LEARNING EVENT:
WRITING WORK DESCRIPTIONS CONSISTENT WITH THE
GUIDELINES ON WORK DESCRIPTION WRITING

March 2005

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Participants will develop their skills in writing work descriptions consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, participants will be able to

- describe a standard template for work descriptions that is consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*

- establish the logical thread connecting the client-service results, the key activities, the content of each criterion, the elements and the work description evaluation method prescribed by the appropriate classification standard

- prepare short, consistent, gender-neutral and easy-to-understand work descriptions, applying the standard template and logical thread mentioned above. This involves

    1. recognizing the different users of work descriptions and explaining how this document is useful to each
    2. using a variety of writing techniques
    3. describing the client-service results
    4. describing the key activities that will produce these client-service results
    5. describing the work
        a) taking into account the four criteria set out in the *Canadian Human Rights Act*
        b) relating the criteria to the key activities
        c) taking into account the information requirements specific to the appropriate classification standard

- list the main ways in which the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing* have changed how work descriptions are written

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

The instructor will go over the general learning objective, the specific learning objectives and the material to be covered in each session.

SESSION 1 - Standard template for work descriptions

In this session, the instructor will introduce a standard template for work descriptions consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing.*

SESSION 2 - Organizing a work description

In this session, participants will learn to establish the logical thread connecting the various parts of the standard template for work descriptions introduced in the preceding session (client-service results, key activities, content of each criterion and information requirements specific to the appropriate classification standard).

SESSION 3 - Describing the work

In this session, participants will learn who uses work descriptions and will explore how such documents are useful to each user. They will develop their writing skills. They will apply what they have learned in the previous sessions by preparing a work description.

Session 3-1 - Work descriptions and those who use them

In this session, participants will learn for whom work descriptions are written and how the documents are useful to each user.

Session 3-2 - Writing techniques

In this session, participants will learn to choose simple, concrete and vivid wording, avoiding technical terms and eliminating roundabout constructions. They will learn to build sentences of reasonable length, using the active voice and conveying the meaning through verbs.

Session 3-3 - Writing the various parts of a work description

In this session, participants will write a full work description, applying the concepts introduced in the preceding sessions.

SESSION 4 - Main changes in work description writing

During this session, participants will draw the following conclusions:

- The work description format has changed.
- The recommended length for a work description is about three pages.
- Work descriptions should not include the percentage of time allotted to an activity.
- The document must describe the key activities and provide other important information about the work, in order to facilitate the allocation of the position when it is not immediately clear how the position should be allocated.

CLOSING SESSION

The instructor will summarize the learning event by re-capping the objectives of the learning event. He/she will provide the participants with an evaluation sheet for the learning event that they will be asked to fill out.

Session no.: Introduction	**Title:** Introductory session
Learning objective:	**Performance:** n/a
	Duration: 15 minutes

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
1. Welcome 2. General remarks 3. Course outline 4. Course objectives	1. Presentation 2. Presentation 3. Presentation **(Transparency 2)** 4. Presentation **(Transparency 3)**	15 minutes

1. WELCOME

2. GENERAL REMARKS

The instructor introduces himself or herself, speaks about his or her experience and explains the role he or she will be playing throughout the learning event.

The instructor also provides information on

- washrooms
- cell phones
- emergency procedures

Learning events are short, specific activities that support continuous learning within the organization and classification community. They complement the courses for organization and classification advisors offered by the Canada School of Public Service under the interim training program and cover subjects related to the development of competencies identified in the *Training/Learning Competency Profile for Organization and Classification Advisers* (see *http://publiservice.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/Classification/CommDev/TLCP/TLCP_E.asp*). They are organized by the Community Development Team and delivered by the PSHRMAC.

3. COURSE OUTLINE

The instructor hands out the lesson plan and describes the topic of each session.

The instructor explains how the day will unfold, indicating the proportion of theory to practical exercises. **(T-2)**

4. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The instructor sets out the general objective **(T-3)**and tell the participants that the specific objectives of the learning event will be covered for each session.

