



# **Business - Creating a Wonderful Environment - How to Develop a Job Description For Staff**

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drhindahancock.com](mailto:office@drhindahancock.com)

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Before you hire anyone in your private practice, it is important that you determine what that employee or contract person will be doing for you. There are several steps in the process that will help you to ensure that you have hired the right person to do the work.

1. Sit down in a quiet place where you can think, plan and work without interruption
2. On a piece of paper write down all of the things that only you can do. These will be the services which only you hold a licence to perform, the management tasks that you need to monitor (such as bank accounts and business statements) as well as the personal choice decisions that need to be made (choosing decor, hiring contractors or developing marketing plans).
3. On a different piece of paper list all the other things that need to be done - but not necessarily by you. They might include things such as ordering supplies, answering the telephone, scheduling appointments, filing, organizing information, making bank deposits, delivering mail or maintaining equipment. It is important that you list everything no matter how small the task may seem.
4. Draw a vertical line down the middle of a third sheet of paper. On the left hand side start sorting the tasks into logical groupings (tasks out of the office, computer tasks, filing and organization tasks etc)
5. On the right-hand side of the third paper list the skills or abilities that a person would need in order to accomplish the task. For example, someone who will be preparing and making bank deposits will need computer skills, math skills and either a vehicle or the ability to walk to the bank to physically make the deposit.
6. When you have completed use a coloured pen to mark the amount of time that you think each category would take to accomplish. Some tasks might need to be done on a daily basis while others might be weekly or monthly activities.
7. Consider which if any of the tasks could be contracted by another professional such as an accountant or lawyer.
8. Once you have calculated the approximate number of hours required to complete the daily tasks, calculate the costs to hire someone to do this. You will likely want to pay more than the minimum wage in order to get a skilled person. Contact an Employment Agency to ask about the rate per hour that would be reasonable. In fact, the agency may even have someone who would be suitable for the position.
9. If there are tasks that could be completed by a Virtual Assistant you might want to consider this and begin to research the best match. On the other hand, a person who needs to be working in the office may actually be glad to have as many hours as you are able to offer.

When you have finally identified all the tasks that you would like someone to do for hire, you can type or write them out in simple but detailed fashion. I usually attach this Job Description to the other documents that I prepare when hiring staff and ensure that we each have copies.

Writing a Job Description is a rather simple task after you have determined exactly what you need to have done that you will not be doing yourself. I think that you will find that hiring someone with skill in the task areas will allow you peace of mind and the opportunity to work additional hours seeing clients. In fact, the amount you can earn in one hour with clients will likely pay for several hours of staffing.

It's all just part of making your business a wonderful adventure!