



UNIT-2

Staffing the Organisation

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Write job specifications and identify core competencies.

Unit 2

Staffing the Organisation

Identifying Job Competencies

You have done the job analysis, in unit 1. Now, armed with that information, you can identify competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) that will be required to do the job. Once we have identified those competencies, you can start writing the position profile or job description.

Let's break them down into technical and performance skills.

Technical Skills

These are skills that call upon specific technical knowledge or experience. They will help you answer the question, "Can the individual do the job?"

How do you determine technical skills? Ask yourself these questions:

- What specific kinds of machines will the employee use?
- What specific kinds of computer hardware/software will they use?
- Is there a certain specific and prescribed way they must manipulate tools?

What do you really need? You'll have to decide if previous experience in these technical skills is important or if you will train the successful candidate. Though technical skills are often more easily learned than performance skills, many jobs demand that a person arrive with their technical skills already in place.

Technical qualifications, while not specifically a part of the technical requirements of a position, can be considered here. If candidates must have a driver's license, a degree in civil engineering, or a diploma from a recognized IT training program, these are not considered performance skills and therefore fall under this category.

Test Your Knowledge

Think of a position that you need to fill in the near future. Write down the technical skills needed for this job.

Performance Skills

These are the tasks and responsibilities assigned to the position, and reflect a person's ability or desire to do something rather than something they know technically. Performance skills can include being able to meet deadlines, adapt to change, anticipate problems and solve them. They can also include working with or managing other people, making decisions, following guidelines, or dealing with the public.

A customer service supervisor, for example, might need to supervise three customer service representatives, apply established guidelines to specific customer inquiries, and solve work unit problems. These are all performance skills.

At the same time, you may expect this employee to be skilled in using Microsoft Word, have some knowledge of database management (including designing and maintaining a database), and know how to set up spreadsheets. These are considered technical skills.

Competence Factors

We aren't quite done here yet, though. Before we go on to the job description, think about the work environment. When you understand the work environment, then you can find the "fit" that is required, to make sure the person you have in that job is the right person for the job. We'll talk more about this later, but in today's world, fit isn't an instinct in your gut. Fit is identifying the culture in which the person works, and then looking for candidates who will fit with that culture. These items are also called competence factors.

Things that you may want in this area include:

- Attention to detail
- Career interest
- Commitment to organization
- Creativity
- Decision making
- Human relations skills
- Independent work/initiative
- Leadership
- Planning and organizing
- Problem analysis
- Stress tolerance
- Technical ability
- Turnover risk
- Adaptability
- Mathematical skills
- Written communication

- Learning ability
- Motivation
- Oral/verbal communication

When you identify a competency, your job isn't done until you also define what you mean by that competency. The easiest way to do this is to think of someone you know who you would say has that competency. What does this person do to make you think they have that competency? Your answer is your definition.

Example: One competency is a “customer service focus.” How would you define a customer service focus? Perhaps Susan comes to mind when you think of that competency. She is always thinking of the customer first. Her first response is always, "Is this best for the customer?"

Here are a couple of concrete examples:

- Susan called a customer back to see if he had received a parcel that was late being delivered.
- She put herself in the customer's shoes when we were developing a policy on compensation for late delivery.

From this, our definition of “customer service focus” might be: An employee who puts the customer first, and who always asks "Is this good for the customer?" This employee will check for customer feedback and maintain empathy with customer needs.

Position Profiles and Job Descriptions

Preparing a Profile

People don't always like preparing position profiles. They feel they have just given their employee the perfect excuse to say, “That's not part of my job.” On the other hand, we have organizations that take to position profiles with a vengeance. They have pages of descriptions, and the actual details are lost in mountains of words, so the employee still doesn't know what they're supposed to do!

Job Descriptions

A job description is a written record of the responsibilities of a particular job. It indicates the qualifications for the job and outlines how that job relates to others in the company. Even if your company has determined it is not going to have job descriptions, writing a job description will help you clarify what the position entails and its necessary qualifications

Things to include:

- Position title
- Salary or pay grade
- Department

- To whom the position is accountable
- Hours required (environment)
- Job purpose
- Summary of job
- Major KRA's (Key Results Areas) and sample tasks to fulfill (not only the responsibilities but the relative importance of these responsibilities)
- Extent of authority
- Level of complexity of duties
- Amount of internal/external contact
- Amount of access to confidential information
- Amount of independent judgment required
- Amount of pressure involved in the job
- Type of machinery/equipment used
- Working conditions
- Terms of employment

There are three important categories in a job description:

- Purpose: Not what they do, but why they are there, the reason the job was created.
- Key Responsibilities: What you are paying them to accomplish.
- Typical Activities: The things they are expected to do in order to accomplish these responsibilities.