Session no.: 1	**Title:** Standard template for work descriptions
Learning objective:	**Performance**: To describe a standard template for work descriptions consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*
	Duration: 30 minutes

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
1. Fundamentals of the template 2. Procedure 3. Template A) Template outline B) Description of the template outline a. Identifying information b. Client-service results c. Key activities d. Criteria i. Skill ii. Effort iii. Responsibility iv. Working conditions e. Additional information	Presentation **(Transparencies 4-5)** **Transparency 6** **(Transparencies-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14 and 15)**	30 minutes

The instructor show the specific learning objective for session 1 **(Transparency 4)**

ESSENTIAL POINT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF THE TEMPLATE

Show **Transparency 5 –** first bullet- Foundations of the template

The instructor explains the legal foundations of the work description template using the following information:

Legislation

According to subsection 11(2) of the *Canadian Human Rights Act:*

> In assessing the value of work performed by employees employed in the same establishment, the criterion to be applied is the composite of the skill, effort and responsibility required in the performance of the work and the conditions under which the work is performed.

Thus, the value of a position must be established in relation to skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions, and the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing* therefore require that the work be described according to those four criteria.

The *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* set out the mechanics of section 11 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. In particular, they define the elements of each of the four criteria.

In order to gauge the relative value of a position according to the four criteria, each element of each criterion must be associated with a certain number of factors, each factor measuring an aspect of that element of the work.

ESSENTIAL POINT 2: PROCEDURE FOR WRITING A WORK DESCRIPTION

Show **transparency 5**- second bullet-Procedure for writing a work description

The instructor explains the procedure for writing a work description consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing.* The procedure is described below.

Before taking pen to paper or making the first keystroke the person writing the Work Description must "develop a sufficient understanding of the work through the analysis of mandate, organization structure, accountabilities of related positions and the specific work assigned to the position." (Example: As you coach someone to prepare a WD you could ask them what would happen if the position did not exist, what would not get done, or which positions in the organisation would take on additional responsibilities. Also examine the position in the sense of own or shared accountabilities).

Procedure for writing a work description consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*

1. Write the client-service results.
2. Describe the work by identifying the key activities.
3. Describe the work in relation to the four criteria.

- A. In order to write to the 4 criteria one has to keep in mind the ultimate objective – to have a rateable work description. The terminology associated with the **style** of the work description format reflects Criteria, Components and Factors, and the terminology associated with the **tools** to evaluate the work description (classification standard) reflects Factors and Elements. When preparing to describe the work in relation to a criterion, organize the work requirements under the appropriate criteria and components, taking into account the information needed by the evaluation tool---the standard. In all likelihood you have an "idea of the possibility" of what standard from the information contained in the CSR and KA's. When you have used all the elements and factors in a standard to define the criteria and not all criteria end up being covered in the WD, you must choose additional factors (see examples of factors) to define the missing criteria and describe the functions of the job under that criteria. This is more likely to happen when you deal with the Effort and Working Conditions. Depending on the evaluation method used, these factors can also be incorporated into the description of levels or the list of predominate factors. Through all of this be aware of the terminology and the difference between style and the tools.

  b.Directly relate the content of each criterion to the work described in the key activities.

c. If an element of a criterion is associated with none of the factors in the appropriate classification standard, describe the aspects of this element using factors that are measurable and take the organizational context of the job into account.

4. Include any additional information that does not appear in the criteria or the key activities but that a classification standard requires for the evaluation of specific factors.
5. Take care to highlight all the important aspects of the work in question and to give a global perspective of the elements and criteria that will be used to establish the relative value of the job.

After explaining the procedure to the participants, the instructor mentions the following notes:

- In principle, new or updated classification standards will consist of factors to which you can match your description of all the aspects of the elements under the four criteria used to establish the relative value of jobs.

- However, in the case of some existing classification standards, there will likely be no factors to which you can match your description of some elements under the four criteria used to establish the relative value of jobs.

The instructor presents the slides on the four criteria and examples of factors drawn from the Canadian Human Rights Commission publication *Guide to Pay Equity and Job Evaluation*, Vol. 1 (*A Summary of Experience and Lessons Learned*) and Vol. 2 (*The Making of a System*). The instructor points out these are offered only as examples.

