

Key Elements of a PD -- The Eight Classification Factors

In order for the Classification Section to assign positions to a job class that best describes the primary and essential duties and responsibilities, comparisons must be made between the position and job class specifications. The eight factors described below provide a basis for analyzing positions and for making these comparisons. These factors are the key elements you and your supervisor should consider in drafting or revising your position description.

The questions listed below the factors are for stimulating your discussion, only, and need not be specifically answered.

1. **NATURE, VARIETY & COMPLEXITY:** Relates to the kind, difficulty and variety of the work assigned.
 - What subject matter, profession, occupation or function is involved?
 - What skills, knowledge and techniques are applied?
 - Are the various tasks in the same or related subject matter fields?
 - Are the various tasks of a recurring type or do they present non-repetitive problems?
 - Are assignments made to the position selected on the basis of difficulty?

2. **NATURE OF SUPERVISION RECEIVED:** Relates to the nature and extent of deliberate, planned supervisory controls exercised over the incumbent of a position which limits the scope of the work, the independence with which it is performed, and the nature and finality of decisions made.
 - From whom does the employee receive instructions?
 - What type of instructions are they, and are the general or detailed and specific?
 - Is the supervision provided technical/functional or is it of a general administrative nature?
 - Is the work reviewed during the process or only upon completion?
 - Is the work given a technical review (substantive, content) or is it reviewed only for compliance with administrative matters (signatory)?

3. **NATURE OF AVAILABLE GUIDELINES:** Relates to written guides which control or influence performance of the work. (You will list the guidelines you routinely consult, in block #16.)
 - How extensively is the work and decision-making process controlled by written guidelines, manuals, procedures, policies, statutes, rules, etc?
 - Are the written guidelines general or specific?
 - How much initiative/deviation is the employee allowed in planning or executing the work?

4. **INITIATIVE & ORIGINALITY:** Relates to the degree of inventiveness, imagination and ability to innovate or create new approaches or deviations in standard work practices and processes.
 - How much leeway is given to the employee in deciding how to accomplish the assignments?
 - Is the employee required to devise new methods or procedures?
 - Does the employee adapt existing methods to fit the assignment?
 - Does the employee devise solutions to problems for which no existing solution or precedent exists?
 - Does the employee analyze and evaluate the recommendations of others in relation to the above?

5. **PURPOSE & NATURE OF PERSON-TO-PERSON WORK RELATIONSHIPS:** Concerned with the relations maintained with others not in the supervisory chain, inside and outside the agency.
 - What contacts does the employee have with others? Within the agency?
Outside the agency?
 - What is the purpose of these contacts?
 - What type of subject matter is dealt with?
 - Is the subject matter simple or complex, broad or narrow, controversial and sensitive or routine and recurring?
 - What conditions make it easy or difficult to accomplish these contacts?

6. **NATURE & SCOPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS, DECISIONS, COMMITMENTS, AND CONSEQUENCE OF ERROR:** Relates to decision-making authority, or the degree of leeway to make final decisions or errors, the likelihood of error being made by a prudent employee, and the consequences of that error to individuals, operations or programs. (You will list the actions and decisions you take independently, in block #17.)
 - Does the employee have the authority to commit the agency and its resources to a course of action?
 - What decisions does the employee make that are not reviewed by others?
 - If the employee's decisions are reviewed, what is the type and extent of this review?
 - What types of problems does the employee encounter and how important are they to the goals and objectives of the agency?
 - What is the employee's responsibility for making recommendations or taking actions on the agencies programs and policies?
 - How final are the employee's decisions and recommendations in relation to the functions of the agency?
 - What would be the consequence of errors or inadequacies in these recommendations and decisions?

7. **NATURE & EXTENT OF SUPERVISION EXERCISED OVER WORK OF OTHER EMPLOYEES:** Relates to the level and kinds of supervisory

responsibilities – as represented by such matters as setting policies, establishing objectives, planning, organizing and establishing workflow, making assignments and reviewing work. (Your supervisor will chart the supervisory authority assigned to you, in block #22.)

- What is the extent of the employee's authority to formulate policies, and what is the scope of those policies?
- What is the responsibility for control over the objectives and purpose of the work supervised and for the form and quality of the end product?
- Does the employee plan for an entire organization or plan specific techniques for given tasks?
- What is the employee's responsibility for organization of work, workflow and methods of operation? Does the employee determine work methods or merely assure that approved methods are carried out?
- What latitude does the employee have in making work assignments?
- What types of review does the employee make of the work of others – detailed, general, technical, policy, administrative?
- What is the extent of the employee's responsibility in selecting, promoting, transferring, evaluating and disciplining employees and settling grievances?
- What general administrative responsibilities does the employee have (procurement, budget, financial management, human resource management, legislative, etc)?
- What is the number and class level of subordinates supervised? What is the complexity of the organization supervised?

8. **QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:** The knowledge, skills, abilities and other qualifications required for successful performance of the work. He qualifications required should be reflective of the duties and of the other seven classification factors above. (You will list the most critical skills your position requires, in block #18, and your supervisor will more broadly list the qualifications required of your position, in blocks #24-25.)

- What knowledge is required for reasonable success in the position?
- What knowledge is required upon entry to the job?
- Which knowledge can be gained on the job in a reasonable period?
- What skills and what level of proficiency are required for the position? What kinds of machines and equipment are used?
- Are skills required at entry or can they be acquired during the probationary period?
- What general abilities are required of the position?