

# Executive Director Job Description

Having a clear job description is critical in any hiring process to land you a prime future employee. It should provide potential candidates with a clear idea of the job, what is expected from them, and how they will be evaluated for success.

The quality of your job description can predict the quality of your new hire. This resource will give you some best practices for writing compelling job descriptions that communicate your expectations clearly and effectively.

You will also find a sample Executive Director Job Description and a sample Skills Matrix which you will find useful as you develop these important resources for your nonprofit organization.

## Why Job Descriptions Matter

The job description is a tool that can be very helpful in many areas of running a successful organization. You may be aware of some of these and others will be new to you. Areas may include:

- Hiring
- Pay decisions- FLSA status\*
- Training
- Performance management
- Workers compensation management
- EEOC compliance- if a covered employer
- Unemployment compensation claims



\*Quick note: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards affecting employees in the private sector and in governments entities. Regulations dictate whether a position is legally allowed to be salaried versus hourly (meaning overtime pay eligible). These laws change regularly and a job description (along with the rate of pay) is a critical part of defending the pay status you give a position. Visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>

## Elements to Include

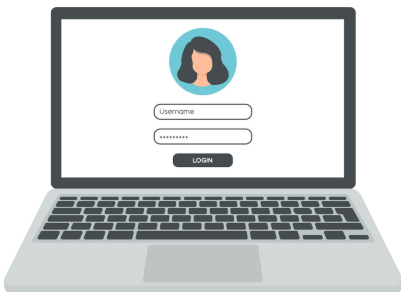
**The actual job description should include:**



- Job title (job code number if applicable)
- Department the job reports to
- Relationships to other jobs and the purpose of contact with outside agencies and personnel
- A brief summary of job functions
- Duties and responsibilities, estimated time spent on each (when using percentages, these should be allocated to equal 100%), frequency of activity, i.e., whether these are performed daily, weekly, or periodically
- The quality and quantity of work expected from an individual holding the position
- Essential and marginal duties
- Special working conditions such as shift, overtime, or as-needed work
- Clarity on accountability for expected results
- A statement that when duties and responsibilities change and develop the job description will be reviewed and subject to changes of business necessity
- Qualifications & Skills
- Physical Demands & Work Environment
- Equal Opportunity Employer Statement- not required by all employers but is a good practice
- Salary Range- some states and local jurisdictions require this to be listed

## Detailing Qualifications and Skills

When detailing qualifications on job descriptions, employers typically require certain knowledge, skills, aptitude, training, and previous experience. Employers should remember that these qualifications might be gained in a number of ways. For example, knowledge may be gained through education, training, or experience. You will find a skills matrix for the Executive Director role later in this document.



## Be Mindful of Requirements

Distinguish between required and preferred skills and consider any requirements that might be discriminatory and unnecessarily limit your applicant pool. A requirement to possession a driver's license could be considered discriminatory.

For example, a job position that requires an employee to be "available to attend evening meetings throughout the community" and "possess a driver's license" could be modified to allow an employee with a disability to be able to attend a meeting via teleconference or access public transportation to attend the meeting.



## Maintaining Consistency



Internal consistency is very important when developing an overall bank of organizational job descriptions. The employer may want to select specific formats, fonts, logos, and other elements to streamline and standardize the appearance of the documents. A bank of job descriptions can be instrumental in supporting the development of other organizational documents and standards; as well providing a framework for developing performance evaluations.

Besides the hiring process, job descriptions can be valuable tools for compliance issues such as insurance and employment law (FLSA, EEOC, ADA, OSHA, etc.).

Employers should also research whether there are other rules and regulations that apply to them, such as state disability and federal and state safety and health laws.

## Resources

- **Physical Requirements** Including the physical demands of the job provides a systematic way of describing the physical activities that the job requires of a worker. You would identify specifics (weight amount, frequency, etc.) This can be helpful to include on a job description in case of a work injury - the workers compensation insurer could use these elements of the job description to create return-to-work recommendations should there be an injury. These would also be helpful to have identified if you are an EEOC covered employer. If exposure to hazardous materials or environments will be part of job, OSHA Requirements may come in to play  
<https://www.bls.gov/ors/factsheet/physical-072015.htm>
- **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** enforces Federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. These laws protect employees and job applicants against employment discrimination when it involves certain covered situations.  
<https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/coverage-0>
- **Job Accommodation Network** If you are an EEOC covered employer, you are required to take certain steps if an applicant or an employee requests accommodations for a disability. A job description is a valuable tool to have already created. While you don't need to conduct the job analysis that that this site refers to unless an accommodation is requested, the factors it describes related to the job description are really helpful to have in place prior to an accommodation or allegation of discrimination situation arises  
<https://askjan.org/topics/jobdesc.cfm>



# Sample Job Description

**Job Title:** Executive Director

**Reports To:** Board of Directors

**Position Type:** Full-time, Exempt

**FLSA Status:** [Exempt vs. non-exempt status under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)]

**Location:** [City, State, Country]

**Last Modified:** [Date]

## Organization Overview:

[This section should give a brief but powerful description of the nonprofit's history, its mission to address specific issues, its vision for the future, and the key stakeholders involved, such as community members, donors, and volunteers.]

## Job Summary:

The Executive Director is the key management leader of [Organization Name]. This position is responsible for overseeing the strategic plan, administration, programs, and daily operations of the organization. Other key duties include fundraising, marketing, and community outreach. The position reports directly to the Board of Directors.

