

Strengthen the Weakest Link in the Chain

Resource Type: Articles

Topic: HR Risk and Employment Practices

If asked to name the number one resource that your nonprofit has, I'd wager that it would be your staff of paid and volunteer people. Whether that's one person and a telephone or thousands of people spread throughout the country, *who* represents your organization is of utmost importance to your mission.

In the Beginning

To ensure that you recruit and sign on the most qualified people you can, you need a very special tool. It costs the time and thought involved to create a job description that reflects the current job requirements for each position you need to deliver your services.

A Blueprint for Selection

The job description serves as an outline of the ideal person you are looking for to fill each seat at your organization's table. It should be realistic and descriptive of what the expectations are to do the job. It can guide the organization's hiring personnel in selecting interview candidates from among myriad resumes, crafting interview questions to ascertain skill level and commitment, and evaluating final candidates prior to making the offer.

A Benchmark for Supervision

Involve the supervisor for the position in the crafting of the job description, as well as the current occupant of the position. By hearing both viewpoints, the job description will be more realistic than if one or the other crafted it in isolation. The supervisor knows what needs to be accomplished by the person being hired for this job; the staff member knows what really occurs in the frontline that might hinder accomplishment or that might make the job more effective.

A Target for Evaluation

Once complete, the supervisor can evaluate job performance against expectations as spelled out in the job description. The job description can be used as a script to discuss accomplishments, roadblocks, areas of improvement, and areas where help is needed to perform as expected.

A Living Document

The job description isn't set in stone. It's a living document that must be altered to reflect changes in the job in order to assist in selection, supervision and evaluation of employees and volunteers.

SAMPLE

Job Description

Job Title: Risk Manager/Risk Management Officer/Director of Risk Management

Department: Administration/Risk Management/Finance

Reports to: Executive Director/Chief Operating Officer/Director of Finance

Risk management is the process of dealing with the uncertainty of loss in all aspects of the organization. It is an integrated system involving analysis of activities and behaviors; establishment of safety and emergency procedures; as well as financial, legal and insurance issues. Activities are evaluated based on their benefit to the organization versus the opportunity for human loss, financial loss or loss of reputation. The evaluation involves a great deal of interaction with the various program, property, personnel and legal departments of the organization.

Position Summary

Risk Manager is responsible for:

- Championing an organization-wide effort to protect the vital assets of [Name of Nonprofit] and engage key stakeholders in risk management activities.
- Developing, implementing and monitoring loss prevention and cost containment programs for general liability and workers' compensation.
- Conducting contract reviews; developing indemnity agreements, hold-harmless agreements and consent forms, and coordinating the purchase of insurance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the insurance program, maintaining appropriate funding levels, accurate loss forecasting, claims management, loss prevention and cost containment programs.
- Integrating risk management throughout the organization's programs.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Management — Plans, organizes, leads and controls the activities of the Risk Management Department
2. Program Development — Coordinates the development, implementation and maintenance of a comprehensive Risk Management Program for the organization.a) Sets goals and objectives for the Risk Management Programb) Identifies and analyzes perils, risks and hazards to which the organization, its employees, clients, volunteers, families, general public and/or property may be exposed.c) Determines the most effective methods of handling each risk exposure

d) Conducts an annual review (procedures to measure the effectiveness and performance) of the organization's Risk Management Program.
3. Analysis — Evaluates major loss exposures in terms of past and potential frequency and severity to establish priorities and methods for treating discovered risk exposures.
4. Consultation — Advises the Chief Financial Officer on methods for addressing risks.
5. Delegation — Recommends an appropriate delegation of responsibility for the organization's risk management functions.
6. Integration — Establishes and maintains liaison with [Name of Nonprofit]'s administrative staff, to include department directors, administrators and others in coordinating risk management activities (development and implementation of risk management program).
7. Administration — Coordinates the creation of risk management policies, programs and procedures, which includes developing safety and loss control programs and procedures.
8. Interdisciplinary Committee — Facilitates an interdisciplinary Risk Management Committee that reviews health and safety concerns, and recommends remedial action to senior management and the board of directors.
9. Insurance — Establishes and manages relationships with various risk management and insurance consultants and vendors, including the organization's broker or agent. Coordinates the process of applying for and renewing insurance coverage consistent with the risk financing goals and objectives developed in concert with the Risk Management Committee.
10. Performs other related job duties as required.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Yes___ No___

Number of staff members who report to this position _____

Job titles of those reporting staff members:

Position Qualifications

College degree in X. Minimum of X years of risk management and insurance experience. Requires managerial and administrative ability. Must have the ability to interface with management, volunteers, insurers and outside agencies and organizations. Nonprofit experience preferred.

Revised by [initials] month/day/year

If you would like to learn more about Employment Practices, try Module #2 Employment Practices in the online computer assisted risk evaluation system — Nonprofit CARES™. Or buy the [Staff Screening Tool Kit](#), and [Taking the High Road: A Guide to Effective and Legal Employment Practices for Nonprofits](#). Save 33% on each book during the Summer Book Sale.