Writing your own job description

This tip sheet was created to help you write your own job description. We recommend that you do this exercise to get a perfectly clear idea about what you want for yourself as a career. Career is a lifelong journey and as we develop our skills, our dream job may alters on the way but know where you stand at the moment and what you are trying to achieve as the highest possibility you dare to dream of.

So, first of all, think of what details are important to you?

Job Title? Salary? Benefits? Work Environment? Commuting? What specific skills and responsibilities should be included?

Maybe you really love working with people but perhaps you loathe working on the telephone. It could be that you thrive in a vibrant, multi-tasking, fast paced environment or you prefer a quiet 9-5 job. Do you work happiest in a large multinational corporation or within a small company with a great cause? In your ideal job, are you sitting behind a desk or are you constantly driving to see clients around the country? Do you work long hours and weekends to climb the ladder, or do you work 2 part-time jobs for more variety and flexibility?

These examples are just a beginning towards a clearer picture on what is important to you, and what you will and will not be flexible about or sacrifice for a job (if anything).

We suggest that you start by considering the following matters related to work:

- Have a realistic salary in mind by carefully considering all angles (benefits, including amount of paid vacation etc.)
- Consider location and how much you are willing to travel
- Know how you want to spend your working hours—imagine the activities you would do each day – write them down
- Know what kind of people and company environment you want to be surrounded by
- Is the type of work the company does important to you? Cause? Mission?
- Does the organization’s vision and mission statement inspire or bore you? Do these matter to you at all?

As a creative exercise, make a vision board for your dream job by using pictures and phrases you can cut out from magazines.

To get started we suggest that you get out a pen and notebook and brainstorm some lists. Then grab a few magazines, scissors, glue and some poster board and get creative!

Try to find pictures that help you imagine your ideal work space. Make a montage of the type of work you are doing. Use images that symbolize the way you will feel once you are in the position you long for.

Have as much fun as possible with this process and by doing so you are pulling your dream much closer to you. It’s like an order for the universe!
As a written exercise, ask yourself the following questions to determine what type of work, environment, and people you would like to be involved with. Note the answers that feel most important to you. For example:

THE TASKS:

- Do you thrive on responsibility and inspiring others, being a leader or do you prefer to be a support person?
- Do you like the stability of doing routine and repetitive tasks or you need constant variety? How well do you adapt to change?
- Where does your motivation come from? Are you able to self-motivate? Does competition help to get you motivated? Do you need strict deadlines and a boss telling you exactly what to do?
- How detail-oriented are you? Are you a big-picture person or are you better with ideas or facts/data?

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- Do you need clear procedures? How would you feel in a very structured environment? A disorganized or chaotic environment?
- What’s your ‘uniform’ for work? Business or smart casual? Suits, ties, costumes? T-shirts & jeans?
- What is the benefits package like at your ideal work place?
- What are the work hours (9-5 or completely flexible)? How do you feel about working on the weekends?
- Where is it located? How far do you have to commute & how? What is nearby? Is it in an office park? Is the grocery store nearby?

THE PEOPLE:

- How much contact do you have with customers? In person or over the phone? Are your customers the general public or professionals in your field or a related field?
- Who are your co-workers? How many are there? What are they like? Imagine!
- Do you like being closely supervised or do you prefer to be given lots of space to do things your own way and style? What is your relationship with your boss like?
- Do you prefer to work independently or in a supportive team environment?

Start with these questions and jot down how you would like to spend your working hours, and how your job would influence your ideal lifestyle.
Most of all in whatever you do: Find happiness, fulfillment, and satisfaction in ways that are meaningful and important to you.

Tip: Look for ‘Career explorers / assessment tests’ among the resources in career next for a list of pages with advice on career quizzes, personality tests, job directions and help on decision making.

International jobs and internships, career resources, database of employers and a cool tool for creating your resume - all on CEU career next http://careernext.ceu.edu/ platform. Login or create your account today!