

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **What is a job description?**

A job description is a written record of the main duties and functions an employee is to perform in a particular role or position.

### **Why do we need a job description?**

The first step in any recruitment process is to be clear about the job description. It may be useful to ask yourself what are the outcomes you want to achieve in the role and therefore, what is actually required from the position in order to achieve those outcomes.

A job description is also an important tool to ascertain whether an employee is performing the role to which the employee was employed. The job description can be used to assist in performance managing an employee who is underperforming or to make operation changes to an organisation.

If there is no job description or a job description is not clear, it becomes a lot harder to prove that an employee has not been performing in accordance with expectations of an employer.

### **What should be included in a job description?**

A job description should include all of the inherent requirements of the position, including the tasks that must be carried out in order to satisfy the complete performance of the job. It should also include all of the other additional tasks required that may not be the essential function of the role but may be required to perform to meet the employers expectations.

#### **Any job description should include the following information:**

- Job title
- Job summary
- Tasks and functions that are inherent to performance of the position
- Ancillary tasks and functions
- Specific conduct requirements
- Reporting relationships, such as the employee's supervisor and any positions which might report to the employee
- Work location and any travel required

#### **A job description may also include the following:**

- Minimum qualification requirements
- Licence and certification requirements
- Methods and processes to be followed
- Applicable legislation and/or regulations to be complied with
- Tools, materials and equipment to be used
- Dress requirements
- Inherent physical requirements
- Possible career progression, criteria / timing of performance review
- OHS information including relevant hazards and PPE requirements
- Professional association requirements
- Ongoing training requirements

### **How should Job Descriptions be used?**

It is advisable that a job description be drafted for each role within your organisation and that the document be updated at regular intervals or when significant changes within an organisation are made.

It is very important that employers update their job descriptions as roles change and employees are promoted or moved within an organisation.

### **Should job descriptions be attached to contracts of employment?**

It is advisable that a job description be provided to an employee at the time of interview and then attached to the employee's contract of employment. At any time the role changes, the corresponding job description and contract should also be updated.

### **Are there any legal implications regarding job descriptions?**

Having an up-to-date job description can be a useful way of defending a discrimination complaint relating to an employee's ability to perform the inherent requirements of a role. It can also be helpful in managing the performance of an employee, terminating employment, restructuring or managing an injured employee on a return to work program.

Source: Stratecom on behalf of RCSA Business Solutions