For example: "Make clients feel welcome" might be a key responsibility of a receptionist. Typical activities could be: smile and greet customers by name as they come in door, keep coffee/tea ready for customers at all times, keep plants in reception area watered and tended, and keep magazines neatly stacked.

Job Specifications

Often, job descriptions and job specifications get rolled into the same document. However, job specifications should include:

- Day-to-day duties
- Other duties
- How is the position supervised
- What other positions receive supervision from this position
- What type of records must be kept
- To what extent is this position involved in analysis and planning
- What verbal/numerical/mechanical aptitudes are required

Things to Consider

If 1 was a "No position profile organization," and 10 were a "Detailed position profile organization," where would your organization fit?

The position profile we suggest rates about a five on the above scale. The profile can be expanded, perhaps even contracted, but it gives the recruiter something that tells them what kind of person they are looking for, without too many restrictions.

One of the biggest problems identified in the workplace right now is that employees don't know what their role is. They go into work and do things every day, but they are not sure if they are focused on the right things, or they work in a place where priorities change regularly and so they are not sure if they should also be changing what they do.

The position profile needs to be accurate, up to date, and it needs to be shared with the employee who fills the position. It also helps the supervisor to refer to the profiles regularly and make sure that staff are focused on priorities, and fulfilling their roles to the organization.

My Position Profile

Fill in this worksheet for your current position.

Job Description

Job Title:

Position Reports To (Title):

Key Result Areas	Activities Required

Key Contacts

Decision-Making Authority

Problem-Solving Responsibilities

Education and Training Requirements

Experience Requirements

Performance Measurement

Job Specifications

Day-To-Day Duties

Other Duties

Direct/Indirect Supervisory Responsibility

Do You Really Need to Hire?

Evaluate All Options

Now you are ready to recruit candidates for a position. However, before you do so, you've got to analyze whether you really need to hire a new person. Maybe options other than hiring make more sense, and maybe they don't.

What are some of your options?

- Review work processes. Is everyone working smart? Are people able to contribute their best, or is this a good time to make some changes? Employees, supervisors, and managers should be involved to determine if the work currently being done is what's supposed to be completed, and if it is being done efficiently.
- Shift some or all the available work to one or more people who aren't working at top capacity, if possible.
- Hire temporary workers; maybe this is a short-term need.
- Work with freelancers or contract workers.
- Be aware that a habit of not filling positions has the potential to backfire on us. When someone leaves the organization and has to be replaced by two people, that's a clear sign that we have been working our existing people far harder than we ought to be.

If your organization has ascertained there is a genuine need, you may still have to convince them there is true value in taking time to fill this position properly.

Do you have any idea of what it costs to hire a new employee? Sometimes when we see all the people coming to the door looking for jobs, we think employees are like potatoes on a conveyor belt: toss out the reject and select another one. But employee turnover costs money, usually a lot more than we realize. Costs include everything from preparing and posting or running an ad to screening and interviewing the candidates to the time and money to train these new people. Some companies have identified costs ranging from 35% to as much as 100% of an employee's annual salary.

We can do a lot to minimize employee turnover and reduce our recruiting costs by making sure that we hire the right person in the first place.

The Real Cost of Employee Turnover

Use the worksheet below to calculate the cost of replacing one employee.

Cost Analysis Worksheet

Task	Description	Cost
Lost productivity while the job is vacant	Make sure to include primary and secondary costs.	
Recruiting costs	Don't forget somebody's time to prepare and place a posting (check what the organization is looking for; prepare information; verify copy; and send to newspaper or websites) and handle phone calls, inquiries, and resumes.	

Task	Description	Cost
Screening costs	This includes reviewing resumes based on a resume short-listing guide that has been prepared by someone (we hope!). Also included is the cost of responding to directed inquiries, requests for information, etc. Don't forget any letters of regret you send out, including paper, postage, and time to type and sign.	
Interviewing costs	This includes time spent contacting candidates, arranging interviews, preparing for the interviews, and conducting them. Don't forget any letters of regret you send out, including paper, postage, and time to prepare and sign.	
Testing costs	If you do testing, there is a cost associated with monitoring and rating the tests. Do you use group testing? Online testing? Divide total cost by number of candidates who will be interviewed.	
Evaluating costs	This includes time spent evaluating candidates, checking references, and making the selection.	
The cost of making the job offer	Figure in time spent negotiating with the candidate, arranging start date, and other arrangements that must be made before the candidate arrives. (Business cards? Supplies? Locker and keys?)	
Training costs	Think about the money associated with taking the time to meet the candidate, introduce them to others, provide an orientation, and providing training.	
The cost of reduced efficiency as the new employee learns the job	Include time spent by someone answering questions and showing them the ropes.	
Other employee turnover costs associated with your organization		