ESSENTIAL POINT 3: TEMPLATE

Show t**ransparency 6 –** third bullet - Template

The instructor presents the outline of a work description template consistent with the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing* (see below).

The instructor points out that the elements, like the factors with which they are associated, do not appear in the outline.

A) TEMPLATE OUTLINE

Identifying information

Client-service results

Key activities

Criteria

I. Skill
II. Effort
III. Responsibility
IV. Working conditions

Additional information

B) DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE TEMPLATE OUTLINE

Using the information below, the instructor describes each part of the work description template outline.

a) Identifying information

At the very least, every work description should include the following identifying information:

- position number
- position title
- authorized group and level
- National Occupational Classification (NOC) code
- effective date
- department
- branch/division
- location
- job/generic number
- supervisor's position number, group and level

b) Client-service results

The work description begins with the client-service results. This first part describes the products or services or a combination of the two that the position provides or delivers and identifies the target clientele.

It is the *results* of the activities that make up the work that are described here, *not the activities themselves*, which are dealt with in the second part of the work description.

Formulating the results sets the tone for the rest of the work description and helps the reader determine the primary purpose of the work.

c) Key activities

The key activities are the activities that the incumbent must perform in order to deliver the client-service results. They are also important for determining the primary purpose of the work and for providing a basis for understanding the work for occupational group and subgroup allocation and evaluation purposes.

While there is no fixed number of key activities that should be covered in a work description, five to seven key activities are usually sufficient to capture the primary responsibilities of most jobs.

Percentage of time should not be a part of the work description and is not a reliable indicator of the primary purpose of the work. For example, airline pilots could easily go through their whole career without ever having to execute a belly landing but must still be able to do so, lest the need arise. Similarly, flight attendants must be familiar with the emergency procedures.

Note: The description of each of the four criteria (skill, effort, responsibility, working conditions) must relate directly to the key activities.

d) Criteria

According to subsection 11(2) of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the value of work should be assessed according to the following four criteria: skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions.

The instructor shows transparencies **(7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14 and 15)** on the four criteria and give some examples of factors according to the *Guide to Pay Equity and Job Evaluation* form the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Show **transparency 7 and 8**
Skill - intellectual and physical qualifications acquired by experience, training, education or natural ability. The methods by which employees acquire those qualifications shall not be considered in assessing the skill of different employees.

Show **transparency 9and 10**
Effort - intellectual and physical effort required in the performance of work

Show **transparency 11,12 and 13**
Responsibility - the extent of the employee's responsibility for technical, financial and human resources

Show **transparency 14 and 15**
Working conditions - the physical and psychological work environments, including noise, temperature, isolation, physical danger, health hazards and stress. The requirement to work overtime or to work shifts is not to be considered in assessing working conditions where a wage, in excess of the basic wage, is paid for that overtime or shift work.

e) Additional information

The work description must also include any additional information that is not described by one of the four criteria or one of the key activities but that is required by a classification standard to evaluate specific factors.

The *Resources Susceptible to Influence - Worksheet* in the classification standard for the Financial Management Group is an example of additional information that must be included in a work description for a position classified in this group.

Session no.: 2	**Title:** Organizing a work description
Learning objective:	**Performance:** Establish the logical thread connecting the client-service results, the key activities, the content of each criterion, the elements and the evaluation method prescribed by the classification standard that will be used to evaluate the work description produced.
	Duration: 1 hour

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
1. Logical thread connecting the client-service results, the key activities and the four criteria	Presentation **(Transparencies 17-18-19-20-21)**	15 minutes
2. Logical thread connecting a criterion, its elements and the factors used to measure those elements	Exercise 1 Exercise 2	45 minutes

SESSION 2

The instructor show the specific learning objective for session 2 **(Transparency 16)**

