Developing Job Descriptions at your Centre

Why are Detailed Job Descriptions Important?

A detailed job description is a fundamental HR management tool that acts as an aid to increase and support the effectiveness of an individual professional and/or an organization. Effective job descriptions provide workers, and potential future workers, with an overall understanding of the expectations and priorities of a given position. These descriptions should be based on a close examination of the job, that is reviewed and revised regularly, and provide an understanding of what skills and abilities are needed by Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to perform and thrive in their roles.

An organization's core values, goals and mandate should directly correlate with the work carried out by it's staff. Some questions to ask while developing job descriptions that are informed by the organization's values:

- What values does the organization want it's staff to reflect in their practice?
- What tasks need to be done and what function or purpose do they fill?
- Is the work meaningful?
- Does the work support a growth-based mindset?
- Does the work support recognition of staff?
- Does the work support equity and inclusion of staff?
- Is the work up-to-date in reflecting the organization's current goals, values and mandate?

Job Descriptions to Support a Staffing Plan

Effective job descriptions outline the roles and responsibilities of all staff, supervisors and management. Doing an analysis of each individual position within within an organization can support a strong staffing plan that further supports how each position engages with one another effectively. By collecting data, in a variety of ways, an organization can understand and describe the duties and responsibilities of any and all positions as well as the knowledge, skills and responsibilities required for each position. Ultimately, the aim is to have a complete and clear picture of each position to gage and inform candidate selection, training, performance evaluation and setting compensation.

Having existing staff from a role participate in the analysis of their position can provide added information about the daily role and responsibilities that they take on. **Questionnaires**, **checklists**, **observations** and/or an **activity log** can be used together to perform an analysis.

The following checklist (**adapted from the CCHRSC Toolkit**) identifies key areas to investigate for each position:

Job Analysis Checklist

	Detailed summary of duties/task
	Details of most common duties
	Supervisory responsibilities
	Special qualifications
	Experience needed
	Equipment/tools used
	Frequency of supervision/Authority for decision-making
	Other staffing positions this position works directly and/or indirectly with
	Working conditions/Physical/Emotional demand of the position

Some duties/tasks may be related and/or shared with other positions. Identify all tasks, and associated sub-tasks, throughout the day, week, month and year for the position. What responsibilities are associated with each task and who is responsible for carrying them out? What percentage of time is required and/or expected for each task? See the example task chart below:

Example Task Chart

Task	Sub-Task	Responsibilities	Time Required
Individual tasks, listed by priority	Are there other tasks related to this task?	It is the responsibility of a single staff member, or is it shared with a team? It is a shared task between staff and management?	What amount of time is required to complete this task? Is it ongoing and requires extended amounts of time?

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Developing Job Descriptions

Effective job descriptions identify and describe the responsibilities required of a particular job, as well as the knowledge and skills that are required to thrive in that position. For employees, or potential employees, it outlines their duties and responsibilities and the ways in which their position contributes to the core objectives and vision of the organization. For the organization itself, effective job descriptions help management to identify appropriate workload and task assignments while ensuring that all of the work being done is breathing life into the organization's vision and values while providing decent work for staff. The benefits of developing detailed job descriptions clarify the hiring needs of an organization while setting clear expectations for individual roles and the relationships between roles within the organization.

As a fundamental HR tool in supporting an organization's recruitment and retention abilities and activities, keep the following stages of engagement with an employee in mind while developing detailed job descriptions:

- **Employee Recruitment:** A detailed job description clearly outlines the duties, skills and qualifications required for a given position while linking those actionables to the core values of an organization. If a job description doesn't clearly communicate the values, aspirations and expectations of an organization, it is less likely to draw in qualified candidates.
- **Candidate Selection:** The detailed job description can be used as a guide for the candidate selection process. A screening process, hiring checklist, goodness of fit within a team and interview questions should be based on the qualifications, skills and experience outlined in the job description. If an organization isn't clearly communicating their expectations consistently, it is less likely that new hires will stay on board.
- **Staff Orientation and Onboarding:** Having detailed job descriptions for all positions within an organization helps staff have a greater understanding of how their position relates to their team and other positions within the organization. Job descriptions can also be used as a guide for building detailed orientation manuals, onboarding mentoring programs, and other innovative HR tools and practices.
- **Team and Individual Training:** Job descriptions can be used to identify areas of growth and interest, both for an individual and for teams. Assessments, goal setting and work plans that recognize strengths and areas of growth, based off of detailed job descriptions, help an organization to meet the needs of their staff while also improving the quality of their program.
- **Wages, Compensation and Career Maps**: Detailed job descriptions can be used to develop a consistent salary structure within an organization based on the duties, responsibilities and qualifications of each position. Clearly outlined duties, and the level of duties expected in each position, provide staff with an understanding of how their work and other positions of potential interest are being compensated.

- **Supervision and Performance Evaluation:** A detailed job description can be used to develop meaningful work plans between staff, teams and supervisors. It can also be used as a tool, in conjunction with a meaningful work plan, to gauge performance and identify areas of strength, interest and growth. This provides an opportunity for staff to set meaningful goals that are strength-based and for an organization to identify how the work being done in practice is reflecting the core values outlined in their mission and policies.
- **Potential Legal Implications:** A detailed, effective job description that is both up-to-date and reflects the duties, responsibilities, experience and qualifications required, and agreed upon, for each position can be used by an organization to defend its decision when ending a relationship with staff based on agreed upon expectations by both parties.

Where to Start

There are four steps to developing a detailed job description:

1. Defining the purpose of the job
2. Outlining responsibilities of the job
3. Detailing the required education and/or experience for the job
4. Recognizing certifications, registrations and/or licenses required for the job

These steps can then be detailed further into the following categories:

- Job Title
- Summary
- Objectives
- Responsibilities
- Qualifications

Every organization has their own practice for developing unique titles, however, keep in mind that potential employees need to understand what position you are recruiting for. Having detailed job titles that are clear with help to connect an organization with qualified candidates. A **Job Title** should include the direct title of the position (ex. Early Childhood Educator) but also the location of the job and who the employee will report to. Subcategories, or sub classes can be used to further communicate the job title (ex. Team Lead, Early Childhood Educator), but keep in mind while developing job titles: Does this communicate the values of the organization? Does this reflect decent work for employees?

A short **Summary** of the job that identifies the key responsibilities and the level of supervision received by management can prove to be useful in building the job description, and can later be used for creating job postings. Further detailing the essential responsibilities of the job will

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support both decent work for the employee and the expectations of the organization. Creating a detailed task chart may help with identifying the responsibilities of a role.

Identifying 1-3 key **Objectives** of the position will help to link the job to the core values, mandate and mission of the organization. Having clear objectives in the job description also help to inform how the position will be accountable to the children, families, communities and colleagues that engage with the organization.

Provide an outline of the ongoing **Responsibilities** of the position that is detailed and itemized by importance to the organization. Link related tasks/duties.

Describe the **Qualifications** and specific knowledge, skills and abilities that are required to perform the **responsibilities** of the position. Any educational and experience requirements (including lived experience, volunteer, ongoing training and other equivalences) should be clearly outlined, including which requirements are essential versus desirable/ considered an added asset. Clearly identify any additional licences, certifications or registrations that are required for the position. These requirements will be specific to each organization (ex. Registration with a provincial/territorial regulatory body or professional association, police and child protection record checks, and CPR and first aid certifications).

The National Occupational Classification page may prove to be a useful starting point in outlining some of the responsibilities of ECE and ECE Assistant positions. This, however, should be a starting point and not an exhaustive list, as each job description should relate specifically to the individual organization.

