



Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements

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HANDBOOK EL-350, NOVEMBER 1989

U.S. Postal Service Washington, DC 20260-4250

A. Explanation

This new handbook provides detailed procedures for establishing selection requirements for Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) positions. The procedures and concepts presented here apply to nonbargaining selection procedures and systems covered by Handbook EL-311, *Personnel Operations*, (except those filled under the Initial Level Supervisor (ILS) and Postmaster selection systems) and to other EAS positions covered by selection procedures which reference this handbook. As appropriate, the handbook is used in conjunction with requirement statements provided by the Office of Selection and Evaluation through the Organization Management Staffing System (OMSS).

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Employee Relations Department
U. S. Postal Service Headquarters
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
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Chapter 1

Overview

110 Purpose

The basic characteristic which distinguishes a manager's responsibilities from those of other employees is that the manager is expected to accomplish unit or functional area goals through other people. Just as a manager would think long and hard about the specifications of a machine before entering into a multiyear leasing contract, so must a manager think about requirements for the unit's staff. Employees are the Postal Service's most vital resource, and they have a day-to-day impact on operations which no machine ever could. Failure to select people who can competently execute their job responsibilities can mean the unit's performance does not measure up to expectations. At the least, the manager may have to shoulder the burden of remedying or compensating for staff deficiencies. Staff selection, therefore, is a key managerial function. Selecting the people that best meet the requirements for various jobs is a major step toward ensuring that the unit's goals will be met.

111 Vacancy Announcements

Requirements shown in vacancy announcements should provide potential applicants with a precise idea of the qualifications being sought for the vacant positions. They should also provide review committees and/or selecting officials with information useful for selecting the applicant who best meets the requirements of the position.

112 EAS Position Vacancies

112.1 Requirements Already Developed. Requirements for inclusion in vacancy announcements for the majority of Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) position vacancies have been developed by the Office of Selection and Evaluation and can be accessed through the Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS). Usually a manager with an EAS vacancy will need only to review the requirements provided by Human Resources to ensure that they relate to the duties assigned to the position as it is ex-

ecuted at his or her facility, and then document the review.

112.2 Requirements Not Yet Developed. In some cases, however, no requirements will be provided because they have not yet been developed. The procedures outlined in this document provide a systematic approach to collecting information and judging how it relates to a specific job. An important step in the process is gathering information from the individual or individuals most knowledgeable about the position. They can assist in identifying the most critical requirements and emphasize what is needed for selection. Step-by-step instructions have been developed to help people knowledgeable about jobs identify and develop critical requirements to include in vacancy announcements. The process also provides a documented record of how the requirements for a particular position were developed.

120 General

121 Scope

The procedures and concepts presented here apply to all EAS positions filled under procedures in Handbook EL-311 (except those filled under the Initial Level Supervisor and Postmaster selection systems) and to other EAS positions covered by selection procedures which reference this handbook.

122 Requirements

Requirements are the criteria by which applicants are measured and selected for positions. When an existing EAS position vacancy is about to be filled, requirements must be established which will be used throughout the selection process including in the review of applications and during interviews. As stated earlier, requirements have already been written for most high incumbency positions and are available from the Human Resources division in your office.

130 Terms and Definitions

131 General

The following terms and definitions are used throughout these guidelines.

131.1 General Terms

131.11 Best Meets. The term “best meets” means the review committee or selecting official should choose an individual whose knowledge, skills, and abilities are of such high quality as to strongly indicate that there is a high probability of successful performance in the position.

131.12 Knowledge, Skill, and Ability (KSA)

a. Knowledge. Learned information possessed by an individual that can be applied directly to the performance of a job task (e.g., knowledge of financial reporting techniques).

b. Skill. A present and observable proficiency to perform a learned physical task, or a proficiency which is acquired through practice (e.g., typing, driving). Normally, skills are not used to refer to requirements for EAS positions.

c. Ability. A present competence to perform a task, or a behavior which results in an observable product, (e.g., ability to prepare reports on financial activities).

Note: Task is defined here as an activity which either may produce a simple product (e.g., a completed report), or may be ongoing (e.g., supervising or planning).

d. KSA. An acronym for knowledge, skill, and ability.

131.2 Specific Terms.

131.21 Selection Consideration Terms

a. Requirements. Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are necessary at entry into the position in order to successfully perform the major duties related to the job. Although degrees are not normally listed as requirements, some positions may include academic degrees, licenses, and training. **Mandatory** educational and certification requirements are determined by Headquarters Office of Selection and Evaluation only or are specified in Headquarters directives. Offices may specify academic degrees in some instances for

highly technical or professional positions EAS-20 or above (see subchapter 524).

b. Special Conditions. Position requirements essential to satisfactory job performance which involve a determination of an applicant’s willingness to meet some need rather than to the applicant’s knowledge or abilities (e.g., willingness to travel frequently; willingness to work irregular hours).

131.22 Other Specific Terms

a. Standard Position Description. Document used for job evaluation purposes which describes the major duties and tasks normally performed by an incumbent in a position. For nonbargaining positions, this information is contained in Handbook EL-202, *Standard Position Descriptions*.

b. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Individuals who are very knowledgeable about the position. Usually SMEs are the managers of the vacant positions and/or incumbents in identical or similar positions.

c. Supervisor/Manager. These terms are used interchangeably throughout this document to refer to someone in the Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) or Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) schedules rather than to someone at a particular level of the organization.

d. Vacancy Announcement. A published document which contains information about a vacant position. The announcement includes the position function, requirements, and, if applicable, special conditions needed to perform the job successfully upon entry into a position. This information is used by applicants, review committee members, and selecting officials.

140 Process Summary

141 Initial Review

141.1 Conducting the Review. Human Resources will provide the manager with the vacancy with two documents: the Standard Position Description and a set of position requirements. The manager, as someone knowledgeable about the vacant position, will determine if the requirements accurately reflect the needs of the position as it is used in his or her unit. The manager’s job knowledge is very important to this process and usually cannot be substituted by that of others less familiar with the position (see 142.1). The manager’s review

will focus on the KSAs needed to perform the duties as shown on the Standard Position Description. For each requirement the manager must ask:

a. Is this KSA related to the duties stated in the Standard Position Description?

b. Is this KSA needed at entry into the position or after a short orientation period, rather than after an extended period in the job or in training?

c. Is this KSA critical or important to successful performance in the position?

d. Is this KSA descriptive of the level or scope of work required?

e. Is this KSA useful for distinguishing between minimally acceptable and superior employees?

f. Are there any major duties which have not been addressed by a KSA?

141.2 Documenting the Review. If no revisions are required, the manager finalizes the process by documenting the review on a Form 8023, *Requirements Worksheet*, (see Exhibit 141.2) and returning it to Human Resources.

142 Need for Changes

142.1 Minor Changes. In most cases the changes needed to a requirement are minor ones limited to updating terminology, etc. Very seldom is there a need to actually change any basic duties or position requirements. Ordinarily, managers make minor changes on their own without any outside assistance. However, if the manager is new to the position, or the vacant position is in a highly technical area and her or his knowledge of the position requirements is limited, then the manager may wish to identify other individuals knowledgeable about the position to provide assistance.

142.2 Extensive Changes. If managers expect changes or additions to requirements to be extensive or to affect a position which is used in several units in addition to their own, they should include several other knowledgeable people in the process.

142.3 Reviewing the Process for Establishing Requirements. This handbook and the accompanying video, *Establishing EAS Requirements (21552-00)*, explain the process for establishing position requirements and outline the principles of requirements development. They should be reviewed by managers with EAS vacancies, those who serve as subject matter experts, and Human Resources staff members who assist them.



Requirements Worksheet

Position Title

I. Documentation of Review

The requirements/special conditions for the subject position have been reviewed and are:

- Accurate as shown on the attached requirements sheet
 Shown on the attached requirements sheet and/or in section 11, below
 Listed in section 11, below

Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Certification of Human Resources Review (Signature)		Title	Date

II. Requirements/Special Conditions

List Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions. Enter the related duty number and check the appropriate boxes. If any box can NOT be checked, consult Handbook EL350 *Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements*.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions	Duty No	Needed at Entry		Important or Critical	Useful for Distinguishing between Minimally Acceptable and Superior Employees

III. Additional/Revised Major Duties of the Position

Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.

Chapter 2

Philosophy of Requirements Development

210 General

211 Responsibility

This handbook is intended for two audiences: managers with position vacancies (here referred to as the manager) and the Human Resources staff (here referred to as the HR specialist) charged with administering nonbargaining-unit selection. While the ultimate stake in good employee selection lies with the manager, human resources management has become sufficiently complex to warrant the involvement of HR specialists who must ensure that: 1) the selection process produces candidates who best meet job requirements; 2) all relevant laws and Postal Service policies are observed; 3) administrative matters are handled efficiently; and 4) the process is fair, both in fact and in appearance.

212 General Approach

The general approach taken toward developing requirements is as follows:

a. Ordinarily, state requirements as knowledge, skills, or abilities (KSAs) needed for successful job performance. Requirements developed under these guidelines should not normally include specific academic degrees, licenses, or certificates. While such credentials may be one way an applicant might demonstrate possession of the necessary KSAs, the goal is to select people who possess current capability to successfully perform on the job, not necessarily those with a degree or certificate. It is better to state the KSAs needed than to state a degree requirement. The same holds for *experience*; it is not the amount of experience, but rather what applicants have gained from their experience, that counts. Therefore, *years of experience* should not be included as a requirement.

b. In some limited instances, it may be useful to include specific academic degrees, licenses, or certificates for professional or technical positions. EAS-20 or above. Degrees are included only when a high level of specialty is needed. Most EAS positions, however, including most EAS-20 and

above positions, will not specify academic degrees, etc.

c. The Organization Management Staffing System (OMSS), Vacancy Announcements option provides requirements for most high incumbent EAS positions.

d. Avoid making arbitrary changes in requirements from one posting to the next and from one installation to another for any given position. However, both the manager and the HR specialist are jointly responsible for producing requirements that accurately reflect the job. Therefore, chapter 4 covers procedures for reviewing and amending existing vacancy announcements to address specific position/installation needs.

e. Chapter 5 provides instructions for writing requirements where no previously developed requirements exist. The procedures create support materials which document requirement development.

f. The information contained in the *Training and Experience* section found in some Standard Position Descriptions is intended for job evaluation purposes, not for selection: therefore, do not use it when developing requirements. Do not use the qualification standards in the obsolete handbooks, EL-302, *Qualification Standards - Nonbargaining-Unit Positions*, or X-118B, *Qualification Standards for Postal Field Service*.

g. When writing requirements, it is important not to alter the function of a position as defined in the Standard Position Description. For example, it would be inappropriate to list as a requirement, *ability to supervise* for a nonsupervisory position. Likewise, *ability to program* is an inappropriate requirement if a position involves only incidental use of computers. Also, never generate requirements to circumvent authorized staffing matrices. When the authorized position does not seem to correspond to the work actually required, contact Human Resources for assistance.

h. The initial decision about who should be involved in developing requirements usually rests with the manager with the vacant position as-

sisted by an HR specialist. Normally, the manager is involved to provide his or her perspective; and in a number of instances, this perspective alone may be sufficient. It is also desirable to seek input from several people knowledgeable about the job. A manager who is unfamiliar with the nature of the job should delegate the task of formulating requirements for it.

i. Since job requirements are used through-out the selection process, it's important to write them to be understood by applicants who respond to them, and review committee members and selecting officials who use them to evaluate the qualifications presented by the applicants.

Chapter 3

Posting Vacancy Announcements

310 Vacancies

311 Determining the Need for Filling a Position

When there is an actual or anticipated vacancy, the managers concerned determine the need for filling it. If the decision is to fill it, the manager with the vacancy and a designee from Human Resources should work expeditiously to finalize the process.

312 Establishing Requirements

Part of the process involves posting an accurate description of the position and its requirements to solicit applications; a vacancy announcement is used for that purpose. The manager and HR specialist must make the following determinations prior to reaching this point:

a. Is there a vacancy announcement which was used in the past and developed according to the present guidelines? If so, the steps outlined in chapter 4 apply; if not, see chapter 5.

b. Are requirements for the position available in OMSS? If so, the steps outlined in chapter 4 apply; if not, see chapter 5.

313 Process Overview

The process of establishing requirements is summarized in Exhibit 313.

320 Automated Vacancy Announcements

321 Using the Automated System

When, as in the majority of cases, offices use the requirements provided in OMSS without amendment, a computer-generated vacancy announcement is produced by the HR specialist. Offices use the system to produce vacancy announcements for EAS positions including Postmaster (inservice) and Initial Level Supervisor position vacancies. However, offices must provide the appropriate application information to applicants when the automated system is used for posting Initial Level Supervisor positions filled under the Candidate List or Individual Application Procedures.

322 When the Automated System Cannot Be Used

If the office must amend the provided requirements, the vacancy announcement is produced manually using Form 990, *Vacancy Announcement*. Requirements are not changed within OMSS. The automated vacancy announcement for Postmaster positions without subordinate career employees cannot be used since factors 6-9 (labor relations, equal employment opportunity, employee development, and supervision) are not appropriate.

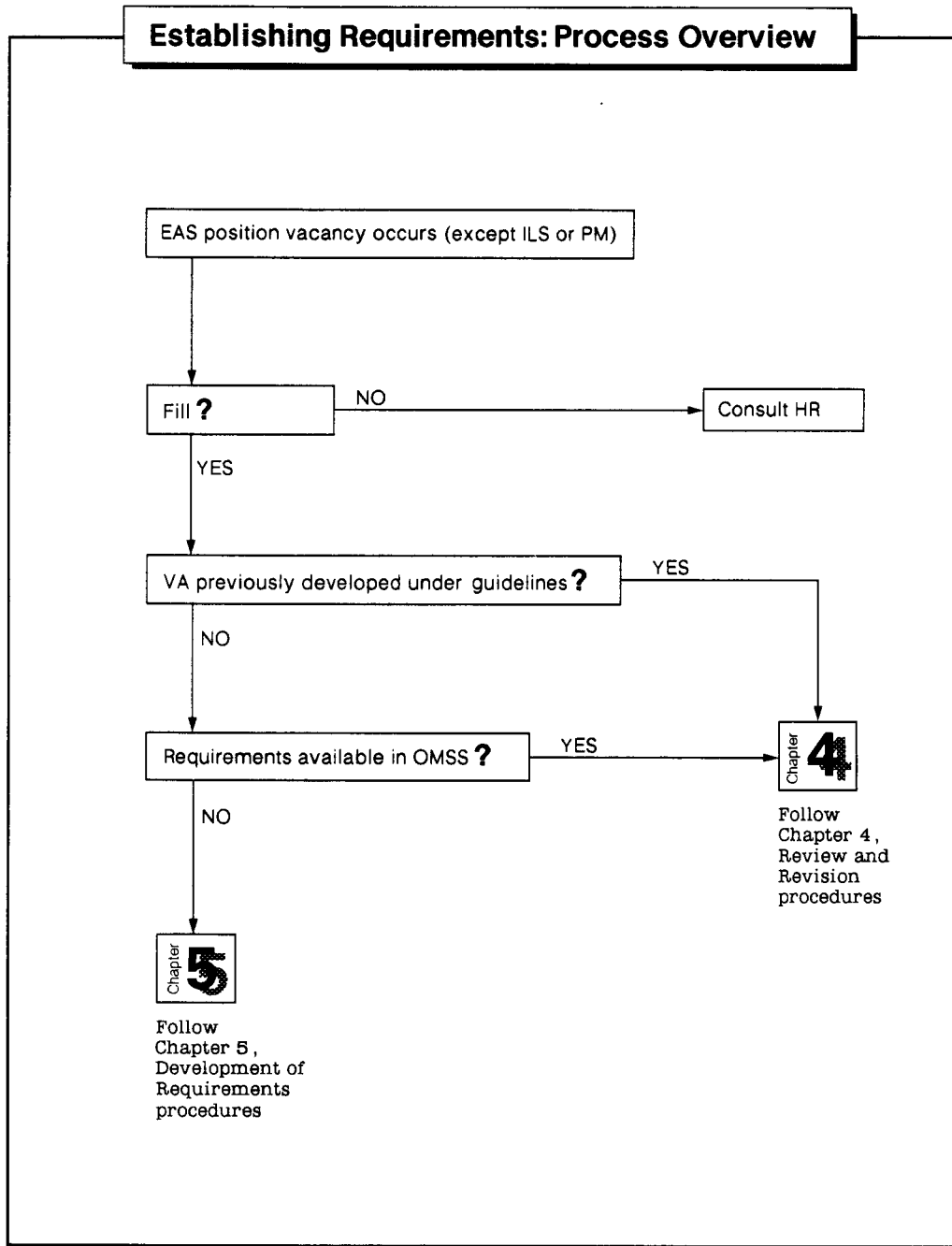


Exhibit 313, Establishing Requirements: Process Overview

Chapter 4

Review and Revision of Existing Requirements

410 General

411 Introduction

In this chapter we will examine the steps taken to review and, if necessary, revise requirements when they are provided in OMSS or are available from a previous vacancy announcement developed under these guidelines. (See Exhibit 411.)

412 No Arbitrary Changes

Refrain from making arbitrary changes in requirements for any given position from one posting to the next. However, in a dynamic organization changes occur in the way installations use a position. This must be reflected in the requirements. The manager with the vacancy is responsible for seeing that the requirements are appropriate and for initiating necessary changes.

420 Requirements Review

421 General

A designee from Human Resources will provide the manager with a copy of the Standard Position Description and the requirements, either previously developed under these guidelines from the office files, or from OMSS. The manager is responsible for initiating the following steps unless otherwise specified.

