

Job Families

Explanation and Guidelines

Definition

A job family is defined as a series of progressively higher, related jobs distinguished by levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities (competencies) and other factors, and providing promotional opportunities over time.

Purpose

Job families:

- Improve competencies of the workforce through better selection and placement;
- Increase training and development participation;
- Increase retention of competent employees;
- Improve individual performance and contribution;
- Provide flexibility to line managers in staffing decisions;
- Provide flexibility to line managers when assigning job duties.

General Characteristics

Job families are designed to take advantage of successful human resource strategies such as:

- General job descriptions;
- Broad salary structures;
- Flatter organizational structures;
- Competency/skill based salary management;
- Comprehensive position management;
- Decentralized position classification decisions;
- Greater emphasis on individual development.

General Features

Placing Jobs in a Job Family

A job family is a series of jobs involving work of the same nature, but requiring different levels of skill and responsibility. For example, it is quite common to find an accountant's job in a job family. An entry level accountant would be one who has recently graduated from college, who has little experience, whose skills are being developed and who would be given responsibilities at a lower level than those with experience. On the other hand, a senior level accountant would be one with many years of experience whose skills and competencies are exemplary and who completes job duties of a high level. Thus, the value of an accountant varies widely based on his/her experience, competencies, and the level of responsibilities being completed.

Not all jobs can be placed into a job family. Some jobs consist of very routinized, repetitive work. Others require extensive experience and specific competencies or credentials prior to being placed into the job. The value of such jobs is typically more narrowly defined; therefore, such jobs are not placed into a job family.

Defining Job Family Levels

Job families function to provide both a structure for departmental human resource decisions and a career ladder by which an employee may plan his/her professional growth and advancement.

A job description for a job within a job family describes, in broad terms, the duties and responsibilities one would be expected to perform at the various levels within a job family. The levels within a job family are defined more on the competencies expected of the employee rather than a list of specific tasks and responsibilities. The number of levels for a job family is determined by the value of the job in the marketplace and to the institution.

When recruiting for a position within a job family, the supervisor may recruit for a broad skill set ranging across several levels of a job family and then assign the specific level based on the competency of the selected candidate. Promotions of individuals within a job family are tied to demonstrated competencies and performance, completion of individual development activities and the needs of the department.

Supervisors of employees in a job family have primary responsibility for deciding on the level of the job family assigned to an individual. Placement of an individual at a particular level within a job family is dependent upon the competencies of the individual, the level of responsibility, and the needs of the department. However, employees in a job family are also empowered because promotions focus on individual performance, development and training based on the competencies established for each level.

Determining Salary Grade Levels

Salary grade levels for jobs within a job family are based on salary survey information and internal equity. Auburn University uses a blend of salary survey information and an internal job evaluation system to determine the value or salary grades for the various levels within a job family.

The assignment of an employee to a particular grade level in a job family is based on the competencies identified for each level. For example, **entry level** positions are characterized by more routine work under close supervision. However, at the **mid-range or intermediate levels**, positions follow established guidelines, but work under more general supervision. Finally, at the **advanced level**, incumbents are working more independently, and in some cases are leading projects or work in their area. The job description for a job within a job family has “job family leveling guidelines” that provide descriptions of the responsibilities, knowledge and education and experience required for each level of the job family. These “leveling guidelines” provide a broad description of the requirements of each level and are designed to assist a supervisor in determining the appropriate level for an employee.

Key Elements of Job Families

Assignment/Promotions to a level within a job family:

- Are based on identified competencies and needs of the department;
- Are based on supervisor recommendation and/or committee review;
- Are made concurrent with annual budget cycle;
- Must follow the standard request/approval procedures.

Performance standards:

- Focus on increasingly higher levels of responsibilities;
- Focus on individual competencies and acquisition of new competencies;
- Focus on contributions to team, departmental image and service;
- Must be met or exceeded to qualify for promotion to a higher level.

Promotional opportunities:

- Are non-competitive;
- Must be initiated by supervisor based on organizational objectives;
- Are based on recognized increases in job responsibilities, competencies and quality of performance;
- Are based on completion of development plans, assigned training and/or time in service;
- Are considered and approved during annual job family promotion cycle only;

Development/training opportunities:

- Are identified by the supervisor as part of annual performance review cycle;
- Are based on competencies established for each level;
- May include job enrichment activities, job rotation, AU HRD programs, in-house, on-the-job, and external sources.

Salary adjustments:

- Are based on the availability of funds;
- Take internal equity issues into consideration;
- Use a standard university formula to determine maximum allowable salary increase;
- Are effective at the start of new the fiscal year;
- Could include exceptions where special competencies are identified, with approval of higher administration;
- Use central University funds (except those positions funded through a contract or grant).