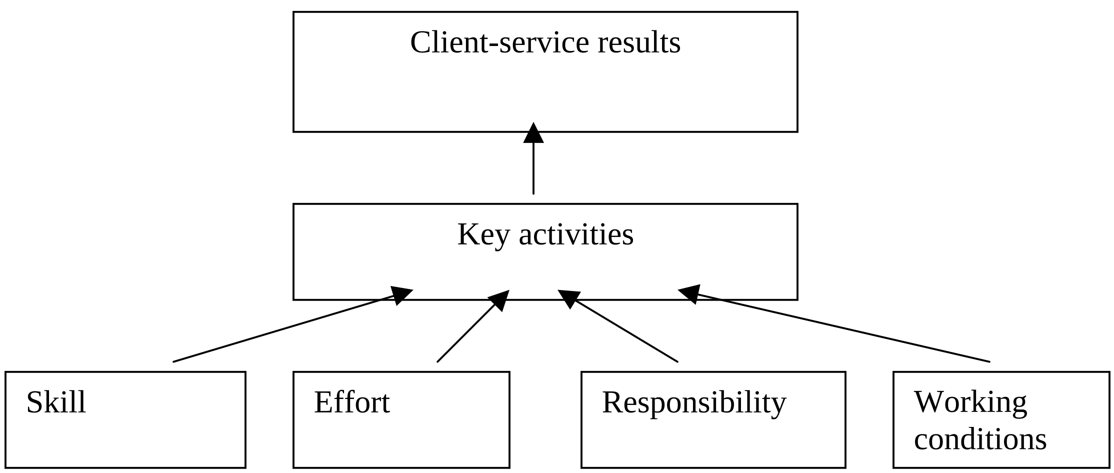
ESSENTIAL POINT 1: Show **Transparency 17** LOGICAL THREAD CONNECTING THE CLIENT-SERVICE RESULTS, THE KEY ACTIVITIES AND THE FOUR CRITERIA

Show **transparency 18 –** diagram

The instructor explains the diagram below, which illustrates the logical thread connecting the client-service results, the key activities and the four criteria.

The instructor brings the following points to the participants' attention:

- The client-service results refer to the products or services that the position provides or delivers and the target clientele.
- The key activities refer to the activities that must be performed in order to deliver the client-service results.
- The description of each criterion explains the associated work requirements connected with the key activities.



Note: **Show transparency 19—**although not shown in the diagram Additional Information does form part of the template. It is here you add the information that cannot be covered under any of the 4 criteria and that is required by the standard for classification purposes.

ESSENTIAL POINT 2: Show **transparency 20** LOGICAL THREAD CONNECTING A CRITERION, ITS ELEMENTS AND THE FACTORS USED TO MEASURE THOSE ELEMENTS

The instructor explains the table below, which illustrates the logical thread connecting a criterion ("skill" in this case), its elements and examples of factors used to measure it.

The instructor makes the link between the "skill" criterion, its elements and the *Equal Wages Guidelines, 1986* and explains that it is the *Guidelines* that define the four criteria.

The instructor explains that

- a criterion consists of elements
- each element is associated with a certain number of factors
- a factor is used to assess one aspect of an element of a criterion

For example, the "sensory skills" factor is used to measure an aspect of the "physical qualifications" element, part of the "skill" criterion.

Show **transparency 21**

Criterion: Skill	
Component A: Physical qualifications	**Component B:** Intellectual qualifications
Examples of factors Sensory skills Physical skills	**Examples of factors** Professional knowledge Knowledge of the products Knowledge of the organizational context Communications Interpersonal relationships Ability to analyse

EXERCISES

The instructor then assigns the exercises below. Each exercise consists of
- listing the key activities that must be performed in order to deliver the client-service results in question
- outlining, with respect to a given criterion, the work requirements associated with the key activities listed
- relating the description of each criterion to its elements and to the content and order of the factors prescribed by the appropriate classification standard

Exercise 1: Work description evaluated according to the AS standard, which prescribes evaluation by factor

The instructor gives the participants the following client-service result:

Client-service results	Administrative services for branch staff

The instructor next asks the participants to identify the key activities that must be performed in order to deliver these services, writing down the participants' answers on a flip chart.

Below is an example of a list of key activities that must be performed in order to deliver these services.