422 Step 1 - Manager Reviews Current Documents

The manager makes a preliminary review of the requirements and the Standard Position Description to determine if the requirements accurately reflect the needs of the position, or if changes have been made locally to the duties which might affect the requirements. If no revisions are required, the manager may terminate the process by documenting the action in Section I on Form 8023, *Requirements Worksheet*, as shown in Exhibit 422:

423 Step 2 - Identify the Subject Matter Experts

423.1 Manager Only Normally, the manager will serve as the sole SME. As stated earlier in subchapter 140, the need for changes is expected to be rare and, when necessary, will likely be minor, limited to updating terminology rather than actually changing any basic duties or requirements. Therefore, the manager will not normally need assistance unless his or her knowledge of the position is limited, which might be true if the manager was newly promoted or if the vacant position is in a highly technical area. However, the manager has the option of identifying other individuals who are very knowledgeable about the position to serve with him or her as SMEs.

423.2 Additional SMEs If the changes affect a position which is used in more than one unit or additions are expected to be extensive, the manager should involve additional SMEs. (See subchapter 521 for further information on SME identification.)

424 Step 3 - SMEs Review Current Documents

The SMEs should review the requirements in the vacancy announcement in conjunction with their related duties in the Standard Position Description. SMEs should determine if the KSAs are:

- a. Needed at entry? If not, delete.
- b. Important or critical? If not, delete.
- c. Related to one or more duties as stated in the Standard Position Description? If not, rewrite or delete.
- d. Descriptive of the level or scope required? If not, rewrite.
- e. Useful for distinguishing between minimally acceptable and superior employees? If not, rewrite.

425 Step 4 - Establish/Develop Requirements/Special Conditions

The SMEs determine if the established requirements/special conditions are appropriate or if changes are necessary. If the SMEs determine no changes are necessary, they document the re-

view by completing Section I on the Requirements Worksheet. If changes are required, the SMEs should follow the steps outlined in chapter 5, beginning with Step 2, *Identification of Duties*, or Step 3, *Converting Duties to Requirements*, as appropriate.

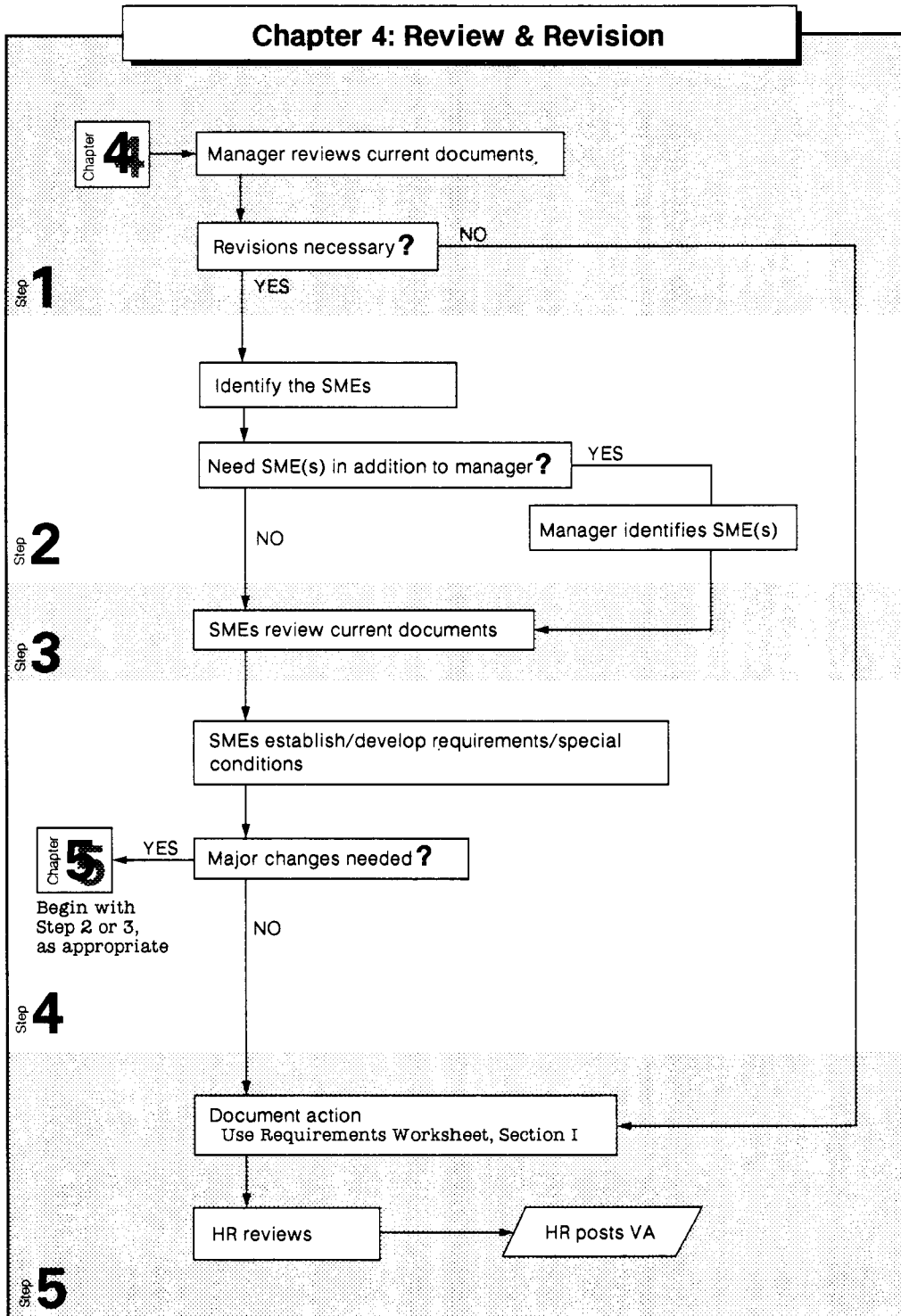


Exhibit 411, Chapter 4: Review and Revision



Requirements Worksheet

Position Title
 Manager, Station/Branch
 Operations

I. Documentation of Review

The requirements/special conditions for the subject position have been reviewed and are:

- Accurate as shown on the attached requirements sheet Shown on the attached requirements sheet and/or in section II, below Listed in section II, below

Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert <i>Thomas Hauser</i> <i>Area Manager, Stations</i>	Date <i>11/17/89</i>	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Certification of Human Resources Review (Signature)		Title	Date

II. Requirements/Special Conditions

List Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions. Enter the related duty number and check the appropriate boxes. If any box can NOT be checked, consult Handbook EL-350, *Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements*.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions	Duty No.	Needed at Entry	Important or Critical	Useful for Distinguishing between Minimally Acceptable and Superior Employees

III. Additional/Revised Major Duties of the Position

Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.

Chapter 5

Developing Requirements

510 Introduction

520 Steps Needed

In this chapter we will examine the steps taken to develop requirements when none are currently available. Unless otherwise specified, the manager is responsible for initiating these steps. (See Exhibit 520.)

521 Step 1 - Identify the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

521.1 Managers as SMEs The manager with the vacancy normally serves as a SME. If the manager needs assistance, she or he may identify other individuals knowledgeable about the position--usually incumbents in identical or similar positions--to work with her or him. Managers who feel that they do not have sufficient knowledge about the position to serve as SMEs should not serve in this capacity.

521.2 Representative Group as SMEs. When the vacancy involves a position found in more than one unit or on more than one tour in the office and would be supervised by different managers (e.g., General Supervisor), then the manager with the vacancy should contact the HR specialist for help to identify a representative group from those areas to serve as SMEs. In this way a single set of requirements can be developed for use in all future related vacancies. The manager should then seek assistance from management at the appropriate organizational level to arrange to make such a representative group available.

521.3 Additional SMEs. If the manager wishes to use additional SMEs but an adequate number is not immediately available, the manager should advise the HR specialist. The HR specialist will assist the manager by identifying persons from other units who are knowledgeable about the position; in some instances, by identifying recent past incumbents of the position. The area from which SMEs are selected should not be expanded beyond that from which individuals are likely to

know how the position is used in the unit/office with the vacancy. If no other SMEs are available, the manager may proceed as the sole SME.

522 Step 2- Identify Duties of the Position

522.1 Use Standard Position Description. The HR specialist will provide the manager with a copy of the current Standard Position Description for the position. Appendix A1 is an example of a Standard Position Description for the position, Supervisor, Accounting, EAS-16.

522.2 Review Duties Listed. SMEs should review the duties listed in the Standard Position Description and come to a positive consensus on the answers to the following questions:

- a. Will the person actually perform this duty on the job?
- b. Is the duty performed as stated?
- c. Is this a major duty of the job, one which is considered essential or which will take up a significant portion of the person's total effort?
- d. Is the duty one which must be performed upon assignment to the job rather than one which can be learned later?
- e. Have all major duties been addressed?

522.3 Relevant Duties Only. SMEs should not spend time considering obsolete duties, those not a major part of the job, or those duties not required upon entry into the position. If a specific duty is no longer performed as stated, it should be rewritten. If most of the duties outlined in the Standard Position Description do not reflect those which would be performed on the job and there would be a need to make major changes in the position description, the manager should consult the HR specialist before proceeding.

522.4 Making Changes. While reviewing duties listed in the Standard Position Description, the SMEs should mark those duties which, by consensus, were eliminated, adding a brief explanation on the document itself. Additional or

rewritten duties are recorded on Form 8023, *Requirements Worksheet* in section III. These should not alter the function of the position (see 212g).

