A job description, which summarizes the most essential responsibilities or functions of a job, is the basis for establishing a position’s job grade and the actual job posting in ASPIRE (Appendix A-3). It also determines the position’s status regarding eligibility for overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

It’s worth spending focused time thinking about the Harvard and FAS competencies and behaviors that will create a foundation for success in the position.

**It is important to make sure the job description is clear and accurate. Here are some guidelines for writing an effective job description:**

- Start each sentence with an action verb.
- Avoid generalized phrases that might limit a clear understanding for the position’s responsibilities (e.g., “handles outside contacts”).
- Be clear in defining the degree and scope of responsibilities.
- Arrange responsibilities in a logical way, beginning with those that are most important.

Additionally, when you post a job in ASPIRE, you will need to include the following sections:

**Duties and Responsibilities, which should include the following components:**

- **Summary**: A brief description summarizing the overall purpose and objectives of the position, the results the employee is expected to achieve, and the degree of autonomy the person has over his or her own work.
- **Essential Functions**: The most important responsibilities and duties of the position.
- **Non-essential Functions**: The desirable, but not necessary aspects of the job.
- **Management Responsibilities**: The scope of the person’s authority as it relates to managing people, including a list of the positions that report to the person.

**Basic Qualifications, the minimum qualifications that an applicant must have, in order to be considered for the position. These qualifications, which are discussed in detail in Appendix B, Basic Qualifications, are:**

- **Non-comparative** (e.g., three years’ experience in a particular position, rather than a comparative requirement such as “must have the most years’ experience, among applicants”);
- **Objective** (e.g., a Bachelor’s degree in accounting, but not a “technical degree from a good school”);
- **Relevant** to the performance of the particular position; and
Demonstrable by evidence or statements in the candidate’s “expression of interest” (resume or cover letter).

Additional Qualifications, those that are preferred for the position but do not fall under the basic qualifications criteria. These would include:

- **Behavioral Knowledge**: Capabilities that contribute to a person’s ability to excel on the job. Examples of the Harvard-wide and FAS-wide competencies can be found in Appendix D, Behavioral Interview Questions.

- **Working Conditions**: A person’s interest in or ability to work in the environment in which the job is performed, especially any unique conditions (e.g., outdoor work, extensive travel, or laboratory work).

- **Qualifications labeled “Preferred”**: Qualifications that, if absent, will not disqualify a candidate, but which are strongly desirable (e.g., “Bachelor’s degree preferred”).

When creating a job description for a HUCTW position, you need to use the generic job descriptions as a guide (http://harvie.harvard.edu/Policies_Contracts/Union_Contracts/HUCTW_Generic_Job_Descriptions/), and basic qualifications must be comparable to those listed in the generic job descriptions. Note, too, that for most HUCTW positions, you cannot require a college degree. (However, you may state a preference or desire for a degree.)

Once a position has been approved as described in the Toolkit section, Staff Hiring and Approval Checklist (page 4), it can be posted in ASPIRE (Appendix A-3).

All positions that are listed on ASPIRE are automatically posted on the New England Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) site, http://www.hercjobs.org/new_england and HigherEdJobs, http://www.higheredjobs.com. If you would like to advertise your position on other job boards, publications, or with professional organizations including the resources described in the Toolkit section, Diversity Recruitment Resources (page 15), please contact FAS Recruitment Services at recruitment@fas.harvard.edu (page 47) for information and assistance. Harvard has established relationships with many job sites and, often, favorable pricing has been negotiated.