Task	Description	Cost
	Total Cost Of Replacing One Employee	

Finding Candidates

There are three important considerations when you are looking for candidates. Your methods must be timely yet cost-effective, and promote positive employee relations. There are several options to consider.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
File Searches	- People were interested or they wouldn't have applied - May not have to advertise - Fast	- Must have an excellent filing system to keep track - Good applicants can get missed if not cross-referenced properly
Internal Searches	- Good for morale to know employees can move - Candidates are a known product so take less of a chance	- No "new blood" - Can cause friction between employees
Placement Services	- They do some screening for you - Fast	- May not screen thoroughly - Sometimes send very unqualified people
Referral Programmes	- Referrals usually are familiar with your company - Usually are good quality candidates	- Can cause cliques in the company - Can cause hard feelings if a referral isn't hired or doesn't work out
Third-Party Recruiters	Have a wider coverage area for positions that are difficult to fill	Company is responsible for the professional conduct of the third party recruiter and there are no standards

Head Hunters	• Can compensate for not having time or skill in-house Advantages • Casts a wider net for hiring senior managers and those difficult to find employees • A less controversial way of hiring employees away from competitors	• Can be expensive Disadvantages • No standards for head hunters either, but your company remains responsible for their actions • Expensive
Internet	• Hire candidates who are computer literate • Wide coverage	• May eliminate good candidates • Can bring in a lot of unqualified candidates
Advertise	• Good image-builder for your company if the ad is well-done • Many potential candidates will be looking for ads	• May not motivate already employed to apply • Can result in a lot of resumes

The point is that the old standard of putting an ad in the newspaper is no longer the way to find the best candidates. There may be a better way of finding the people you want. Track your efforts so you will know what's effective in your business.

Advertising Guidelines

What to Include

When you are ready to prepare your job ad, there are plenty of things to consider. Most likely, you are preparing an electronic advertisement that will be posted on your company website, and may be picked up by aggregator sites (websites that search the web looking for what you have posted), or you may advertise on recruiting websites. For some positions, you may put ads in electronic classified ads, or a newspaper or trade publication.

Advertising guidelines should include the following.

Include information about the company.

Who are you? What do you do? Sometimes when we focus on internal postings we forget to sell ourselves. Remember that employees and other members of the community will read this information, and that a job posting reflects your company image. Make it good.

What position is being advertised?

If you read employment ads enough, you'll see companies that forget to mention what the candidate would be doing if they were hired. Make sure that you describe the position adequately and honestly. This will benefit you by reducing inappropriate applications where prospective candidates screen themselves out of the process because the job is not a good fit or interest for them.

What qualifications do they need?

Sometimes we think the way to discourage a lot of resumes is to list miles of qualifications. That practice can backfire on you, when you see that you are actually discouraging people that you want to apply. Analyze the job. What technical and performance skills do you need? What would be nice to have? Hiring a receptionist who has a degree in business may mean you will be hiring for that position again in a few months when they get promoted. Aim for what the position actually needs.

What are the responsibilities and challenges?

What will this person do? Is there challenge or a chance to grow? The best candidates will be looking for something more than a paycheck, and want to know what you are offering with the position.

Consider ad placement.

Get creative so that people can find your ads the right candidate for some positions would never think of looking in the business section in a job search website. Similarly, those who look in the business section may never look in the general section. When a fast food company was looking for part-time staff to work over the school lunch hour, they used keywords related to women and parenting. A stereotype? Maybe, but it worked.

Consider position on the page.

This is good fodder for an argument. However, most researchers agree that the right hand page of any newspaper or magazine is seen slightly more often than an advertisement on the left. In computer listings, the top of the list is better than the bottom.

Include graphics.

Images should be clean and easy to read. Often a sans serif font for the heading and a serif font for the ad will make it look friendlier. Different websites have different resolutions available for your logo (which you should include), so make sure you are submitting the right kinds of files.

Call to action.

Remember to include information about applying, RIGHT NOW. In today's fast world, e-mail, faxing, and online application forms are preferred by many companies. If they are for yours, include your contact information where people can find it easily. If you want a paper resume, make sure people can find you easily. Don't make submitting the initial application documentation the equivalent of an aptitude test.

Use white space.

Ads cost money and we hate to waste space, but cramming too many words into an ad makes you look cheap, and is often so unattractive people don't read it. Using generous white space and words that have been carefully chosen to say what must be said is much more effective.

Try social networking.

Depending on the position you are hiring for, social networking can be a helpful way to find the right people. Use your existing networks (if you have them set up), and consider asking your existing staff to leverage their own networks and share links to your posting. This kind of strategy can give you exposure to carefully targeted audiences you might have difficulty reaching otherwise.