523 Step 3 - Convert Duties to Requirements

523.1 Needed Requirements. Once the SMEs have agreed on the major duties of the position, they must also agree on what the performance of those duties requires. We call these needs *requirements*. Requirements, written as knowledge, skill, or ability statements, will communicate to applicants, the review committee, and the selecting official the requirements upon which they should base their selection.

523.2 General Procedures for Writing Requirements Statements

523.21 Duty - KSA Relationship Example. Review the duties outlined in the Standard⁷ Position Description in Appendix A1 and the requirements identified in Appendix A2 for the position, Supervisor, Accounting EAS-16. Notice the relationship between the duties and the requirements, and that the requirements are written as KSAs.

523.22 Knowledge and Ability Statements

523.221 Knowledge. Knowledge is defined as **learned information** possessed by an individual that can be applied directly to the performance of a job task (subchapter 130). Knowledge statements specify areas of course work, academic disciplines, and technical training, or regulations, policies, or procedures. In our Supervisor, Accounting example (see Appendix A2) the following knowledge statements are included as requirements:

- a. Knowledge of accounting, budget consolidation and monitoring, reporting and banking of cash receipts, and timekeeping.
- b. Knowledge of financial policies and procedures.

523.222 Ability. Ability is defined as a present competence to perform a task or a behavior which results in an observable product (see subchapter 130). Ability is **not** defined as capacity to learn. The following ability statements in the example (see Appendix A2) define present competence to perform an activity:

- a. Ability to perform accounting studies and prepare reports on financial activity.
- b. Ability to supervise accounting technicians and clerical employees.

523.223 How to Write Knowledge and Ability Statements

a. Write a knowledge statement when proficiency in the job requires a specific body of knowledge. In our requirements system, a knowledge statement is always evaluated with reference to the vacant position. This means that applicants considered to have met the knowledge requirement must have demonstrated the knowledge at the level of difficulty to be used in the job.

b. Write ability statements to cover whatever activities must be performed successfully in the job. In our requirements system, abilities are written geared to position duties; therefore, it is not necessary to break down an ability into its smaller underlying knowledge and ability components. For example, if *ability to use a personal computer* is a requirement, the requirement would state that only. It would not list knowledge of computer science, and skill and ability statements to cover each separate facet of computer operations (e.g., start up, data entry, log off, etc.). Ability, like knowledge, is always considered at the level of difficulty required for the vacant position.

c. Never write knowledge and abilities to cover the same requirements and, never combine them.

Don't write: Ability to prepare reports on financial activities, **and** knowledge of financial activity reporting techniques. Instead write: Ability to prepare reports on financial activities, or knowledge of financial activity reporting techniques.

Don't write: Knowledge of and ability to perform complex accounting studies. Instead write: Ability to perform accounting studies.

523.23 Skill Statements. Because the definition of skill includes proficiency to perform a learned physical task, avoid using skill statements when writing requirements for EAS positions. Even though in some Postal Service contexts skill is frequently used interchangeably with ability, when writing **nonbargaining** requirements, use ability as the preferred term. Instead of writing *skill in*

Requirements - Postal Accounting Specialist, EAS-17

Knowledge of general and cost accounting practices.
 Ability to prepare and review reports, maintain financial records, and make and record deposits and component transactions.
 Knowledge of postal computer-based operations, financial, and recording systems.
 Ability to administer policies and procedures as they apply to payroll, purchases, and expenditures.
 Ability to instruct employees in accounting procedures.
 Ability to convey technical procedural information to technical and nontechnical employees.

b. After reviewing the level 17 requirements, the SMEs agree that the same requirements are appropriate for the Senior Postal Accounting Specialist position. However, the level 17 requirements alone would not cover all the level 19 position duties. Duties 3, 5, and 6 of the vacant Senior position would still not have been addressed. The SMEs could complete their requirements by adding three additional KSAs to cover those duties:

For Duty 3 - Ability to direct the collection and processing of statistical information.
 For Duty 5 - Ability to maintain control accounts.
 For Duty 6 - Ability to coordinate personnel and records maintenance systems.

c. To document their work SMEs record the three KSAs they wrote on a Requirements Worksheet in Section H with the numbers of the duty statements to which they relate, complete Section I, and attach a copy of the requirements for Postal Accounting Specialist, EAS-17 (see Appendix B2) from which the remaining requirements were *lifted* (see Exhibit 523.32c).

523.33 Appropriate Language. In some cases, KSAs for related positions may be similar in concept, but the language may not be appropriate for the requirement under development. For example, incumbents in both the Manager, Labor Relations (A), EAS-20 and the Labor Relations Assistant (Field), EAS-16 positions might need knowledge of collective-bargaining procedures. However, the KSA, *ability to manage local nego-*

tations on a Divisionwide basis including preparing management position statements, proposals, and counter proposals, which appears in the manager position would not be appropriate to *lift* for use in the Assistant position which has no Divisionwide responsibilities. SMEs should keep the function, scope, and level of the position in mind to assure that requirements language borrowed from other jobs is appropriate. It may be necessary to rewrite some of the KSAs to make them more appropriately fit the vacant position.

523.4 Use Modifiers

523.41 Purpose. Often the level of the KSA will need to be clarified to provide a better understanding of the actual requirements of the position. To do this, use *modifiers* such as those in the following formats:

Knowledge of sufficient to
 Knowledge of ... as it applies to ...
 Knowledge of including ...
 Ability to ... such as ...
 Ability to ... as it relates to ...

523.42 Example. The KSA, *knowledge of financial management functions* can be clarified by using a modifier, such as *knowledge of financial management functions including accounting, budget preparation and consolidation, and information systems operation*. Also consider the requirement, *ability to communicate orally and in writing*. This ability might be included for both the positions of Procurement Specialist, Senior, EAS-19 and Public Affairs Officer, EAS-18. However, the needs of the two positions are quite different; therefore, the use of a modifier would be helpful. In the example below, notice how we were able to indicate the level or scope of the KSA required by listing examples of the things that needed to be done or needed to be known, thus fixing the complexity or depth of knowledge or ability required.

oral and written communication, write ability to communicate orally and in writing sufficient to

523.24 Putting Together KSAs

a. Keep the definitions of the terms in mind. This will help to phrase requirements statements correctly.

b. Each KSA should relate to one or more duties. The following examples were selected from various positions which show the relationship of KSAs to duty statements.

Example 1

Duty: Investigates and resolves commercial/government customer mailing problems and irregularities for assigned accounts to ensure protection of revenue and reduce operating costs.

KSA: Ability to analyze customer mailing problems.

Example 2

Duty: Provides local input into the review of plans and specifications for the construction, modification, installation, and purchase of facilities, equipment, and supplies to ensure conformance with safety regulatory codes or standards and recommends changes where necessary.

KSA: Ability to inspect and evaluate work, storage, and service areas, and equipment for hazardous conditions and unsafe practices,

Example 3

Whenever possible, use a single KSA to include several duties:

Duties: Directs a quality control program for the MSC area ensuring that national and regional programs are implemented. Directs programs to identify delivery, mail processing, and transportation requirements for the MSC area; coordinates the development of the MSC operating plan. Directs the address information system programs for the MSC area supporting ZIP code programs and the Carrier Route Information System for the MSC office and subordinate associate offices.

KSA: Ability to direct quality control, logistics, address information, and operations analysis programs,

c. Notice that the KSAs summarize what is needed to perform the duties and the duties define the specifics of the KSAs. Adding the word *knowledge* or *ability* at the beginning of a duty statement does not make it a KSA statement. A well-written KSA statement states the qualifications an applicant must possess in order to perform one or more duties.

523.3 Getting Started

523.31 Review Similar or Related Positions

When developing requirements, it is best to start by reviewing requirements for similar positions contained in the Organization Management Staffing System (OMSS). Similar or related positions, identified by occupation codes, may contain knowledge and ability statements which are appropriate for the requirements under development. Your Human Resources section can print out copies of requirements for similar positions for your use.

523.32 Example. Consider the following example:

Suppose a group of SMEs needed to develop requirements for the position Postal Accounting Specialist, Senior, EAS-19, occupation code 0510-5046 (see Appendix B1). OMSS contains requirements for the position, Accounting Services Specialist, EAS-17, which has a closely related occupation code: 0510-5045.

Procurement Specialist - Ability to communicate orally and in writing sufficient to prepare statements of work, conduct preproposal conferences, and specify contract language.

Public Affairs Officer - Ability to communicate orally and in writing sufficient to express thoughts and ideas to a variety of people; to prepare written releases for the news media; to write newsletters, speeches, and scripts; and to make verbal presentations and speeches.

523.5 Language to Avoid

523.51 Abstract Modifiers. When writing knowledge or ability statements, don't use language which detracts from an understanding of the level or scope required. Avoid using modifiers such as, **basic, some, in-depth, or graduate-level understanding of.** Instead use modifiers in the format shown in 523.41 and below.

Example:

Don't write - Some knowledge of employee benefit programs.

Instead - Knowledge of employee benefit programs sufficient to conduct retirement counseling and process claims for retirement; and health, disability, and life insurance.

