

Is THAT In My Job Description?

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Is THAT in My Job Description?

We all know that the key to a successful childcare program is the staff. Teachers are the link between the child and the parent, and a good teacher can be a wonderful word of mouth advertising whereas a poor teacher can result in lower enrollment. You can save yourself a lot of time and trouble by doing a lot of work in the hiring process, and also have a better chance of retaining top quality staff.

To make this a little easier, we are first going to look at what you want in a staff member.

Designing Job Descriptions

The purpose of a job description is to clearly specify the duties, responsibilities, and expectations for a position. To create effective descriptions, keep these steps in mind.

1. Collect information about the position.
2. State the tasks.
3. Verify the information.
4. Determine the relative importance of the position.
5. Determine the skills, knowledge, and abilities to do the job.

Be sure to weigh ALL the elements of the position, the staff will. Make sure the language used is clear and precise, does not leave any gray areas.

Now that you have an idea on the task for that position, let's look at how to create the description.

Writing the Description

When writing the description, keep in mind the philosophy of the school, accreditation, status of the school (profit or non-profit), other schools in the area and the needs of the parents. To write effective descriptions, they must include the following:

- Qualifications must include *Minimum Standards for Child Care Center* requirements.
- Clearly specified education and experience necessary to gain the skills, knowledge and abilities to do the job.
- Clearly identify the critical skills, knowledge, and abilities to do the job.
- Clearly identify the skills, knowledge, and abilities that may be acquired through orientation, on the job training, workshops and other training opportunities.

Recruiting Staff

Now that your job descriptions are done, you need teachers to fill those positions. You want to get the best qualified candidates possible, so what do you do?

Do's

Advertise your positions at related areas

Post a detailed advertisement

Be clear about your own expectations

Use non-profit sources for advertising

Observe potential employees in the classes before you hire them.

Don't

Hire on impulse

Rely on your first impression

Ask illegal questions

Do all the talking

Make promises you can't keep

Interviewing

Legal Questions

- Do you have responsibilities that conflict with the attendance or travel requirements?
- There are no legal questions concerning race, sex or religion.
- What is your address?
- If hired, can you offer proof that you are at least 18 years of age?
- Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
- Can you show proof of your eligibility to work in the U.S.?
- Are you fluent in any languages other than English?
- Are you able to perform essential functions on this job with or without reasonable accommodations?

Discriminatory Questions

- Are you married?
- What is your spouse's name?
- Do you have any children?
- Are you pregnant?
- What are your child care arrangements?
- Do you own or rent your home?
- Who resides with you?
- Are you disabled?
- Where were you born?
- What is the nature or severity of your disability?
- Are you a U.S. citizen?
- Have you ever been arrested?

Orientation

Now that you have hired the desired staff, you have to make sure they are aware of the responsibilities the job entails. This is done in the new employee orientation. Orientation will include everything, **EVERYTHING** that the employee needs to be aware of.

- Review the job description.
- Go through a thorough orientation - review the policies, training expectations, minimum standards, work hours, daily schedule, and emergency procedures.
- Ensure that you have the employee sign and date each section of the orientation package as it is completed.
- Make sure that the orientation includes a complete discussion of the employee handbook. This is the most important part of the orientation. In the employee handbook, you include all the areas that involve the employee as part of the facility. Making sure they are aware of the policies and procedures before they begin will avoid a lot of unnecessary issues arising.
- To ensure that the employee handbook is complete, it should contain some basic elements.

Employee Handbook

A well developed employee handbook should contain the following as a base:

- The principles of the Facility - philosophy, purpose, program, curriculum goals and program quality.
- Employment - hiring practices, pre-employment requirements, probationary period and ongoing employment requirements.
- Job Descriptions - very specific, leaving nothing out or unclear.
- Compensation - salary/payroll information.
- Staff Management - supervision, evaluation, conduct, dress code, termination, grievance procedure, chain of command.
- Attendance/Scheduling - shifts, breaks, absenteeism and tardiness.
- Interactions - teacher/child, teacher/teacher, teacher/parent.
- Problem Solving Procedures - conflict resolution processes.
- Health/Safety Procedures - medication, food handling, sanitation, broken equipment/hazards and release of children.
- Reporting Procedures and Requirements - illness, injuries, suspicion of abuse.
- Emergency Procedures - fire, tornado, accidents, disasters.
- Telephone Use and Leaving the Premises
- Benefits and Procedures - Time Off. Holidays, vacation, sick leave, bereavement/critical illness, jury duty/court appearance, emergency closing, professional leave, leave without pay.
- Benefits and Procedures - Insurance/Retirement. Health, life, dental, TRS, social security, Workman's Compensation.

Evaluating Staff

As outlined in the employee handbook, time comes for evaluating the staff.

Before beginning the evaluation process, keep in mind the processes in place.

- Make sure the staff knows what is expected of them.
- Offer guidance and support.
- DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT!
- Talk it out
- Follow Through
- Don't lose your temper
- Don't let emotions cloud your judgment.

Remember, it was outlined in the employee handbook, and

THAT IS IN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION!