# Table of Contents

- **Introduction** .................................................................................................................................................. 1
- **What Are Important Terms to Understand?** .............................................................................................. 2
- **What Is A Job Description?** .......................................................................................................................... 3
- **Why Write Job Descriptions?** ........................................................................................................................ 3
- **What is Job Analysis?** ..................................................................................................................................... 4
- **How Is A Job Analysis Conducted?** ................................................................................................................. 4
- **What Are Work Oriented Methods of Job Analysis?** ....................................................................................... 6
  - Structured Questionnaires or Checklists ........................................................................................................ 6
  - Process Analysis ............................................................................................................................................... 7
  - Observation ...................................................................................................................................................... 7
  - Self-Reports .................................................................................................................................................... 8
  - Participation .................................................................................................................................................... 9
- **What Are Worker Oriented Methods of Job Analysis?** .................................................................................. 10
  - Information Interview .................................................................................................................................... 10
  - Critical Incident Technique .......................................................................................................................... 11
  - Repertory Grid ............................................................................................................................................... 11
- **What Goes In A Job Description?** ................................................................................................................... 12
- **What Should NOT Be Included In A Job Description?** .................................................................................. 16
- **How Is A Job Description Written?** ................................................................................................................ 16
- **When Should A Job Description Be Reviewed and Revised?** ......................................................................... 18
- **Is There A “Model” Job Description?** ............................................................................................................. 20
- **What Now?** ................................................................................................................................................... 21

- **Appendix** ....................................................................................................................................................... 23
  - Job Analysis Quick Check .............................................................................................................................. 24
  - Sample Structured Questionnaire ................................................................................................................ 26
  - Sample Process Analysis Flow Chart ........................................................................................................... 27
  - Sample Completed Self-Report Form ............................................................................................................ 28
Appendix (Cont’d)

Sample Self-Report Form .......................................................... 30
Sample Completed Critical Incident Form ........................................... 32
Sample Critical Incident Form .......................................................... 33
Sample Repertory Grid .................................................................. 34
Sample Repertory Grid Compilation Sheet ........................................... 35
Quick Check for Writing Job Descriptions ........................................... 36
Quick Check for Revising and Updating Job Descriptions ...................... 38
Sample Job Description Outline ....................................................... 39
Glossary of Action Verbs ................................................................. 40
List of Additional Action Verbs ......................................................... 43
References and Items for Further Study ............................................. 44
Introduction

Whether you are a Head Start or Early Head Start Director, Services Manager, Human Resources Manager, or mid-management supervisor, you probably have no more important role in your organization than that of writing concise, clear, and accurate job descriptions. Few tasks generate tools as useful and important as well-written, comprehensive job descriptions. Yet even the most experienced supervisors often find the process of writing job descriptions, and the companion task of job analysis, both time-consuming and tedious.

Intimidating though it may be, conducting thorough job analyses and writing effective job descriptions are skills that anyone can learn with a little effort, and they are also tasks that can be less complicated when shared. In this guide, we will not only explore the basic steps to the practice, but we’ll try to de-mystify the entire process as well.

Even the most experienced supervisors often find the process of writing job descriptions, and the companion task of job analysis, both time-consuming and tedious.

We will explore the basic steps to the practice and try to de-mystify the entire process as well.
What Are Important Terms to Understand?

On the surface, it may seem obvious what we mean when we use words such as **job**, **position**, **duties**, **tasks**, and **responsibilities**, but if we asked several people what each of these words mean, we could easily get a variety of responses. In a study of job analysis and job descriptions, we would readily learn that such terms have specific and distinctly different meanings, and that many also share a specific relationship to the others. Let’s start by looking at the definitions the experts assign to these terms, all of which are relevant to the discussion of job analysis and job descriptions.

- **A Job** is a set of activities performed by one person or multiple people. For example, personnel management and teaching are jobs.
- **A Position** is a job held by a person, such as **Human Resources Manager** or **Teacher**.
- **Responsibilities** are major areas of accountability and make up the **primary** or **essential functions** of a job. For instance, the Human Resources Manager has the **responsibility** to recruit candidates to fill organizational positions.
- **Duties** are activities and functions that a person performs to meet the job’s responsibilities (i.e., the job’s essential functions). The Human Resources manager performs the **duty** of recruiting and interviewing potential employees as part of the **responsibility** of filling organizational positions.
- **Tasks** are specific functions performed to accomplish larger duties and responsibilities. For example, the Human Resource Manager performs the **tasks** of advertising job vacancies and compiling job simulations as part of the **duty** of recruiting and interviewing potential employees, which is part of the **responsibility** of filling organizational positions.