523.52 Synonyms. Don't use synonyms for knowledge or 'ability, such as **understanding of, familiarity with, or capacity to.** The terms, knowledge, skill, and ability have commonly understood definitions in personnel selection while other synonyms do not.

Example:

Don't write - Familiarity with microcomputers.

Instead - Knowledge of microcomputers, including installation, operation, security, and maintenance as they relate to data collection operations.

523.53 Degrees or Certificates. Avoid using academic degrees, certificates, licenses, or training as requirements. It is better to state what you

want the person to have learned rather than merely listing a degree. (See Step 4 in section 524 for further information.)

Example

Don't write - Bachelor's degree in Personnel Management.

Instead - Knowledge of personnel management including selection methods, wage and salary administration; and benefit, suggestion, and employee award programs.

Knowledge of personnel-related laws and regulations.

523.54 Experience. Don't require years of experience; time does not ensure that the knowledge or ability has been acquired.

Example:

Don't write - Two years' experience in administration of safety policy and procedures.

Instead - Ability to administer safety policies and procedures.

523.55 Example. Returning to our Supervisor, Accounting example, we see that each duty was addressed by a KSA; some KSAs address more than one duty:

PD Duty #	Requirement
1	Ability to supervise accounting technicians and clerical employees,
2,8	Ability to perform complex accounting studies and prepare reports on financial activity.
3 - 7,8	Knowledge of accounting, budget consolidation and monitoring, reporting and banking of cash receipts, and timekeeping.
3 - 8	Knowledge of financial policies and procedures.

523.6 KSAs for Management Abilities

523.61 Use a Generic Ability Statement. In most cases, when writing KSAs for management abilities, requirements need to include no more than a generic managerial ability statement: *Ability to manage, including planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring the work of people, programs, or projects to meet organizational goals.* While requirements should always be geared to the specific vacancy, you should avoid including long lists of components within the requirement. When we speak of management within our system, we include several dimensions of management ability which might be grouped into three different aspects: structuring/organizing, establishing effective work relationships, and communicating.

523.62 Management Dimensions. When ability to manage or supervise is listed as a requirement, evaluators will consider these three dimensions and, depending on the position duties, all or part of their integral components as included in the requirement:

a. Structuring/Organizing.

(1) Actively establish an appropriate course of action for self and others to make effective use of resources and accomplish organizational goals, adjusting to emergencies.

(2) Identify problems and possible interrelationships, secure relevant information, and identify possible causes of problems.

(3) Develop and weigh alternative solutions to problems, evaluate courses of action, foresee their effects, and make logical decisions.

(4) Follow up on activities to see that they are on time, within budget, and that positive results are achieved.

(5) Make innovations in procedures or work methods, originate constructive action, invest time and effort to ensure a high quality product, take the calculated risk to go beyond conventional solutions to get a better result, and set and maintain high standards for quality work.

b. Establishing Effective Work Relationships. Ability to get things done through people, including:

(1) Support the boss's mission and represent the unit at the next higher management level.

(2) Engage in teamwork with other managers in the same functional area.

(3) Maintain effective relationships with clients and customers, both internal and external to the Postal Service.

(4) Deal with those who supervise smaller units or who are directly performing the unit's work so that they function effectively as individuals and as a team.

(5) Act on policies and programs, including EEO, Affirmative Action, EI/QWL, Management by Participation, and Safety and Health, that help maintain an equitable and safe working environment.

(6) Motivate and lead employees of varied backgrounds and with varied skill levels.

(7) Assign work to appropriate personnel at the proper time, with authority necessary to achieve objectives and accomplish tasks, encourage decisions to be made at the lowest possible level, involving employees in decisions which affect them.

(8) Conduct operations in a way that reflects responsiveness to superiors, peers, and subordinates.

(9) Maintain cooperative labor-management relations.

(10) Get ideas accepted, guide others to accomplish tasks and achieve objectives.

(11) Provide honest performance feedback; positive recognition for individuals and work groups that perform well; train and develop subordinates, including coaching and providing opportunities for individual challenge and accomplishment; and use effective discipline.

(22) Handle interpersonal conflicts, encourage teamwork within the unit and with other units.

c. Communicating.

(1) Communicate information and instructions in writing to achieve desired results.

(2) Communicate oral information in individual or group situations.

(3) Present technical information at a level of complexity appropriate to the audience.

(4) Facilitate information flow within the organization unit.

523.7 KSAs for Human Relations and Communications

523.71 When Separate Statements Are Not Used.

As shown in 523.62, when managerial ability is considered, establishing effective work relationships and communicating are part of that ability; additional requirements related to those dimensions are not listed on the vacancy announcement. The applicant's demonstration of the human relations and communications aspects of the listed KSAs are considered. Separate human relations and communications requirements are not used unless they are significant for, and specific to, a particular position. The phrase, *well-developed human relations and communications abilities*, and similar general statements, are not used.

523.72 When Separate Statements Are Used.

When a particular aspect of human relations or communications relates to the essence of one or more position duties (e.g., written and oral communication ability for Manager, Public and Employee Communications), then a requirement is written for inclusion on the vacancy announcement. Modifiers are used to make it clear what specific kind of human relations or communications ability is needed in the job. Examples of the appropriate use of modifiers is found in 523.42.

523.8 Use KSAs for Major Functions

523.81 Include KSAs for Major Duties Only. It is not necessary to include a KSA for every single duty the individual is likely to perform. KSAs are included to cover major duties only, those that are essential for successful job performance. Remember, each applicant must be evaluated by the review committee or selecting official on each KSA listed. It is not necessary or feasible to devote time evaluating qualifications for unimportant, seldom performed duties.

523.82 Address All Major Duties. SMEs should continue to write KSAs until each of the major duties identified has been addressed. The KSAs developed are recorded on the Requirements Worksheet in Section II with the numbers of the duty statements to which they relate and the appropriate columns checked. The last column is not checked for typing and driving requirements.

523.9 Typing and Driving Requirements

523.91 When Mandatory. Typing or driving is required for some EAS positions. Typing or driving requirements developed by the Office of Selection and Evaluation which are included in OMSS **must** be included in the final vacancy announcement for these positions without amendment.

523.92 When Optional. In some cases the ability to type or drive may be essential to the performance of the duties of positions at specific locations, but has not been included in the OMSS requirements. Managers may add 1) Postal Service Test 712 (Typing), 2) Postal Service Test 714 (Simplified Typing), 3) Postal Service Test 713 (Incidental Typing), and/or 4) as a driving requirement, OF-346, *U.S. Government Motor Vehicle Operator's Identification Card*.

523.93 Test 712. Postal Service Test 712 must be used when the kind of typing which will be performed is straight text such as letters or reports. When this test is added as a requirement, include the following statement in the vacancy announcement:

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to type 45 net words per minute in a 5-minute test. This must be demonstrated by successful completion of Postal Service Test 712. Certificates of proficiency are not acceptable.

523.94 Test 714. Postal Service Test 714 must be used when the kind of typing performed is data entry or typing on forms. When this test is added as a requirement, include the following information in the vacancy announcement:

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to type 30 correct lines within 10 minutes by successful completion of Postal Service Test 714. Certificates of proficiency are not acceptable.

523.95 Test 713. Postal Service Test 713 must be used for all other typing applications. When this test is added as a requirement, include the following information in the vacancy announcement:

Applicants must demonstrate the ability to type 30 words per minute for 5 minutes with no more than two errors by successfully completing Postal Service Test 713. Certificates of proficiency are not acceptable.

523.96 OF-346. If driving is added as a requirement, include the following information in the vacancy announcement, as appropriate to the position:

Applicants must have or be able to obtain a valid OF-346 to operate a motor vehicle.

or

Applicants must have or be able to obtain a valid OF-346 to operate powered industrial equipment.

524 Step 4 - Record Educational Requirements

524.1 Degrees

524.11 When Degrees Are Not Necessary. Normally academic degrees, certificates, licenses, and training should not be included as requirements. It is better to state what you want the person to have learned rather than merely list a degree.

Example

Don't write - Bachelor's degree in Personnel Management.

Instead - Knowledge of personnel management including selection methods; wage and salary administration; and benefit, suggestion, and employee award programs. Knowledge of personnel-related laws and regulations.

524.12 When Degrees Are Necessary. In the case of some highly technical or professional positions (EAS 20 or above), it may be useful to include advanced academic degrees, etc. However, it is not intended that every level 20 or above position should include a degree. Nor when used, is it intended that broad areas of study or degree levels without a field of study be shown. Degrees in Business Administration and MBAs are too broad in scope to show an essential need related to job duties. If you cannot name a specific area of study which would be useful, then you probably do not need to include a degree.

Don't write - Degree in Business Administration.

Don't write - Degree in Finance, Business Administration, or a closely related subject.

Don't write - MBA.

Don't write - Masters Degree in Mathematics, Economics, or Business Administration.

Don't write - Masters Degree.

Instead - Masters Degree in Mathematics.