## Key Responsibilities:

### Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Collaborate with the Board to refine and implement the strategic plan while ensuring that the budget, staff, and priorities are aligned with [Organization Name]'s core mission.
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction to all executives, and ensure the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization; establish effective decision-making processes that will enable [Organization Name] to achieve its long- and short-term goals and objectives.
- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with the Board and ensure open communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact performance against stated milestones and goals.

### Operations Management

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality services while managing for current and future growth.
- Support and motivate the organization's staff.
- Facilitate cross-departmental collaboration and strengthen internal communications with staff throughout the organization; create and promote a positive work environment that supports consistency throughout the organization's strategy, operational methods, and data collection needs.

### Financial Performance and Viability

- Develop a reliable financial strategy and operations that align with the strategic vision of the organization.

- Ensure that the flow of funds permits the organization to make continuous progress towards the achievement of its mission and that those funds are allocated properly to reflect present needs and future potential.
- Formulate and execute comprehensive marketing, branding, and development strategies that will ensure consistency throughout the organization and enhance revenue from major donors, foundations, government agencies, and corporations.

### **Organization Mission and Strategy**

- Work with the board and staff to ensure that the mission is fulfilled through programs, strategic planning, and community outreach.
- Enhance [Organization Name]'s image by being active and visible in the community and by working closely with other professional, civic, and private organizations.

### **Fundraising and Community Outreach**

- Expand local revenue-generating and fundraising activities to support existing program operations and regional expansion while simultaneously retiring building debt.
- Oversee fundraising planning and implementation, including identifying resource requirements, researching funding sources, establishing strategies to approach funders, submitting proposals, and administrating fundraising records and documentation.

### **Job Qualifications**

- Proven leadership, coaching, and relationship management experience.
- Demonstrated ability to oversee and collaborate with staff.
- Experience successfully generating new revenue streams and improving financial results.
- Active fundraising experience. Excellent donor relations skills and understanding of the funding community.
- Experience in establishing relationships with individuals and organizations of influence including funders, partner agencies, and volunteers.

### **Skills**

- Solid organizational abilities, including planning, delegating, program development, and task facilitation.
- Strong financial management skills, including budget preparation, analysis, decision making, and reporting.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; a persuasive and passionate communicator with excellent interpersonal and multidisciplinary project skills.
- Ability to interface and engage diverse volunteer and donor groups.
- Demonstrated ability to manage and implement change and to oversee large, complex, and diverse operations.
- Strong public speaking ability.
- Strong work ethic with a high degree of energy.

**Physical Demands & Work Environment**- add appropriate information here

**Equal Opportunity Employer Statement**- not required by all employers but is a good practice

**Salary Range**- some states and local jurisdictions require this to be listed



# Skills Matrix for Executive Director

The skills matrix provides an overview of skills that are typically required for an Executive Director in a nonprofit organization. When developing the job description and recruiting plan, your team will want to tailor this based on the needs of the role and the culture of the organization.

The matrix provides a holistic view of the following:

- Name of skill
  - It is important that your team go through the exercise of clarifying how your organization defines each of these, especially the soft skills. For example, leadership might mean different things to different people.
- Type of skill
  - Hard- Often these are technical skills and are learned through education or hands-on experience. These are concrete, measurable abilities that are often specific to a job.
  - Soft- These are traits and abilities that you develop throughout your entire life.
- Necessity of skill
  - Essential- These are non-negotiable skills that the candidate must possess to perform the job functions effectively.
  - Desirable- These skills are not critical for the job at the outset but would be beneficial for the candidate to have for better performance and future growth.
- Assessment method
  - It's important to determine how you might assess each skill during the recruitment process. For instance, role play and scenarios might be used for conflict resolution, whereas a practical assessment could be more fitting for assessing technology literacy.

Once employed, the matrix can also be used as a tool both when assessing an individual's strengths and areas for development.

<b>Skills/Competencies</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Essential/Desirable</b>	<b>Assessment Method</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	Soft	Essential	Interview, References
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Hard	Essential	Case Study, Interview
<b>Financial Acumen</b>	Hard	Essential	Interview, Qualifications
<b>Fundraising Ability</b>	Hard	Essential	Past Performance, References
<b>Communication</b>	Soft	Essential	Interview, Writing Sample
<b>Project Management</b>	Hard	Desirable	Interview, Past Performance
<b>Networking</b>	Soft	Essential	Interview, References
<b>Program Development</b>	Hard	Essential	Interview, Past Projects
<b>Budget Management</b>	Hard	Essential	Interview, Case Study
<b>Team Building</b>	Soft	Essential	Group Interview, References
<b>Conflict Resolution</b>	Soft	Essential	Role Play, References
<b>Innovation</b>	Soft	Desirable	Interview, Past Performance
<b>Change Management</b>	Hard	Essential	Interview, References
<b>Policy Development</b>	Hard	Desirable	Interview, Review of Written Policies
<b>Marketing &amp; PR</b>	Hard	Desirable	Interview, Portfolio Review



<b>Skills/Competencies</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Essential/Desirable</b>	<b>Assessment Method</b>
<b>Adaptability</b>	Soft	Essential	Interview, References
<b>Ethical Judgment</b>	Soft	Essential	Interview, Scenarios
<b>Technology Literacy</b>	Hard	Desirable	Practical Assessment