National Occupational Classification:
https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/NOC/ProfileQuickSearch.aspx?val=4&val1=4214&ver=16

Embedding Decent Work into Job Descriptions

Performing a job analysis be helpful to outline work that is meaningful, motivating and fulfilling for staff. When designing a job description, keep the perspective of the employee as a focus. Have current employees who hold the same or similar positions participate in the design and development of a job description. By embedding the principles of **Decent Work** into the design of the job, organizations can enhance their effectiveness in practicing their core values while also supporting the satisfaction of their staff. This will in turn can foster greater retention of qualified staff.

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The following principles of **Decent Work** have been adapted from the Association for Early Childhood Educators Ontario's [AECEO Ontario Early Childhood Sector Decent Work Charter](#) and should be considered when creating a detailed job description:

- **Recognition of Staff as Valued Professionals**:
  - Does the job support the employee's sense of belonging?
  - Does the organization maintain structures and resources, internally and externally, that recognize the role this position performs in the delivery of a quality program?
- **Professional Pay and Compensation**:
  - Does the job support staff well-being?
  - Do the wages and compensation being offered reflect the level of responsibility, expectations and qualifications for the position?
  - Are the wages and compensation competitive and fair?
  - Is the organization establishing and maintaining strategies to provide professional pay the professional work for their staff?
  - Does the job reflect physical, mental and emotional well-being practices?
- **Professional Learning**:
  - Does the job outline opportunities that support individual engagement and growth?
  - Does the organization have structures and resources in place to support early childhood professionals in all aspects of ongoing professional learning?
- **Quality Work Environment**:
  - Does the organization create and maintain structures and resources that promote belonging, inclusion, diversity, well-being, engagement and expression in the work environment?
  - Does the work environment support and champion for expression and community participation?

Effective Job Description Checklist

Use the following checklist as a guide for creating a detailed job description:

Item	Description	Check
Job Class	● Clear Classification of Position (Smaller organizations and/or non-unionized organizations may not have classifications. A clear Job Title can be used in its place) 　○ Sub Classification (ex. Program Lead,	

	Team Lead, Room Lead, etc)	
Job Title	● Clear Title of Position 　○ Level, Certification and/or Registration	
Location	● Program Location 　○ Program type (ex. School-Aged Before and After program, Infant Room, etc)	
Reports to	● Title(s) of Position that this position reports to	
Summary	● Identifies 3-4 key responsibilities ● Relate responsibilities to the organization ● Set clear expectations that connect policies and procedures set out by the Federal, Provincial/Territorial and Municipal government to the organization	
Key Objectives	● Identify 2-3 Key objectives of the position that link the position to the values and mandate of the organization 　○ How does the position uphold with the organization's values 　○ How does the position add quality to the program/organization 　○ How does the position support children, families and communities	
Responsibilities	● List clear responsibilities of the position 　○ Organize the responsibilities in order of importance to the organization 　○ Make responsibilities actionable 　○ Outline any Occupational Health and Safety Standard 　○ Outline any Federal, Provincial/Territorial/Municipal Legislation and/or Standards of Practice 　○ Outline knowledge and implementation requirements of the organization's Pedagogical	

	approaches ○ Outline the physical demands of the position (ex. Lifting, carrying, extended standing, extended sitting, etc) ○ Outline any unique working conditions and/or environments (ex. Outdoor Forest School, work shifts that are beyond the hours of a typical work day, etc)	

Qualifications	● Level, Certification, and/or Regulation and standing with regulating body
	● Level of Education and/or lived experience
	  ○ Name Diploma or Degree from a recognized College or University or other equivalent educational/lived experience qualifications
	  ○ Years of experience required and in what setting
	● Diverse work or volunteer experiences (Ex. Culture-based learning, volunteer work with diverse communities)
	● Informal education (ex. Traditional Storytelling, Traditional teachings, Indigenious Worldviews)
	● Outline strengths and skills for this position, in detail:
	  ○ Communication
	    ■ verbal/written
	  ○ Collaboration
	  ○ Leadership
	  ○ Organization
	  ○ Cultural Knowledge and understanding
	  ○ Assessment
	● Specific Criminal Record Clearance Requirements for working in the Vulnerable Sector
	● Specific First Aid/CPR Levels Required for position
	● Additional Certifications/Licences that would be an asset (ex. Food Handlers Certificate,	