Key activities	• Processes travel requests • Manages the purchase of office supplies • Takes messages for the Director • Manages the Director's agenda and resolves scheduling conflicts • Answers requests for information from employees and clients • Collects and enters administrative and financial data • Prepares administrative and financial reports • Follows up on Access to Information requests • Processes mail

The instructor then asks the participants to specify, with respect to the "skill" criterion, the requirements of the work associated with the key activities identified. The instructor reminds the participants that they must match the description of the criterion to its elements and to the content and order of the factors prescribed by the appropriate classification standard, the AS classification standard in this case.

The instructor goes over the factors in the AS classification standard with the participants.

The instructor distribute the hand-outs on factors and skill criteria for exercise 1.

Factors

1. Knowledge: This factor is used to measure the amount of experience and education required to undertake the duties of the position, and the requirement for continuing study.

Definitions

"Experience" refers to the minimum length of time an employee requires, under optimum conditions, to acquire the administrative knowledge and skill needed to carry out the duties of the position.

"Education" refers to the level of academic or other formal training required to provide the basis for the development of the skill and knowledge needed in the position.

"Continuing study" refers to the requirement for maintaining a knowledge of trends and developments in one or more fields related to the duties of the position.

2. Decision making: This factor is used to measure the difficulty of the duties of the position as indicated by the scope for decision making and by the impact of the decisions.

Definitions

"Decisions" refers to decisions to take particular courses of action within the authority delegated to the position, to recommendations to superiors and to line officers to follow particular courses of action, and to shared decisions and recommendations in which the incumbent is an effective participant.

"Scope for decision making" refers to the freedom to make decisions. It is measured in terms of the judgment, initiative and discretion required to identify and resolve problems, the availability of directions, and the difficulty of determining the implications of possible courses of action.

"Impact of decisions" refers to the importance of the decisions in terms of the resources committed or affected, the effect on the efficiency with which external programs are administered, and the significance of the precedents established.

"Established methods" is to be interpreted broadly to include the guidance provided by manuals and directives, and by precedents.

“Program” refers to the plans of action that are developed and implemented by the organization to achieve its objectives.

3. Responsibility for contacts: This factor is used to measure the difficulty and importance of contacts that occur as an integral part of the work and the requirements imposed by these contacts to work and communicate with others in person, by telephone or in writing. The elements of the factor are the nature of contacts and the persons contacted.

<u>Definitions</u>

“Colleagues” refers to employees in the federal public service who are engaged in similar fields of work and who have no authority to control or affect the extent and scope of the department’s programs.

“Associates” refers to persons with whom contacts are customarily established over long periods of time and in circumstances that develop an awareness of each other’s requirements.

“Officials” refers to administrators or other persons with some degree of executive authority who are not associates.

4. Supervision: This factor is used to measure the continuing responsibility that the incumbent of the position assumes for the work and guidance of other employees. The two elements of the factor are the numbers supervised and the level of employees supervised.

<u>Definitions</u>

“Level of employees supervised” refers to the highest level supervised.

“Numbers supervised” refers to the total number of employees for whom the incumbent of the position exercises supervisory responsibility directly or through subordinate supervisors.

The table below presents a sample description of the “skill” criterion:

Skill: work requirements related to key activities	• Knowledge of the various activities of the directorate • Ability to plan and organize the work on the basis of priorities, in order to meet established deadlines • Ability to manage the director’s agenda and resolve scheduling conflicts • Good knowledge of the acts, regulations, methods and practices relating to travel requests, budget preparation, handling of Access to Information requests and records management • Ability to co-ordinate and maintain the operating and travel budget • Interpersonal relationship skills, including tact, judgment and initiative, to take messages for the director and respond to enquiries from employees and clients • Ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally using the judgment necessary to obtain the assistance and agreement of others when preparing budgets and processing travel claims and Access to Information requests • Good knowledge of amendments to Acts, regulations, methods and practices that apply to the services provided • Knowledge of the operation and maintenance of various types of equipment: photocopiers, computers, fax machines • Experience in processing documents and data using software • Experience in managing files and controlling the flow of documents • Experience in handling Access to Information requests • Experience in preparing budgets • Ability to prepare reports and correspondence • Ability to process information/data from the computer system and manuals • Ability to manage the flow of correspondence quickly and effectively • Eye/hand co-ordination to use a computer

The instructor explains to the participants that the “knowledge – education” factor in the AS standard refers to the level of academic or other formal training required to develop **the skill and knowledge needed in the position**. Therefore, the skill and knowledge required for the position must be described.

