of the information in a concise and systematic manner. This is normally in the form of an individual job description, generic role profile or job family descriptor. There are, however, other ways of presenting job information such as annotated organisation charts, generic job matrices, and so forth.

## **Principles of Job Analysis**

The Job Analyst must adhere to four main principles:

### **Analysis not lists**

The Job Analyst separates jobs into their important constituent parts, examines them, and reassembles them in a way which facilitates understanding. Without analysis, the job description or role profile is likely to become a wearying check-list of small and unrelated tasks.

### **Jobs not people**

Analysis is not concerned with performance, style, character, career history or anything else about the **job holder**. It is concerned with the job, and the present job holder is only involved because he/she usually knows most about it.

### **Facts not judgements**

It is not the role of the Analyst to make judgements about jobs; rather the task is to communicate factual information as clearly as possible. The distinction is analogous to that between the news itself and the editorial comment in a paper. It is for the eventual users of the job description or role profile to form whatever kind of judgements are necessary for their purpose, on the evidence the Analyst has presented.

### **The job as it is now**

The Analyst's role is to capture jobs as they are at a particular point in time. The job description or role profile should not be clouded by references to historic roles or future aspirations, although information on such aspects may well be gathered during the course of discussions about a job, or group of jobs.

## **Accountability**

In order to understand and describe jobs it is critical to have a clear understanding and presentation of what a job is accountable for delivering. Within the job description we present this information as Main Duties and Responsibilities.

These are statements of the continuing end results required of a job. They answer the question "What are the main areas in which this job must get results in order to achieve its purpose?"

### **Characteristics of Principle Accountabilities**

- taken together they represent all the key outputs of the job;
- they focus on results, not duties or activities. They tell the "what", not the "how";
- they are timeless, standing permanently unless the job itself is changed in a fundamental way;
- each one is distinct from the rest, and describes an explicit area in which results must be achieved by the job holder's action;
- they suggest measures or tests which could determine whether they are being met;
- they relate specifically to the job in question and not to the superior's job, or to the organisation as a whole.

### **Areas of Contribution**

In order to generate Principal Accountabilities, it is initially useful to "brain-storm" or list all the main areas for which a job is responsible - its Areas of Contribution. For example, the Areas of Contribution for a Personnel Manager may be:

- Departmental Budget

- Industrial Relations
- Manpower Planning
- Recruitment
- Training and Development
- Personnel Administration

### **Management Accountabilities**

Some of the areas of contribution for a management position will be similar, reflecting the common elements of management shown on the following page. Thus, the example of an accountability statement shown above concerning the department budget could apply to a large number of management roles.

However, it is not possible to produce a general set of management accountabilities which apply to all jobs. In the Principal Accountability statements you are seeking to confirm the unique nature of a particular job and accountabilities which define a management role must be supplemented by statements which identify the output/service deliverables associated with the role.

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