

## Hiring 101 Podcast: Job Analysis – January 2021

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Guest: Landon Mock, Director of Strategic Talent Management, DOI Office of Human Capital

### Transcript

KELLY: You're listening to the Department of the Interior's Hiring 101 podcast. I'm Kelly Sewell, Human Capital Communications Specialist with the Talent Management Division in the Office of Human Capital.

The Hiring 101 podcast is based on the Department of the Interior's Hiring 101 Guide that was published in December 2020. The Hiring 101 Guide is a resource developed by a team of bureau subject matter experts to assist DOI HR practitioners and hiring managers during the recruitment and hiring process. Each month, we will feature a different topic related to the hiring process, with a heads up about helpful training and resources. This month's topic is job analysis.

Our guest today is Landon Mock, Director of Strategic Talent Management with the Office of Human Capital. Thanks for joining us. Before we dive into our main topic today, we like to ask our guests: What do you love about working at DOI?

LANDON: Thank you, Kelly. What initially drew me to the Department of the Interior was a combination of the Department's mission and the opportunity to do the work within my field that I wanted to pursue. In my case, it was assessment and selection and conducting job analysis across the Department. At DOI, there are so many unique and interesting jobs, it was a really big draw to have the opportunity to work with subject matter experts across the bureaus and learn from them about all the interesting things that they do. Because of the wide-ranging program areas and the broad scope of the Department's mission, there are a lot of opportunities for people to come to DOI and work on the things they are passionate about.

KELLY: That's great. Can you share a little more about what you do in your role at Interior and how you have developed your expertise in job analysis?

LANDON: I am the Director of the Strategic Talent Management division within DOI's Office of Human Capital. Our office works with human resources offices throughout the Department's bureaus to set policy, advocate for best practices, and provide resources, and our division specifically oversees all program areas regarding recruitment, hiring, and staffing. Some examples of the type of work we do include procuring and implementing assessment tools and strategies, establishing standardized position descriptions, collaborating with bureaus to draft staffing policies, and building tools to communicate internal job opportunities.

My background originally is in Industrial-Organizational Psychology, which is a fancy way of saying "psychology of work." At DOI, and prior to that with the Office of Personnel Management, I spent over a decade developing Government-wide or Department-wide job analyses, conducting training on job analysis with HR professionals, and providing consultation on best practices for job analysis.

KELLY: Awesome. Can you break it down for us and explain what a job analysis is?

LANDON: A job analysis is, in essence, exactly what it sounds like - the analysis of a job. But what does that really mean? A job analysis is a process of exploring and assessing the various elements and details of a job, including job tasks or duties, and the competencies, which are measurable patterns of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform those tasks or duties. Job analysis also involves connecting the tasks and duties to competencies and successful performance on the job, and it provides information about the context in which the work for the job is performed.

KELLY: Why is a job analysis completed as part of the hiring process?

LANDON: Job analyses are completed for several reasons. First, and perhaps most importantly, it makes the hiring process more legally defensible by ensuring that the competencies used for assessing candidates are directly linked to successful performance of the tasks and duties in that role. Not only that, but each employment practice of the Federal Government is required by law (Code of Federal Regulations) to be based on a job analysis. A job analysis helps to inform subsequent employment practices by providing the competencies that candidates should be assessed on for a specific job. By identifying the critical competencies for successful performance up front and establishing solid assessment practices for evaluating candidates on those competencies, we can ensure the people we hire have the right skillsets at the right level to be successful once they enter the job.

KELLY: Who is responsible or involved in the job analysis?

LANDON: HR professionals, subject matter experts, and hiring managers are all stakeholders in developing a job analysis. HR professionals are there to guide the process, answer questions for the hiring manager or subject matter experts and ensure the job analysis is sufficient and legally compliant for hiring. Hiring managers help to identify and describe the position and its previous hiring outcomes to the HR specialist. If a job analysis has recently been conducted or if the Department has developed a competency model for that series and grade, that can be used as job analysis information. Hiring managers help to develop specialized experience requirements based on critical tasks or selective factors based on the most highly rated competencies identified during the job analysis. When planning the assessment process, hiring managers will choose which competencies to examine through assessment as well as provide input on the tools used in assessing those competencies. Next month in February of 2021, we will cover in depth how assessments can be used to identify high quality candidates for hire. The hiring official can also refer the HR specialist to additional subject matter experts to provide input on the position or describe the skills needed for a particular role.

KELLY: You mentioned hiring managers quite a bit. Can you explain a little more about why they're so critical to the job analysis and to this process?

LANDON: The role of the hiring manager is important because the information they provide in a job analysis sets the tone for the hiring process. They provide information about the position at the beginning stages of the analysis that impacts the entire process. It is the hiring managers opportunity to define the exact specialized experience they are looking for in candidates. Once the job analysis is completed, it informs what applicants see in the vacancy announcement and how their abilities will be assessed when determining the best candidates for the position. Job analysis is critical to ensuring a quality hiring process, and it is the hiring manager's opportunity to specify the competencies to target during recruitment.

KELLY: What's the benefit of a good job analysis and what does a good job analysis look like?

LANDON: If job analyses are not completed or they are of poor quality, there is potential for negative organizational and employee outcomes, including things like increased turnover, poor work quality, customer dissatisfaction, higher training and development costs, low employee morale, bad quality hires, and legal challenges. All of these outcomes drain resources that could be better used elsewhere. On the other hand, putting in effort up front in the job analysis, identifying, targeting, and evaluating the right competencies, and subsequently making a great hire can be transformative for your organization. A quality job analysis process involves collaboration and communication back and forth between the HR specialist and hiring official. The hiring official should provide detailed information on the most important types of tasks or duties performed in the job and the competencies needed upon entry to the job in order to be successful. Anyone should be able to review the results of the job analysis and have a pretty good idea of what the position entails.

KELLY: Are there any resources you can recommend that can assist or speed up a job analysis?

LANDON: One of the best tools I can recommend are the Department's competency models that have been developed for several occupations across the Department. A competency model can be many different things depending on the purpose for which it's developed. The Department's Office of Capital develops competency models with a sufficient level of rigor that they can be used as a standardized job analysis for a position. Like a job analysis, these competency models identify the tasks or duties performed in an occupational series, and the most important competencies needed by grade level in order to successfully perform those tasks or duties. These competencies, in turn, can then be evaluated when candidates for vacancies go through the assessment process. DOI has developed competency models for over 50 occupational series and for the role of supervisor. These models are available on the Office of Human Capital website, and they are also uploaded to the USA Staffing system, so HR specialists can import competency definitions directly into a job announcement package. This can help save time during the hiring process, because it streamlines the job analysis and keeps you from having to write competencies from scratch.

KELLY: Great. Where can managers go for additional information on job analysis?

LANDON: For more information on job analysis and its components, hiring managers can utilize the DOI Competency Dictionary, which includes definitions for over 300 competencies. They can also utilize existing Department competency models. On the Office of Personnel Management's website, the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook contains worksheets and templates for job analysis, and the OPM Assessment and Selection Policy website has a section with additional job analysis resources.

KELLY: Great. We'll be sure to link those resources you mentioned in the show notes for this episode. Thank you so much for sharing your expertise with us today, Landon. This Hiring 101 podcast is produced and brought to you by the DOI Office of Human Capital. Be sure to visit the Hiring 101 page on our website at [doi.gov/hr](https://doi.gov/hr). New episodes will be posted each month – keep an eye out for next month's episode on Assessments.