Ten Tests for Creating an Effective Job Posting

1. Does the posting concentrate on the job?
2. Does it sort out and emphasize important details?
3. Does it highlight unique opportunities?
4. Is the posting specific?
5. Is the posting realistic?
6. Does the posting avoid clichés?
7. Does the posting speak to the reader?
8. Does the look of the posting portray the company image? The position's importance to the company?
9. Would a stranger understand the job opportunities?
10. Does the posting have "sell"?

Screening Resumes**Using a Resume Screening Guide**

So now you have the stack of resumes on your desk, in your e-mail, or in an electronic database. What are you going to do with them?

This is where you have to start thinking about how you make decisions and how you can defend those decisions, should you be taken to task for not hiring Samantha's brother or giving Thomas an interview. This is where you take the time to develop a resume screening guide that you use for evaluating that pile of resumes. This resume screening guide may be on paper or electronic. Already some of you feel might feel anxiety building up in your chest: but what if I miss the best candidate?

The answer is that your resume screening guide should allow you to search for those things you absolutely must have and still leave room for a little bit of flexibility.

Sample Screening Guide

Knockout Factors

Area	Yes	No
Grade 12 or equivalent	Rate	Send letter of rejection
Bilingual (Spanish-English)	Rate	Send letter of rejection

Rating Guide

Area	Breakdown	Possible Points	Points Awarded
Application	Complete	5	
	Legible	5	
	Resume attached	5	
Education	Post-secondary	5	
	Post-secondary in related field	5	
	Bachelor degree	5	
Experience	Multiple phone lines	5	
Experience in clerical or administrative field	6 months-3 years	5	
	3+ years	10	
Computer Experience	PC experience	5	
	Mac experience	15	
	Report writing	5	
	Spreadsheets	5	
Keyboarding	40-59 WPM	5	
	60+ WPM	10	
Human Resources	Target group member	5	
TOTAL		100	

Notes

First of all, the company had decided Grade 12 or the equivalent was a must. They did decide what they considered the equivalent: Grade 11 and vocational school or successful completion of a high school equivalency. If the candidate didn't meet these criteria, they weren't accepted.

Since they had a number of Hispanic customers who couldn't speak English, they felt they had to have a bilingual person answering phones. This was another knockout factor.

They also felt it was important that they had a completed application, signed by the candidate, as a legal document. (Resumes are not legal documents.) They wanted the application to be complete and legible as they felt that said a great deal about how much effort the person was putting into applying for the position. Of course, they wanted a resume as well. They awarded points on all three counts, for a total of 15 points.

While Grade 12 was a necessity, they felt there were opportunities attached to this position, so they would like to see that the successful candidate had additional education or training. The marketing assistant was leaving at the end of the year to go back to university, and if the candidate worked out well in this position they could move on.

Therefore, post-secondary education such as community college was worth five points. If the education was in a related field (administration for example) they would get another five points. If they applicant has a degree they can get another 5 points, for a total of 15.

Since the most critical part of the job was answering phone lines, they were looking for somebody who had experience with multiple phone lines and could hit the ground running. This was worth five points.

They were looking for somebody with experience since they didn't think they had time to do a lot of training on the basics. So, the candidate got five points for less than three years or 10 points for more than three years.

They were using Mac computers and peripherals and it had been their experience that PC-trained people took a long while to adjust to a Mac environment. They were prepared to give 15 points to those who had experience on Mac, and five points to those who were PC trained. Next, the ability to do reports and spreadsheets were worth five points each for a total of 10 points.

Keyboarding skills were important too. They would test for accuracy, but they were looking for basic speed. The candidate could get up to 10 points, depending on skill.

The company had also applied for funding for a target group that included minorities, women and those with disabilities, but this was only given five points. They would hire a good candidate whether they met this criterion or not.

Using the Screening Guide

When you use a screening guide, you can decide on a pass mark and then go through the resumes (or have someone else go through them) to short list candidates. In the example above, you may decide that only applicants with a score of 75 or higher will be shortlisted.

Probably the most important feature of a resume guide is that it is defensible. It must be a test that everybody has to pass. When people call to see whether they were considered, or ask why they didn't get an interview, you have a defensible answer for them: they didn't pass the initial screening test. Most people understand tests, pass marks, and failing. You need to say no more.

Developing a Resume Screening Guide

Consider a position that you are about to fill or have filled, for which you have applications. Your task is to develop a resume screening guide based on what you need or based on what you were looking for.

Knockout Factors

Area	Yes	No

Rating Guide

Area	Breakdown	Possible Points	Points Awarded

TOTAL			

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Staffing the Contemporary Organization: A Guide to Planning, Recruiting, and ...*
By Donald L. Caruth, Gail D. Caruth, Stephanie S. Pane,(2008)
- ✓ *Staffing the Contemporary Organization: A Guide to Planning, Recruiting, and ...*
By Donald L. Caruth, Gail D. Handlogten,(1997)