The Importance of Creating a Thorough Job Description

With over 40% of undergraduate student working on-campus, it is very important that Campus Job Descriptions include clearly defined skills, responsibilities, and pay rates.

In 2015-16, CMU created hourly job profiles for undergraduate and graduate student positions, based on the responsibilities and skills necessary for each job. As a result, the following changes were implemented:

- Corresponding job profile codes and pay grades were assigned to each job.
- Recommended pay ranges for each pay grade were assigned, reflecting minimum, mid-point and maximum hourly rates.
- Better understanding of the importance of a meaningful job description in the hiring process for the both the student and the employer was discussed.
- New job profiles and pay ranges that offer increased transparency for student planning as related to on-campus job searches and available positions which will allow for a more impactful experience.
- New job profiles and pay ranges that will help campus employers plan for their student employee hiring needs as it relates to guidelines for competitive wages and writing clear and concise job descriptions. This will allow for a larger pool of candidates and better hiring decisions.
  - Go to https://www.cmu.edu/career/employers/on-campus_employers/ and then click on Paying Students > Job Profiles & Pay Ranges to view the new job profiles and pay ranges.

Creating your Job Description

Creating a job description is a key step in the hiring process. The job posting should include a concise picture of the skills and qualifications necessary for the position in order to attract qualified job candidates.

The newly created student hourly job profile codes and pay grades are representative of the typical student jobs on campus. As each department has its unique need for student staffing, the job profiles provided are general and can used as a starting point for each department to use in writing a job posting in Handshake.

With that in mind, departments can use these resources to:

- Design job descriptions, recruit their student staff, and select students to fill positions
- Develop leadership or advanced positions for student staff and provide valuable personal and professional development opportunities for students

Below you can find an example of how one would create a new job description for Handshake. In this example we’re creating a description for a Career Peer Mentor.

1. Find the Job Profile that most closely matches your job.
   a. Undergraduate Job Profiles
   b. Graduate Job Profiles

2. Ours would be **U-102 8045** – Undergraduate Peer Mentor

   The undergraduate peer mentor is a student employee who works with, and assists, their peers with program specific services, performs outreach activities, and sponsors and facilitates events. Peer mentors have been specifically trained and have the skills, competencies, and expertise needed to assist their peers.
3. Find the **Pay Range** that matches the Job Profile you have chosen. Each Pay Range also has a description of tasks that students should be expected to complete at each level. At **U-102** our description is:

   Requires basic skills acquired through some previous work experience, training and/or completion of related coursework. Responsibilities may require the application of basic organizational and/or more technical knowledge, operation and accountability for more complex equipment or performing routine tasks. Some independent decision making and supervision of other student workers or volunteers with daily on site supervision.

4. Our pay range for U-102 would be: **Minimum $7.25 / Midpoint $9.40 / Maximum $11.95**

5. Now that we have this information, we can begin to create a thorough job description. You can use the information found to help fill in your description accurately. Our example for the position of Career Peer Mentor is shown below:

   **Sample Job Description for a Career Peer Mentor**

   **Job Title:** Career Peer Mentor

   **Position Summary:** The undergraduate peer mentor will work with their peers with program specific services, perform outreach activities, and sponsor and facilitate student events. The Career Peer Mentor will assist with services within the Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC) at the front desk, as well as with outreach activities, events, and programs outside of the center. The goal is to foster a peer-to-peer relationship that will build a personalized foundation for early student engagement in discovering and exploring career options. This position pays $8.75/hour.

   **Duties and Responsibilities:**

   - Be available to their assigned residence hall for at least one hour consistently per week in order to run creative career-related programs
   - Provide assistance with resume writing, job searches, and using online career resources
   - Work at the front desk in the CPDC Advising Center for at least two hours per week
   - Work six hours per week, including evening and occasional weekend hours
   - Individually organize at least one CPM workshop with a group or organization outside of the first-year residence halls

   **Qualifications and Skills**

   - Current freshman, sophomore, or junior with a minimum GPA of 2.5
   - Excellent communication (oral and written) and interpersonal skills
   - Desire to take initiative to assist peers with career-related needs
   - Demonstrates reliability and strong work ethic
   - Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
   - Ability to plan and prepare professional presentations and workshops
   - Ability to function as a productive member of a team
   - Ability to maintain confidentiality in all aspects of job responsibilities

   *Once you create your job description, you can copy and paste it directly into Handshake and also keep it as a reference for future hiring.*