The factors in the AS classification standard used to described the “skill” criterion are listed in the table below.

Factors from the standard used to describe skills	The skills are based on the following factors from the standard: knowledge – “education” knowledge – “experience” knowledge – “continuing study” contacts – the nature of the contacts may serve as an indicator of the judgment required to perform the tasks

Other factors used to describe the elements of the criterion:

Other factors used	Abilities related to administrative services

Exercise 2: Work description evaluated according to the IS standard, which prescribes evaluation by level descriptions

The instructor explains to the participants that this exercise covers a position description evaluated according to the IS standard, which uses a classification method based on level descriptions. Each of the six levels in the IS classification standard is described in terms of the main characteristics used to classify the positions at a particular level.

The main challenge in writing a work description evaluated in terms of a standard based on level descriptions lies in relating the description of each criterion to the main characteristics used to classify the positions at a particular level.

Here is one way to approach the task:

- Tentatively assign the position to a particular level on the basis of the key activities and other significant information on the work.
- Once that has been done, relate the description of each criterion to the content and presentation of information relating to the main characteristics used to evaluate work at this level and at levels above and below.

The instructor gives the participants the following client-service result:

Client-service results	Communication services for Branch X employees in region Y

The instructor next asks the participants to identify the key activities that must be performed in order to deliver these services, writing down the participants' answers on a flip chart.

Below is an example of a list of key activities that must be performed in order to deliver these services.

Key activities	• Writes and edits various communications products • Organizes media events • Monitors media coverage • Updates Web sites

The instructor then asks the participants to specify, with respect to the "effort" criterion, the requirements of the work associated with the key activities identified. The instructor reminds the participants that they must relate the description of the criterion to its elements and to the main characteristics used to classify positions at the level tentatively assigned and at levels above and below.

The instructor goes over the descriptions of levels 2, 3 and 4 of the IS classification standard and asks the participants to indicate the characteristics used to describe those levels that may be used to emphasize certain aspects of the "effort" criterion elements.

The instructor informs the participants that there are no such characteristics. Consequently, to describe this criterion, they will have to match the description of the various aspects of its elements to measurable factors that reflect the organizational context of the job.

The table below presents an example of a description of the "effort" criterion. The description of the intellectual effort and physical effort elements are compared with the following factors: concentration (visual); versatility required for the job (i.e. the need to switch between several roles in quick succession); constraints that must be considered (when the work entails being creative); physical effort; body posture at work.

Effort: work requirements related to the key activities	The work requires relatively sustained attention every day when concentrating to read and analyse what is said in the media. This task may take 30 minutes to 2 hours, as the case may be.
	The work entails providing services relating to several communications activities, for example, the production of press releases or the co-ordination of media events. These activities are usually carried out one at a time.

Session no.: 3	**Title:** Describing the work
Learning objective:	**Performance:** Prepare short, consistent, gender-neutral and easy-to-understand work descriptions, applying the standard template and logical thread referred to earlier
	Duration: 180 minutes (3 hours)

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
1. The various users of work descriptions	Presentation **(Transparencies22-23)**	15 minutes
2. Various writing techniques	Presentation and practical exercises	60 minutes
3. Writing the various parts of a work description	Exercise	1 hour 45 minutes

The instructor show the specific learning objective for session 3 **(Transparency 22)**

ESSENTIAL POINT 1: THE VARIOUS USERS OF WORK DESCRIPTIONS

Show **transparency 23**

In this session, the participants will learn for whom work descriptions are written and how the documents are useful to each user.

Below is a list of individuals who use the information contained in a work description:
- Employees and their managers, negotiators and grievance committees
- Staffing officers
- Evaluators and classification committees
- Senior management
- Insurance companies

Work descriptions are tools for evaluating the work. It must be realized, however, that the information they contain is used for a number of purposes, hence the importance of presenting a clear description of the duties of the position.

Points to emphasize: *Employees and their managers, and negotiators and grievance committees*

Work descriptions must accurately portray the duties assigned and carried out, in order to avoid misunderstanding, abuse and false expectations.