524.13 For EAS-20 and Above Positions Only. Remember, degrees may be included for EAS-20 and above positions only; requests for exceptions must be addressed to the Director, Office of Selection and Evaluation. Degrees and licenses included in OMSS by the Office of Selection and Evaluation **MUST** be included in the final vacancy announcement without amendment and are considered **mandatory** for selection. Head Occupational Health Nurse and Industrial Engineer are examples of positions which carry a mandatory degree or licensing requirement. These will appear in the *Requirements* section of the vacancy announcement.

524.14 Degrees Added by Managers/SMEs. The mandatory requirement described above for degrees found in OMSS is not applied to degrees added by the manager/SMEs. Local degree requirements indicate the need for a particular discipline which includes a recognized course of study. However, the same breadth and depth of professional development implied by completion of a formal academic program may have been obtained by some applicants in less formal ways, through professional training and experience. Such applicants should also be considered. De-

grees added by the manager/SMEs should be placed in the *Education* section of the vacancy announcement by Human Resources.

525 Step 5- Record Special Conditions

A few essential needs of a position cannot be accurately reflected with knowledge or ability statements. For example, suppose one of the duties of a position required the incumbent to visit operations in various locations throughout an MSC or Division. Applicants should be alerted about this frequent travel condition on the posting. However, using the KSA *ability to travel* would not truly reflect the need. An applicant might certainly possess the ability to travel, but not the willingness to do so; therefore, normally Special Conditions are written to relate to the applicant's willingness to perform a duty or task. Special Conditions are also recorded on the Requirements Worksheet in Section II (as shown in Exhibit 523.32 c); however, the last column is not checked:

526 Step 6 - Finalization of Requirements/Special Conditions

526.1 Determining the Number of KSAs. The SMEs should have produced some number of KSA statements. While the right number of KSAs is whatever number is needed to accurately describe the needs of the position, generally five to ten should be sufficient. It is difficult for applicants to address more than that on the application form and also difficult for the review committee to evaluate more. On the other hand, one or two KSAs alone may not provide adequate information about the position for the applicants or the review committee.

526.2 Reviewing Requirements and Special Conditions. SMEs should review each requirement and special condition by asking the following questions about each:

- a. Required for the position and related to a duty? If not, rewrite or delete it.
- b. Needed at entry? If not, delete it.
- c. Important or critical? If not, delete it.
- d. Descriptive of the level or scope required? If not, rewrite.
- e. Useful for distinguishing between minimally acceptable and superior employees? If not, rewrite.

526.3 Using the Requirements Worksheet for Review. Form 8023, the *Requirements Worksheet*, provides columns in Section II to assist SMEs in their review of the KSAs and special conditions they develop. For each requirement listed, the SMEs should be able to enter a related duty number (from the Standard Position Description) and check all three columns on the form (see Exhibit 523.32c). If this cannot be done, then the requirement is not written properly. However, KSAs for typing and driving and special conditions are not checked for their usefulness for distinguishing between minimally acceptable and superior employees. They distinguish between the minimally acceptable and unacceptable employees.

526.4 Checklist and Case Studies. A checklist is provided in Appendix C to help managers ensure that the necessary steps were followed and development considerations were addressed. Case Studies are also provided as Appendices D through J to assist managers in the use of these concepts.

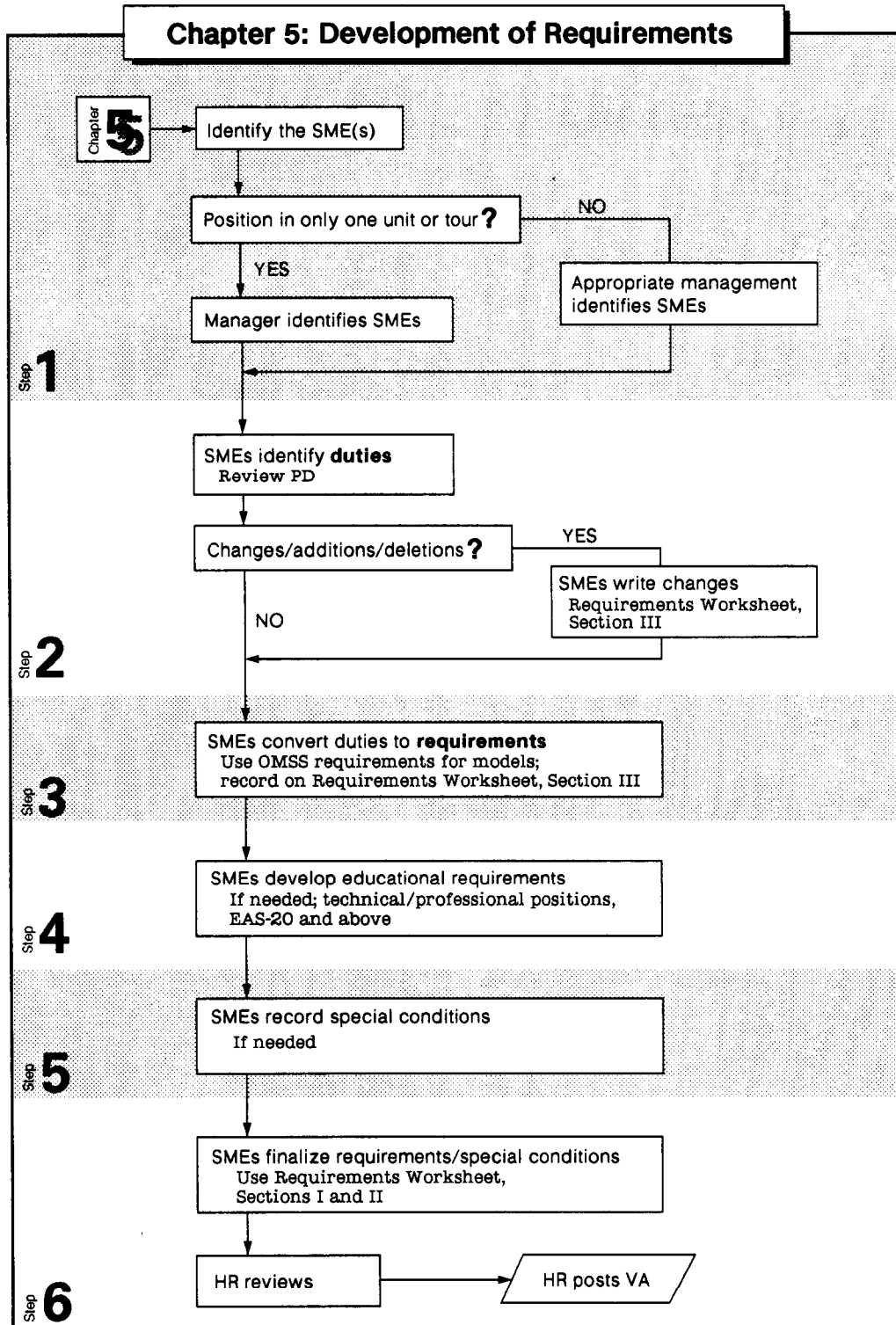


Exhibit 520, Development of Requirements



Requirements Worksheet

Position Title
**Postal Accounting Specialist,
 Senior, EAS-19**

I. Documentation of Review

The requirements/special conditions for the subject position have been reviewed and are:

- Accurate as shown on the attached requirements sheet Shown on the attached requirements sheet and/or in section II, below Listed in section II, below

Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date	Signature/Title of Subject Matter Expert	Date
Certification of Human Resources Review (Signature)		Title	Date

II. Requirements/Special Conditions

List Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions. Enter the related duty number and check the appropriate boxes. If any box can NOT be checked, consult Handbook EL-350, *Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements*.

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities/Special Conditions	Duty No.	Needed at Entry	Important or Critical	Useful for Distinguishing between Minimally Acceptable and Superior Employees
Ability to direct the collection and processing of statistical information.	3	✓	✓	✓
Ability to maintain assets and accounts.	5	✓	✓	✓
Ability to coordinate personnel and records maintenance systems.	6	✓	✓	✓
Willingness to travel frequently.	1	✓	✓	

III. Additional/Revised Major Duties of the Position

Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.
Duty Statement	Duty No.

PS Form 8023, August 1989

Exhibit 523.32c, Form 8023, *Requirements Worksheet*

Chapter 6 Documentation

610 HR Review

The HR specialist must review Form 8023, *Requirements Worksheet*, prepared by the SMEs for compliance with these guidelines. The HR specialist should assure that:

- a. The SMEs' competence, credibility, and tenure is such as to suggest the legitimate use of their service as SMEs.
- b. The requirements produced have not altered the basic function of the position as defined in the Standard Position Description.
- c. Requirements and special conditions are written in the proper formats.
- d. The KSAs show a relationship to the duties specified.
- e. The KSAs use *modifiers* as needed to clarify meaning and to convey level or scope.
- f. The requirements are written so as to be understood by applicants, review committees, and selecting officials.
- g. A Form 8023 has been completed by the SMEs including Section I, Documentation of Review.

620 Resolution of Discrepancies

Bring any discrepancies to the attention of the manager who will coordinate their resolution assisted by the HR specialist, as necessary. All discrepancies must be resolved before posting the position.

630 Vacancy Announcements

Human Resources will use the Requirements Worksheet to prepare the vacancy announcement. KSAs and special conditions should be included in the vacancy announcement within the appropriate section. Academic degrees, licenses, or testing requirements which are included in OMSS requirements for any position **MUST** be included in the final posting without amendment.

