

Model Tool: Job description template

Why you need this model tool:

Job descriptions are critical management documents. A law office manager should make sure there is a formal, written job description for every position.

How this model tool helps you:

This template provides the major categories that you should include in your job descriptions along with an explanation of what to include in each category.

How to use this model tool:

Follow this guide to create job descriptions for your law office.

Model Tool: Job description template

This template provides the major categories that you should include in your job descriptions along with an explanation of what to include in each category.

Job title	<i>The formal title of the position</i>
Reports to	<i>The title of the position that the job incumbent reports to</i>

Job purpose

Provide a brief description of the general nature of the position; an overview of why the job exists; and what the job is to accomplish.

- The job purpose is usually no more than four sentences long.

Duties and responsibilities

List the primary job duties and responsibilities using headings and then give examples of the types of activities under each heading. Using headings and giving examples of the types of activities to be done allows you to develop a flexible job description that encourages employee to ‘work outside the box’ and within reason, and discourages “that’s not my job.”

- Identify between five and eight primary duties and responsibilities for the position.
- List the primary duties and responsibilities in order of importance.
- Begin each statement with an action verb.
- Use the present tense of verbs.
- Use gender neutral language such as s/he.
- Use generic language such a photocopy instead of Xerox.
- Where appropriate use qualifiers to clarify the task – where, when, why or how often. For example instead of “greet clients as they enter the law office” use “greet clients, as they enter the law office, in a professional and friendly manner.”
- Avoid words that are open to interpretation – for example instead of “handle incoming mail” use “sort and distribute incoming mail.”
- Include a statement indicating that the position may be responsible for other duties, as assigned by practice management. This is a disclaimer of sorts, and allows for tasks like special projects or filling in for absent coworkers.

Qualifications

State the minimum qualifications required to successfully perform the job. These are the qualifications that are necessary for someone to be considered for the position.

Qualifications include:

- Education
- Specialized knowledge
- Skills
- Abilities
- Other characteristics such as personal characteristics
- Professional certification
- Experience

Working conditions

If the job requires a person to work in special working conditions this should be stated in the job description. Special working conditions cover a range of circumstances from regular evening and weekend work, shift work, working outdoors, working with challenging clients, and so forth.

Physical requirements

If the job is physically demanding, this should be stated in the job description. A physically demanding job is one where the incumbent is required to stand for extended periods of time, lift heavy objects on a regular basis, do repetitive tasks with few breaks, and so forth.

Direct reports

List by job title any positions to be supervised by the incumbent.

Approved by:	<i>Signature of the person with the authority to approve the job description</i>
Date approved:	<i>Date when the job description was approved</i>
Reviewed:	<i>Date when the job description was last reviewed</i>

Ideally, a job description should be reviewed annually and updated as often as necessary.

This job description template is provided for reference only. Any legal questions should be directed to an attorney.