It must be emphasized how important it is to have complete work descriptions that are written in clear, unambiguous language.

Staffing officers

Staffing officers use the information contained in work descriptions when filling vacant positions by selecting qualified candidates who are suited to the work.

The work description must therefore enable a staffing officer, who is not necessarily a specialist in the field concerned, to properly identify and understand exactly what the position requires of potential candidates in terms of knowledge, skill, effort, etc. Overly specialized jargon, generalizations and short forms understandable only by specialists must thus be avoided.

The work description must clearly describe the duties of the position so that the staffing officer can identify the skills required.

Evaluators and classification committees

> The key activities and other important information on the work must be described in such a way that the position can be accurately allocated to an occupational group or subgroup.
>
> The work description must also contain all the information that is necessary according to the relevant classification standard to determine the relative value of the work.
>
> In particular, it is important to avoid, for example, pretentious language, exaggerated terms, generalizations that can also be applied to all sorts of positions in different groups and at different levels, and the use of unexplained, specialized jargon.

Senior management

> Work descriptions should help managers perform most of the human resources management functions needed to attract, retain and motivate skilled workers, including recruitment, promotion, performance management, career management, learning, labour relations and human resources planning.
>
> Work descriptions must not only indicate the complexity, responsibilities and requirements of the position, but also specify where it fits and its role in the organizational structure and its exact contribution to the organization as a whole.

Insurance companies

When an employee applies for a disability allowance, his or her department must send a copy of the work description to the insurance company so that it has all the information needed to assess the employee’s application.

Session no.: 3-2	**Title :** Writing techniques
Learning objective:	**Performance:** Apply the techniques of writing in a clear and simple style to the writing of work descriptions
	Duration: 1 hour

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
1. Writing techniques with examples	Presentation **(Transparency 24)**	20 minutes
2. Application	Team exercise	40 minutes

Show transparency 24- A critical part of writing a clear, concise WD is the adoption of suitable writing techniques.

The instructor gives each participant a workbook, which presents different writing techniques and examples in addition to a series of writing exercises.

The techniques concerned are the following:

- Concrete, vivid wording
- Sentences of reasonable length
- Active voice
- Meaning in verbs

The instructor then divides the participants into teams of three. After explaining each of the techniques and illustrating them with a few examples, the instructor asks the teams to do the exercises and present their answers to the group.

Once all the techniques have been tried, the participants will do a wrap-up exercise to reinforce what has been learned. Once the exercise has been completed, the instructor gives the participants an answer booklet, to which they will be able to refer when they have to write work descriptions.

The workbook is a handout.

Session no.: 3-3	**Title:** Writing the various parts of a work description
Learning objective:	**Performance:** Apply the concepts presented during the preceding sessions
	Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

Essential points	**Training aid or method**	**Time in minutes**
The various stages in writing a work description	**(Transparency 25)** Team exercise	1 hour 45 minutes

Show **transparency 25**

The instructor divides the participants into small teams of three to five. He or she hands out to each of the teams one of the two summaries of an interview with a manager prepared for the exercise. The instructor explains that each summary describes the requirements of a different position. The exercise entails writing a work description, step by step, on the basis of the summary received. Each part of the exercise involves writing part of the work description and a plenary discussion. The steps are as follows:

1. describe the client-service results
2. describe the key activities
3. describe the work in relation to the four criteria identified in the Canadian Human Rights Act

1. Distribute the interview summaries to the teams with the corresponding standard for each of them.
   ONE APPROACH..ration the time into 45 minutes for CSR and the KA's…at the end of 45 minutes have the teams check each others work using the answer sheet. Then have the teams resume the work on Criteria.
2. At the end of the exercise, distribute the examples of the work descriptions for the CS and the PM

Interview summary 1 (CS)

The Director General, Client Services, meets with a classification officer from your department to bring a staffing requirement to the officer's attention. The DG needs to recruit someone able to look after the installation and maintenance of the computers, application software and operating systems of a local area network. As this network is connected to the wide area network (WAN) and is also remotely accessible, connectivity must be maintained. The incumbent would require the ability to resolve complex technical and administrative problems referred by junior staff, identify client training needs and develop and give courses.

