

*There are some important steps you can take in the hiring process that will help ensure you are hiring qualified people. Using best practices to hire new employees can help you better match jobs to employees, identify potential risks, potentially increase productivity and profitability, and possibly reduce workers' compensation losses.*

### Job Hazard Analysis

A job hazard analysis is a technique that focuses on job tasks as a way to identify hazards before they occur. It focuses on the relationship between the worker, the tasks, the tools, and the work environment. Identifying uncontrolled hazards will help to identify what protective measures should be taken to eliminate or reduce risk. Job hazard analyses can also directly assist in writing accurate job descriptions. Steps involved in the job hazard analysis process are:

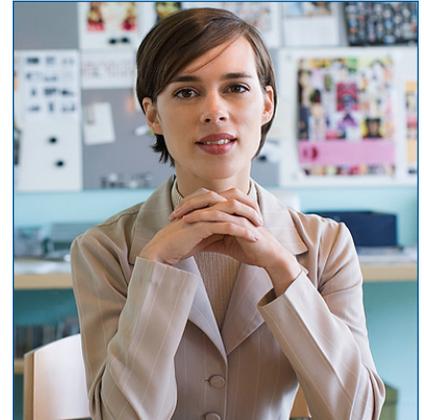
- Identify each step or task in a job.
- Identify the hazards that may be encountered during each step or task.
- Determine how to eliminate hazards from each step or task.
- Develop precautions for any hazards that are not eliminated.

### Written Job Descriptions

Job descriptions should be written for every position for which employment is available, including existing positions. These should clearly define job title, essential functions, and all requirements for the position. A well crafted job description also spells out the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the job successfully. They can serve as a benchmark for evaluations of new and existing employees and can also be used to determine performance objectives and career development. Many requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are determined or influenced by the essential functions of the job, which an employer can reasonably determine in a job description. A job description should be very specific about the physical, ergonomic, environmental, and other requirements of the job in order to comply with requirements of the ADA. An occupational medical clinic or your designated physician can assist you in writing or verifying the physical requirements within your job descriptions.

### Functional Analysis

By defining the essential functions and requirements of a job in the job description you can implement a functional analysis program. The object of a functional analysis program is to



identify the current physical and functional ability and true work potential required of your new employee. Using a functional analysis evaluation is a tremendous tool to supplement the interview process. A functional analysis evaluation includes interviews, testing, and screening and allows for customizing as your company requirements change. Good sources for functional analysis evaluations are occupational medical clinics, physical therapists, and rehabilitation specialists.

### Pre-Work/Post-Offer Evaluations

Once you have defined your job descriptions, you can develop procedures to follow when you are ready to hire new employees. Working closely with an occupational medicine clinic can assist you to define your post-offer hiring practices. A post-offer screening evaluation can be completed with the assistance of an occupational medicine clinic. Depending on the state you are in, you may or may not have direct control over where you send an employee for hiring evaluations and future work-related injuries. The physician will use the job descriptions to screen a new hire to determine if they are a good fit for the available

Continued

position. A release should be signed by the employee with the understanding that the screening is post offer, or contingent upon an offer being made. At this point you may require drug testing and background checks of the new hire. This pre-work/post-offer screening may determine if the employee is a good fit for the position being offered. If the new hire is not a good fit, alternatives should be in place.

### Interviewing

Employers often conduct interviews of applicants without a clear understanding of the objectives of the hiring process. The result is an interview that lacks focus and that does not promote the ultimate goal of selecting the most qualified candidate for a particular position.

An effective interview should secure a candidate's commitment to performance, determine whether a particular applicant is qualified for the position in question, identify future potential and trainability, ensure compatibility with management and other team members, and reveal an applicant's strengths and weaknesses. Select personal styles that fit and complement specific tasks and teams. Demand the willingness to defend your culture — your standards, expectations and codes of conduct and communication. Seek work ethic, drive, dedication, endurance, and eagerness to succeed. This is the make-up of a true professional. Train yourself to recognize these critical "soft" qualities, even if you can't quantify them. You will waste your time teaching technical skills to employees who lack these qualities.

There are obvious benefits to conducting a focused interview. An interview focused on a particular job's demands allows for an objective comparison of candidates, as well as consistency between interview questions and position demands. Focused interviews also allow the employer to concentrate upon a job's true requirements, thereby increasing the probability of selecting the most qualified applicant.

### Background Checks

As an employer, you should give employees advance notice, both on the job application and in their employee handbook, that you reserve the right to

conduct a background check and to investigate matters like an individual's prior employment history, personal references, educational background, and other relevant information. You may also decide to go further and ask for credit reports and criminal background checks. The policy should disclose that these types of background checks may occur, and that the employer will comply with federal and state laws in gathering this information. A release form should be signed by the individual acknowledging this policy.

### Drug Testing

If you decide to implement a drug testing program, make sure to begin with a written policy that details what is expected by all employees and what is prohibited. The policy should also make clear when drug testing will be conducted. A good first step toward a drug free workplace is to test new hires, and then to include provisions for future random testing, suspicion testing, and post accident testing of all employees. Check your state laws for what is required to develop a specific program.

### Alternative Job Placement

If requirements for a position are not met, it should be made clear that you have no other alternatives available. This can be done with specific, written job descriptions. Or, you may have less physically demanding positions available, or a work-fitness program that will provide the tools for someone to become qualified for the original position for which they applied.

### For Additional Information

O\*Net online: [online.onetcenter.org](http://online.onetcenter.org)

US Department of Justice – ADA: [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)