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	Driver's Licence, Trauma-informed Certificate, Land Based Teaching, Montessori training, etc)
	 ● Any additional and/or ongoing training experiences
	 ● Realistic and detailed physical expectations of the position and potential assistance/augmentations that are available
	 ● Availability required for this position, shifts, rotation of shifts and expected length of shifts
	   ○ Outline of overall time frame of the position (ex. 6:30am-6:30pm, centre opening to closing, etc)
	   ○ Outline of shift rotation for the position (ex. Rotation of 7:30am-3:30pm, 8:30am-4:30pm and 10:00am-6:00pm)
	   ○ Outline of shift rotation based on team collaboration (ex. Team collaborate on and self manage the rotation of shift coverage)
	 ● Language delivery of program
	   ○ Assets of additional languages and/or cultural practices
	   ○ Requirement of Bilingualism	

Reflective Practice

Important questions to consider after drafting and reviewing a job description:

- Does the language used in this job description reflect the core values of the organization?
- Does the language used in this job description reflect decent work for staff?
- Is the job description accessible to and inclusive of Idigenous educators? Are there equivalencies of lived experience, volunteering and on-going training noted in qualifications of this job description?
- Does the order of the responsibilities in the job description reflect how the organization values their importance?
- Does the job description capture the true practices of the organization, or what the organization is striving for?

- Do the requested qualifications in the job description reflect the work and are they appropriate for the organization? Will staff be compensated with fair wages that reflect the qualifications the organization is requesting?

Detailed Job Descriptions as a Recruitment Tool

Much like a detailed job description, a detailed job posting is a fundamental HR management tool that acts as an aid to increase and support the effectiveness of an individual professional and/or an organization. Effective job postings provide potential qualified candidates with an overall understanding of the expectations and priorities of a given position and communicates how the organization will foster the candidate's skills and continued development as a professional. These descriptions should be based on a close examination of the job and the value placed on the work itself and provide an understanding of what skills and abilities are needed by Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) to perform and thrive in their roles.

While there are certainly a variety of duties and tasks that are required on site in Early Learning and Child Care programs, a job posting that only lists cleaning duties doesn't effectively communicate the value of early learning and care, nor does it demonstrate an organization's interest in supporting decent work conditions/opportunities for it's staff. Using a detailed job description to generate a job posting will provide candidates with a clearer picture of what the organization is expecting for the position and what they are offering.

Connecting with Candidates

When used deliberately and with intention, social media platforms showcase the work being done by current staff, the connections being made in the community and makes visible the values and mission of the organization. This, when used effectively, becomes a three-fold tool that **promotes** your organization, **supports the growth** of current staff and acts as a platform for **recruiting potential staff**. When an organization's social media platforms and website are used in conjunction with online job boards to post available positions, it is more likely that potential candidates will see the availability. It also makes the job posting shareable across the platform. Keep the following online resources in mind when posting a position:

- The organization's website
- Facebook
    - The organization's page and through facebook job postings/ads
- Instagram
    - Linking to a detailed job posting on another webpage
- Twitter

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  - ○ Linking to a detailed job posting on another webpage
- Charity Village
- Municipality job bank
- Canadian job bank
- Post Secondary Instution's website

For a detailed list of online ELCC job postings, please visit the **ELCC JOB POSTING BOARDS**

Referral Programs

An organization's current staff have an understanding of both the work and culture of a program. Implementing a referral program that provides current staff to put forth candidates who they feel would make a great addition to the organization. Please visit the **CREATING A REFERRAL PROGRAM AT YOUR CENTRE** for more information.

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