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## WHY JOB DESCRIPTIONS ARE IMPORTANT

### Do you know the cost of replacing an employee?

**I**n the United States, the cost of replacing an employee averages \$17,000. Those making over \$60,000 per year will cost you more than \$38,000 to replace.

However, more than one human resource manager says to simply look at an employee's annual salary and that's about what it costs you to replace that person.

With those numbers in mind, it gets very expensive for organizations to make a bad hire and have that employee quit in short order.

According to the *Harvard Business Review*, the number one reason people leave their job is *Job Content*.\* In other words, what they do on their job is not what they thought they were going to do when they were hired.

So just the cost of ONE employee leaving because of a mismatch in job expectations can be quite expensive.

For those who deal mostly with entry-level employees, the cost of replacing them is obviously lower. But a survey I conducted in 1999 found that the LEAST amount it cost an employer to replace an entry-level employee was \$2,000.

Two thousand dollars. How much time does it take for you to earn \$2,000? Looking at annual income, here's about how long:

\$ 25,000 / year = About four weeks (160 hours of work)

\$ 50,000 / year = About two weeks (80 hours of work)

\$100,000 / year = About one week (40 hours of work)

Even if you make \$200,000 per year, if you can write a job description for an entry-level position in less than eight, ten, or even twenty hours, you're saving yourself a lot of money—not to mention time and headaches.

\*Contrary to popular belief, "Insufficient Salary" was # 5 on the list!

So, if you're looking to do all that plus increase workplace efficiency and effectiveness at the same time, consider the information in this book.

You will find this process easy to learn, and you can use it as a step-by-step guide. Although it will take a little time up front, this process pays you back many times over down the road. Let me say that again:

This process pays you back many times over.

Wouldn't it be great to identify applicants with a natural tendency to do the things that need to be done?

And what if each employee got trained in what he *really* needed to know?

And wouldn't it be great if you had an easy way to evaluate the performance of each employee? That they knew what was expected, and how to excel at it?

The simple task of creating clear cut job descriptions does all this and more. In fact, effectively using job descriptions elevates morale, increases production, and makes the workplace more enjoyable for everyone.

If you've printed out this book, get a scale and find out how much the book weighs. Then figure out how much it would be worth if it were made of gold. I *guarantee* the information you're about to read is worth *much* more than that.

### A Simple Overview of the Process:

- 1) Identify and prioritize the duties and tasks needed for successful job performance, in keeping with the vision and mission of your organization.
- 2) Use that job description to create interview questions.
- 3) Once a person is hired, use the job description as an outline for training.
- 4) Use the job description as the outline for a realistic performance review.

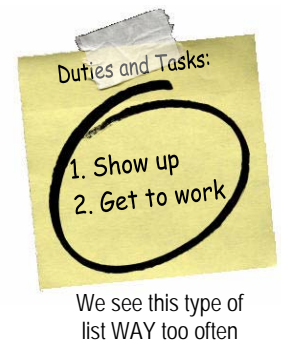
Keep in mind this is a "how to" manual, not simply theory. It's a practical nuts-and-bolts process that will make a huge difference. Time to roll up our sleeves . . .

# Chapter One

## Create a List of Duties and Tasks

*“If you love what you do,  
it’s not work.”*

**T**o get the right person you must know what behaviors and skills are needed for the job. This is easy if you have a good job description. If you already have a job description, great—you’re ahead of the game! (Just verify it’s accurate.) If you don’t have one, the following an easy way to benchmark the job—even if you’re creating a brand new position:



### Developing a Job Description

Whenever a job description has to be created, I recommend using a “Table Top Job Analysis” method, as it makes fairly short work of the process. An overview of the practice looks like this:

1. Form a small group of experts for the job in question. If the position is brand new or you don’t have “experts” available, select people who understand what will be expected of the person doing the job. If you’re seeking to fill an established position, your small group should consist of people who are already successful in that job or are very familiar with what is expected in that job. Ideally, your group should have at least three people but no more than seven.