640 Records

These procedures have been designed to provide a record of requirement development. Human Resources is the custodian of these records. The Requirements Worksheet should be placed in the Vacancy File as established in Handbook EL-311, *Personnel Operations* (formerly P-11). (Headquarters and Headquarters facilities may follow past practices.) Human Resources may also wish to maintain a file of locally developed requirements for use in future vacancies as outlined in chapter 5.

Appendices

STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTION**U.S. POSTAL SERVICE****Supervisor, Accounting, EAS-16****Functional Purpose**

Supervises and oversees the general accounting functions of a very large complex MSC or similar size organization, including account maintenance, financial report generation, payroll adjustments, and related finance activities.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Supervises accounting technicians and clerical employees performing general accounting and budget consolidation/monitoring activities, including work scheduling, performance review, and training.
2. Performs complex accounting studies and oversees the preparation of routine and special reports on the status of a variety of accounts.
3. Supervises review of travel and purchase vouchers for correctness and certifies for payments within authority, or forwards to designated approving official with recommendation.
4. Supervises the manual (nonPSDS) timekeeping activities for the MSC.
5. Assists in the consolidation of the MSC operating and capital expense budgets for review and approval by the Field Division; monitors specified portions of the approved budget to ensure expenditures do not exceed budget limits.
6. Oversees and coordinates the centralized reporting and banking of cash receipts for the office and area.
7. Interprets, applies, and oversees the application of national finance policies and procedures.
8. Reviews and summarizes reports reflecting daily financial statements, deposits, and composite transactions.
9. Has occasional contact with representatives of financial institutions and auditors.
10. Exercises supervisory responsibility for the normal protective care of equipment and materials used; supervises maintenance of asset accounts.
11. Takes personnel actions for, and supervises a medium size group of accounting technicians and clerical employees.
12. Provides technical guidance to employees engaged in accounting-type activities.
13. Exercises a normal regard for the safety of self and others, with particular emphasis for ensuring employee compliance with established safety policies and procedures.

Supervision

Manager, Accounting and Budget (V).

Work Environment

A normal office environment.

Supervisor, Accounting, EAS-16

Requirements

1. Knowledge of accounting, budget consolidation and monitoring, reporting and banking of cash receipts, and timekeeping.
2. Knowledge of financial policies and procedures.
3. Ability to perform accounting studies and prepare reports on financial activity,
4. Ability to supervise technicians and clerical employees.

Selection Method

See Handbook EL-311, Section 540 - Selection Policies for Nonbargaining Positions.

Selection Requirements

PS 991

STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTIONU.S. POSTAL SERVICE

Postal Accounting Specialist, Senior EAS-19

Functional Purpose

Oversees and coordinates the timekeeping, general, and cost accounting systems for a large Field Division.

Operational Requirements

This position is for use in a large Field Division 1.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Oversees the accounting, cost accounting, and control functions of a Division.
2. Plans, organizes, and maintains work schedules; establishes work priorities; and resolves related problems.
3. Oversees and coordinates accounting systems to provide accurate, timely, and relevant operating support information to managers.
4. Coordinates and oversees the verification of general accounting reports from organizations.
5. Oversees the maintenance and balancing of control accounts reflecting items such as accountable paper inventories, cash reserves, and capital assets.
6. Works with the Postal Data Center concerning problems in the areas of data system, payroll actions, employees' equipment allowances, and capital property.
7. Conducts special studies in connection with accounting, cost accounting, or finance functions.
8. Trains accounting office employees, ensuring that they are familiar with accounting policy and procedures.
9. Has occasional contact with vendors regarding accounts payable/receivable and with managers of financial institutions.
10. May supervise the activities of a medium sized group of technical and clerical accounting employees.
11. Provides technical assistance on accounting, cost accounting, and control activities to functional and operational employees in the Division.
12. Exercises a normal regard for the safety of self and others, with particular emphasis for ensuring employee compliance with established safety policies and procedures.

Supervision

Manager, Accounting Services (B).

Work Environment

A normal office environment.

Postal Accounting Specialist, EAS-17

Requirements

1. Knowledge of general and cost accounting practices.
2. Ability to review reports, maintain records, and make and record deposits and component transactions.
3. Knowledge of postal computer-based operations, financial, and recording systems.
4. Ability to administer policies and procedures related to payroll, purchases, and expenditures.
5. Ability to instruct employees in accounting procedures.
6. Ability to convey technical procedural information to nontechnical employees.

Selection Method

See Handbook EL-311, Section 540 - Selection Policies For Nonbargaining Positions.

Selection Requirements

PS 991

Requirements Development/Procedure Checklists

The following checklists are suggested for use by managers with EAS vacancies who are developing requirements, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who assist them, and Human Resources employees who review the total process. The checklists highlight steps in the process and some concepts that are particularly important.

		Situation 1			Situation 2
_____	Step 1	Manager identifies an EAS vacancy (nonILS, nonPostmaster) which needs to be filled.	_____	Step 1	Manager identifies an EAS vacancy (nonILS, non PM) which needs to be filled.
_____	Step 2	Manager reviews Standard Position Description and requirements provided by HR.	_____	Step 2	Manager reviews Standard Position Description and requirements provided by HR.
_____	Step 3	If changes are not needed, manager completes process by documenting the review on Requirements Worksheet.	_____	Step 3	If changes are needed, manager decides to process either as sole SME or involve other SMEs.
_____	Step 4	Manager forwards Worksheet to HR for review.	_____	Step 4	SMEs review requirements for closely related positions.
_____	Step 5	HR posts the vacancy announcement.	_____	Step 5	SMEs develop KSAs/Special Conditions for vacancy.
			_____	Step 6	SMEs complete Requirements Worksheet using Section II to check appropriateness of inclusions,
			_____	Step 7	SMEs forward Worksheet to HR for review,
			_____	Step 8	HR posts the vacancy announcement

Yes	No*	
_____	_____	Do the duties shown in the standard position description accurately reflect those performed in the position?
_____	_____	Are requirements written as knowledge or ability statements?
_____	_____	Have KSA statements been written without adjectives, such as extensive, in-depth, basic, etc.?
_____	_____	Has the pat phrase <i>Well developed human relations and communications skills</i> been eliminated and replaced, if necessary, by more communicative KSA statements?
_____	_____	Have requirements been written as KSAs without including experience or educational degree requirements?
_____	_____	Have requirements been limited to 5-10 KSAs related to the major duties of the position?
_____	_____	Has a Requirements Worksheet been completed and signed by the manager with the vacancy, and by other SMEs if used?
_____	_____	Have all Section II columns on the Worksheet been completed if changes or additions were made to the provided requirements? (If the addition was a typing or driving requirement, or a special condition, was the <i>distinguishing</i> column not checked?)

* If you answered **no** to any of these questions, modifications are necessary. Consult this handbook or your Human Resources section if you need assistance.

Case Study - Training Specialist Appropriate Amendment of Requirements

Joyce Woodard has a Training Specialist, EAS-14 position vacant in her training unit. She knows that since the hours she has assigned to the job are at night, the person filling the position will be concentrating on mail processing related training, particularly MPLSM training. Joyce has reviewed the requirement; available from the Organization Management Staffing System (OMSS):

Requirements - Training Specialist, EAS-14

1. Knowledge of postal training and development policies and procedures.
2. Ability to administer instructional programs, including diagnostic tests.
3. Ability to explain and sell ideas and to convey training-related information.
4. Ability to counsel employees on training matters.
5. Ability to schedule use of the training facilities and equipment.

While she agrees with the stated requirements, she also wants to make it clear to potential applicants and the review committee that she must have someone who is knowledgeable about mail processing and MPLSM programs. Therefore, she adds the requirement, *knowledge of mail processing related training programs, including MPLSM training*.

By adding this knowledge, Joyce hopes to attract both present training technicians who work with mail processing programs and MPLSM operators. She reasons that operators would have gained knowledge of the training program through their participation in it and may have acquired the remaining KSAs in a variety of ways, including serving as on-the-job instructors.

Case Study - Commercial Accounts Representative, Senior Using KSA Versus Experience Statements

Ashley Buhler, Manager Commercial Accounts, contacted the Manager Personnel Services, John Barry, to discuss a Commercial Accounts Representative, Senior vacancy. Ashley had read the philosophy section of Handbook EL-350, *Guidelines for Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements* which indicated experience requirements should not be used. Ashley felt strongly that experience should be required for her Senior position. She commented that while, as specified by the Standard Position Description, the Senior Commercial Accounts Representative does not directly supervise the level 15 Commercial Account Representatives, the position does provide planning, direction, training, and technical guidance to the level 15 staff. She argued that the selected candidate would not be able to do so without experience in the area.

John agreed that knowledge of the area was needed, but he pointed out that this need could be expressed without citing experience requirements. He told Ashley that if, for example, she were to cite an experience requirement, she could very probably get applicants who had been Account Representatives; however, she would have given the review committee no means for distinguishing between the *best meets* and other applicants. Both good and poor performers would have met her requirement by merely holding an Account Representative position. On the other hand, by stating her needs in terms of knowledge and ability requirements (e.g., knowledge of sales techniques, ability to provide technical guidance to mailers), Ashley would have required and, therefore, could select applicants who both knew the work and who could be evaluated on the results they were able to achieve in each of the KSAs she specified.