Job Family Committees

The University encourages the use of job family oversight committees to screen all applications for job family promotions and to review and make recommendations regarding training and other requirements necessary to advance through the job family. Recommendations for job family promotions or changes in a job family are generally presented to the oversight committee for review and approval. Such committees are intended to ensure consistency in promotional activity within a job family. The Human Resources Department can assist in the development and operation of such committees.

Job Family Personnel Procedures

Creating a Position

To establish a position in a job family, the initiating unit must follow the University's standard procedure for creation of a position. This will include: (1) a proposal demonstrating the need for such a position and indicating the source (including any commitment of Auburn University), amount, and term of funding for the position; (2) completion of a job questionnaire; and (3) approvals by the chief administrative officer of the concerned unit.

Position Vacancies

Job searches to fill a vacancy in an approved job family position will follow normal university hiring procedures.

Job Family Promotions and Review Process

Job family promotions of eligible incumbent employees within a job family will be coordinated with the University's fiscal cycle of budgetary planning. For those job families with an oversight committee, the job family oversight committee will review all applications for job family promotions.

Required forms and criteria for job family promotions are included in this manual to assist managers in submission of promotional applications for eligible employees.

Job Family Training and Development

Purpose

The goal of development programs is to define the quantity, content and sources of accessible programs which enable employees to fulfill competency expectations of the job family, while allowing supervisors maximum flexibility in managing staff training. Such programs do not necessarily require a lock-step training sequence per level. Development

programs should be designed to promote an employee's career objective and fulfill annual training and development activities which supervisors are expected to assign and employees are expected to fulfill in order to qualify for future promotions within the job family. Additional expectations of professional and service activities, certifications, etc. may be assigned to the employee by the supervisor as the employee progresses to the upper levels of the Job Family.

General Professional Development

Under the category of General Professional Development, the Human Resources Development Office offers training activities that stress the continuing development of human resource related skills and abilities that are of major importance in job effectiveness, focusing on the following categories: communications, leadership, service, teamwork, and process improvement. The supervisor should assess the employee's proficiency in each category to determine development priorities. The existing curriculum of Auburn University HRD courses offers a broad range of programs in these categories. As the employee completes all appropriate AU HRD courses, the supervisor should substitute content from other sources to provide continuing development in these categories throughout the career of the employee. Areas of focus could include:

- Communications
- Leadership
- Service
- Teamwork
- Process improvement

Unit, Job Specific and/or Technical Training

This training is designed to improve an employee's technical or professional knowledge for his/her specific job. Areas of focus could include:

- AU Office Administration courses
- AU IT courses
- Self-directed courses
- External training providers
- On-line sources
- Training certifications (as identified for advanced level positions)
- Major disciplinary certifications and/or fellowships

Professional Development

Participation in appropriate professional activities enhances professional expertise and fosters an environment which promotes continued learning and improvement. Areas of focus could include:

- Annual regional/national organizational participation (conferences, committees, presentations, papers)
- University service (committees, task forces, advisory teams)

Approved Credit Courses

Following University guidelines for enrollment in credit programs and as approved by one's supervisor, an employee's participation in credit courses may be taken into account toward job and professional development expectations on an ad hoc basis.

Documentation

Completion of training and assignments for the coming year should be documented as part of the University's standard annual performance planning and review process. Included in the appendices of this document is a form "Annual Employee Training and Development Plan" which can be used to plan and track employee training and development activities.

Applications for the annual cycle of Job Family planned program promotions should document training accomplishments. Though these applications are generally due in March, AU Human Resources allows training completed before October 1 to count towards a job family member's promotional requirements for that year. For clarity, completion of such training should be documented as "anticipated."

APPENDICES

Procedures and Criteria for Job Family Promotions

Annual Employee Training and Development Plan

Request for Job Family Promotion

Example of Job Family Leveling Guidelines

Job Family Procedure and Criteria for Job Family Promotion

Advancement within a job family will be considered as part of the University's annual cycle of planned job family promotions. Job family promotions are not automatic or employee-driven. Applications for promotional review of an employee must be initiated by the supervisors following the process outlined herein.

Contingent on funding, advancement within a job family requires the recommendation of the supervisor based on the objectives of the unit, change in work expectations, and the placement of the position within the organization. The employee must meet minimum standards and possess demonstrated capabilities to hold the position at a higher level. The employee will be expected to meet higher performance standards for the advanced position.

Promotions within a job family will be considered on the basis of the employee's assignment to higher level duties, responsibilities, and accountability. The employee must have demonstrated increased competency, met all specified criteria for the advanced position, and performed at a satisfactory level for the period of time specified for their current level. Participation in training and development opportunities appropriate for the prospective program promotion will be reviewed. The employee must meet any development and training goals established by the supervisor in annual performance planning. Promotions within a job family will follow the progression outlined for each job family. Promotions within a job family occur one level at a time within a budget cycle. Promotions of two or more levels within a budget cycle are not permitted.

For initiation and approval of program promotions, supervisors shall prepare and submit the form "Request for Job Family Promotion" through their appropriate department head/dean/vice president. The form "Request for Job Family Promotion" is available at: www.auburn.edu/administration/human_resources/forms.

After all departmental approvals are obtained, the request must be submitted to the job family oversight committee established (if appropriate) who will review each application for promotion to ensure that all required training, experience, performance and other criteria have been met for the target job level. Upon completion of their review, the committee will forward all qualified applications to Human Resources.

Applications for program promotions must be received by March 1 of the current fiscal year in order to be reviewed for reclassification in the upcoming fiscal year. Approved program promotions will take effect on October 1 of the upcoming fiscal year.

Annual Employee Training and Development Plan

Name of employee

Fiscal Year

DISTRIBUTION OF TRAINING:	HRD Courses	OTHER Courses	On the Job Training	DATE Completed
DIVISION ORIENTATION:				
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:				
Communication				
Leadership				
Service				
Teamwork				
Process Improvement				
UNIT/JOB SPECIFIC/ TECHNICAL:				
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: As assigned, participation in regional/national organizational activities and university service				

Supervisor

Date

Employee

Date

Request for Job Family Promotion

**This form must be completed and attached to a “Request for Position Reclassification”,
Form HR-34 (a)**

Employee Name:_____ Employee ID Number:_____

Position Number:_____ Department Name:_____

Current Salary:_____ FOAP Acct Number:_____

Current Title:_____ New Title:_____

*Note: Promotions within a job family occur one level at a time within a budget cycle.
Promotions of two or more levels within a budget cycle are not permitted.*

Current Salary Grade:_____ New Salary Grade:_____

Date Of Hire:_____ Date of Hire in Current Position:_____

Submitted by:

Supervisor’s Name/Title:_____

Supervisor’s Position Number:_____

Justification for Promotion

*Please see the job leveling guidelines attached to the job description for an explanation of
Responsibilities, Knowledge, and Education and Experience required for each level of the job
family.*

Does this person meet or exceed the minimum qualifications for the new job? Yes No

Has this person completed all training and development requirements as established by the
supervisor? Yes No

Please list and explain the fulfillment of training and development activities.

Does this person have a history of documented good job performance? Yes No

To be eligible for promotion a person must have a satisfactory rating on a performance appraisal
within the past 6 months.

Has the person shown an increase in his/her level of competency? Please explain.

Has the person demonstrated the ability to perform the responsibilities of the higher level job? Please explain.

Does the department have a legitimate need for the new level of responsibilities required of the higher level job? Please explain.

Has the person met other requirements as set forth by the job family oversight committee? (if applicable).

Supervisor's statement: Please provide a brief statement supporting the employee's merit for advancement.

Submit any other documentation, such as an employee's resume or vita, to support this requested job family promotion.

Approvals:

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Department Head: _____ Date: _____

Dean/Director: _____ Date: _____

Sample Auburn University Job Family and Levels

Job Family Name: **Admin Professional 3-Level**

Applies To: Three-level Administrative Professional jobs. All jobs are exempt. This describes the minimum qualifications and the general level and type of work performed at each level of this job family. Promotions from a lower level to a higher level may require completion of additional criteria as outlined by the supervisor, department, or job family committee.

Sample Jobs: Accountant; Editor; Internal Auditor; Buyer; Counselor, Career; Advisor, Admissions; Curator; Human Resources Generalist

Level	Responsibility	Knowledge	Educ & Exp
1	Under immediate supervision, performs standard tasks using established methods, principles, concepts and procedures related to a specialized field. Judgments are made on routine matters of relatively small impact.	Knows fundamental concepts, practices and procedures of particular field of specialization.	Bachelors degree in discipline appropriate to position with no experience.
2	Under close supervision, performs varied duties and assignments involving some judgment. Resolves routine questions or problems, referring only complex issues to higher level. Some evaluation, originality and ingenuity required.	Knows and applies fundamental concepts, practices, and procedures of particular field of specialization, with awareness of related fields.	Bachelors degree in discipline appropriate to position plus 2 years experience. Experience must include at least 2 years at the preceding level or
3	Under minimal supervision, performs complex assignments and fulfills broad responsibilities where required outcomes are defined, but methods and procedures may vary based on professional judgment precedent. Considerable latitude for unreviewed action. Confers with supervisor on unusual matters. Coordinates the work of others on projects and may assign work to and assist less experienced professionals or support staff. May act in an advisory capacity to managers or faculty.	Possesses and applies a broad knowledge of principles, practices and procedures of a particular field of specialization to the completion of difficult assignments. Also possesses knowledge of related fields and areas of operation which affect, or are affected by own area.	Bachelors degree in discipline appropriate to position plus 4 years experience. Experience must include at least 2 years at the preceding level or equivalent.