SESSION 3-3

The incumbent would also have to monitor network performance on the basis of various indicators and write reports in this regard, test new hardware and software and manage upgrades and software releases. Furthermore, the incumbent would be responsible for administering client accounts and leading work groups or special teams responsible for determining which upgrades are required and which new software should be provided. In general, the incumbent would have to provide all the technical services required for the effective operation of the network, computers, software and systems in the corporate offices of the Department.

Interview summary 2 (PM)

The director of a Human Resource Centre of Canada (HRCC) has requested an interview with a classification adviser from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). The director is considering creating a position whose duties would relate to HRDC programs and services and would target not only the Centre’s staff and management but also external sponsors and partners. In a nutshell, the incumbent would be required to provide not only program advice and monitoring services but also training.

For example, the incumbent would have to closely monitor the delivery of the HRCC’s programs and services and assess delivery practices in order to identify areas for improvement. This would entail submitting reports to management highlighting problems and recommending improvements. To this end, the incumbent would have to participate in forums on regional and national programs, where he or she would have an opportunity to present his or her point of view on enhancing the design and delivery of new programs. Similarly, should the incumbent observe deficiencies in the delivery of local projects or services, he or she would be responsible for ensuring that corrective action was taken by following up with program delivery staff.

In order to fulfil his or her responsibilities, the incumbent would also have to review policy, procedure and system changes that apply to local, regional and national services and then lead projects to implement these changes and provide the necessary technical training.

Session no.: 4	**Title:** Main changes in work description writing
Learning objective:	**Performance:** List the main changes made in work description writing by the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*
	Duration: 1 hour

Essential points	Training aid or method	Time in minutes
1. Guidelines on Work Description Writing	Presentation/discussion **(Transparency 26)**	
2. Work description format	Presentation/discussion	
3. Preparing to write a work description	Presentation/discussion	

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The instructor asks the participants to identify the main changes in the process of writing work descriptions and explain the objective of the new approach.

The instructor completes the list of changes that the participants identified using the information below, presented by category:

Change 1: *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*

Point to be covered

- The new guidelines on work description writing replace the *UCS Work Description Writing Guide*.

Objective

- To provide deputy heads, managers and human resources advisors with a format for writing work descriptions that are short, understandable, consistent with the requirements of the CHRA and gender-neutral.

Change 2: ***Work description format***

Points to be covered

- This is a new work description format, and it differs from the USC format and the "duty-task" format used in the past.
- The new format includes identifying information that sets out the minimum requirements specific to each work description (this is not a new element, but it was not spelled out in the policy guidelines).
- The new work description format also includes the client-service results; key activities; a description of the skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions based on the criteria in the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and consistent with the classification standard; and any other information needed for evaluation based on a specific classification standard.
- It is recommended that the content be limited to three pages.

Objective

- To obtain a short description that presents the assigned duties in gender-neutral terms, contains all the information needed to evaluate the work description according to the relevant classification standard and complies with the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.
- To minimize the information that will not be evaluated according to the specific classification standard.
- To ensure that the information needed for reporting is accurate and understood by human resources advisors and managers.

Change 3: ***Preparing to write a work description***

Points to be covered

- The percentage of time spent on the work should not be included in the description (this is not a new element, but it is clearly set out in the policy guidelines for the first time).
- Financial implications need to be considered when jobs are created.
- Discussion of occupational group allocation and work description writing.
- The key activities and other information included in the work description should be described in a way that facilitates occupational group allocation.

Objective

- To ensure that human resources advisors and managers understand the basic concepts before any work descriptions are started.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Although time may vary based on the length of the course, it is nevertheless important to conduct a closing session as part of all learning events. This session enables the instructor to review the course content and to help participants link what they have learned to their respective job requirements.

1. SESSION REVIEW

Using the Agenda and recap the learning objectives of the session.

2. LEARNING EVENT EVALUATION

Distribute evaluation questionnaire to participants.

This informal evaluation questionnaire is suggested to provide PSHRMAC some feedback on the learning sessions.

The instructor should also encourage participants to provide specific comments on content, exercises and references, as well as resource persons.

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