John worked with Ashley to help her put her requirements into KSA statements.

Case Study - Manager, General Mail Facility Operations (C) Inappropriate Degree Requirement

The Field Director, City Operations, Rich Towner, begins the procedure to fill a Manager, General Mail Facility Operations (C), EAS-22 position at his office. He decides that requiring an MBA degree would help to attract the best possible candidates. Therefore, he includes an MBA as a requirement on the Requirements Worksheet and returns it to the Human Resources section.

In Human Resources, Annette Bookman reviews the Requirements Worksheet prior to posting the vacancy. She sees the MBA requirement and knows the Handbook EL-350, *Establishing Nonbargaining Requirements* limits Field addition of degree requirements. She believes the full intent of the handbook requirements for inclusion have not been met, even though the level of this position permits the local addition of a degree. She reviews subchapter 520, Step 4 of the handbook to refresh her understanding of those appropriate instances and then arranges to meet with Rich.

Annette starts by asking Rich what specific knowledge and abilities he hopes a degreed person will bring to the position. Rich has no specific degree in mind; he feels a degree in business, marketing, economics, or any related field would all meet his needs. He tells Annette he is looking for general knowledge of business practices and graduate level planning, management, and analytic ability.

Annette asks if an experienced manager, without an MBA degree, who possessed those KSAs would be acceptable. Rich says he very much wants to attract experienced managers. She points out that Rich may, in fact, discourage the experienced, but nondegreed, candidates he wishes to attract by including the degree when no specific area of study is needed to perform the job.

For these reasons Rich agrees there is no need to include an MBA requirement. The KSAs listed are sufficient to attract highly qualified applicants.

Case Study - Automation Readability Specialist Inappropriate Change of Position Duties

The Director, City Operations, at a large Management Sectional Center had been experiencing difficulty providing permanent relief supervision in the Optical Character Reader/Bar Code Sorter operation. When the Automation Readability Specialist, EAS-15 (2315-4013) position became open due to the promotion of the incumbent, he decided to modify the duties to include supervision of that operation 1 day per week. He included the duty and the requirement, *ability to supervise a small group of employees*, on the Requirements Worksheet when he returned it to the Human Resources section.

The Human Resources specialist who reviewed the Requirements Worksheet advised the Director that addition of supervisory duties to that position was inappropriate because the Standard Position Description did not include employee supervision. He suggested that a Supervisor, Mails Relief position seemed better suited to the needs of the operation and recommended that the Director work with the Compensation and Staffing section to investigate the appropriateness of establishing that job. The Director agreed and the Automation Readability-Specialist position was posted without change.

Standard Position Description (excerpt)

Automation Readability Specialist	2315-4013
Functional Purpose -	
Coordinates and oversees the resolution of Optical Character Reader (OCR) and Bar Code Sorter (BCS) readability and processability problems within the assigned facility for the purpose of optimizing the processability of all letter mail on automated equipment. Determines causes for the failure of automated mail processing equipment to correctly read address and bar-code information. Contacts mailers to discuss and suggest corrective measures to be taken and follows up on changes negotiated to eliminate problems. Coordinates necessary changes with other specialists to correct problems originating at their facility.	
Supervision Required -	
Diversified procedures and standards, under general supervision.	

Case Study - Postal Operations Analyst Inappropriate Change Of Position Duties

A Postal Operations Analyst, EAS-16 (occupation code 2340-5015) at a Division office retired creating a position vacancy. The manager with the vacancy, Joe Murray, Manager, Engineering Technical Unit, determined it was necessary to fill the position and notified the Human Resources section. Susan Johnson, the Human Resources specialist, working with Joe, provided a copy of the Standard Position Description and the requirements available from the Organization Management Staffing System (OMSS).

Joe reviewed the duties in the Position Description and found they accurately described the actual duties performed at his facility. Then he reviewed the requirements for the position. He found the KSAs accurately described the requirements of the position. However, Joe noted that although use of an IBM-PC was needed to analyze data and conduct tests, studies, and projects, there was no KSA to reflect that requirement. Therefore, he added *Ability to develop computer programs for the IBM-PC*. He completed a Requirements Worksheet and returned all the documents to Susan Johnson.

Susan reviewed the documents using Handbook EL-350, subchapter 520, Step 3 as an outline. She questioned the appropriateness of the added ability; writing computer programs appeared to her to be outside the scope of the Analyst duties Joe had provided. She contacted Joe, and they discussed the position's computer-related duties. Joe agreed his ability statement did not match any of the duties listed in the Position Description. At first he suggested that a computer program development duty be added; however, such an addition would have been a major change to the position, and, therefore, inappropriate. They concluded that the Analyst actually would be using available software such as dBASE III and Lotus 1,2,3. Therefore, they changed the statement to read, *Ability to use dBASE III and Lotus 1,2,3*, which related to duty #2:

Gathers and analyzes data, making recommendations for improvements in manpower requirements, production control, equipment utilization, operational procedures or methods, and standards.

Susan then posted the vacancy announcement.

Standard Position Description (excerpt)

Postal Operations Analyst	2340-5015
Functional Purpose -	
Performs various regularly scheduled and special studies that encompass employee requirements, equipment needs, operational procedures, or improved method and standards of operation, ensuring optimum performance or saving within a sectional center or associate Office.	
Duties Performed In Executing the Responsibilities -	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performs periodic and special studies and surveys of postal operations for a sectional center or associate office. 2. Gathers, reviews, and analyzes data, making recommendations for improvements in manpower requirements, production control, equipment utilization, operational procedures or methods, and standards. 3. Monitors implementation and operation of new programs and ensures new methods and procedures or equipment are within established specifications. 4. Participate in forecasting short and long range manpower or equipment needs for a sectional center or associate office. 5. Serves as a team leader on special projects or survey teams in support of equipment, production control, methods and standards, or operationally related support projects. 	

Requirements

1. Knowledge of mail processing and delivery service operations.
2. Ability to perform work hour forecasting, scheduling and staffing studies, work flow analyses, and facility layout planning.
3. Ability to perform productivity and economic analyses of equipment and programs.
4. Ability to coordinate the effort of a small group of people working on equipment, facility, and production projects.

Case Study - Handling Human Resource Planning Improper Raising of Requirements

A Field Division Director had a vacancy in one of her mid-level management positions. She also expected the next higher management position, a critical and difficult position, to be vacant in the next 4 to 6 years when the present incumbent planned to retire. Given the relationship of the two positions, she felt the successful applicant for the current vacancy would be a logical candidate for the next higher management position, when it opened. Remembering how difficult the higher level position had been to fill the last time, she wanted to be sure she would have at least one well qualified applicant, the person from the lower level position, who would be able to handle the difficult job when it opened. Therefore, she decided to write the requirements to match the critical position rather than the vacant position, making them less stringent than she would have if she were filling the higher level position now. She completed the Requirements Worksheet and sent it to Human Resources with a note of explanation.

The Human Resources specialist handling the vacancy contacted the Director. He explained that where job progression can not be expected to be nearly automatic or that the time span is such that higher level jobs or employees' potential may be expected to change in significant ways, it is recommended that applicants be evaluated based on the lower level position needs. We could expect the successful candidate for the lower level position to develop KSAs needed in the higher level position from training and experience received in the lower level position. Therefore, it is not necessary to risk complaints from individuals who could currently meet the needs of the vacant position but not the future vacancy.

Case Study - Handling Human Resource Planning Improper Lowering of Requirements

A Field Division Director had a vacancy in one of her mid-level management positions. She was aware of several very high potential Division employees she would have liked to attract to her department. These employees were very bright, had done well in other positions, but had had only a limited amount of exposure to the areas of postal knowledge needed in her department. She felt that with the proper training and experience such employees could become valuable assets for her department, both in the vacant position and eventually in other higher level positions. Since the requirements as they were presently stated would have eliminated these employees from consideration for the vacant position, she set the requirements lower than in the previous postings for the same job. She knew it might be difficult for the selectee to handle the job in the beginning, but she was confident that a high potential selectee could learn quickly.

When the Director's Requirements Worksheet reached the Human Resources section, the specialist noticed that the KSAs were very different from those which had been included in the last vacancy announcement which he had sent to the Director for review. The specialist called the Director.

After listening to the Director's intention, the Human Resources specialist suggested a different approach. He commented that lowering the requirements this time, then probably raising them again the next, would be hard to justify. He said that drastically altering the requirements, almost on a cyclical basis, might give the appearance of impropriety. Therefore, the requirements should be written to reflect the actual needs of the position. However, the specialist suggested the Director could prepare for future vacancies by considering the use of a variety of developmental programs, such as the Career Ladder, Professional and Specialist Trainee, and the Temporary Assignment Programs. He pointed out that such programs would both attract talented employees to her department and also create a pool of qualified employees for future positions. The Director agreed, and the specialist helped her to select a development program which would meet her needs.

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