

How to Manage Job Grading Exercise Panic

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Job evaluation is a notoriously rocky process and if not handled properly, it could leave an organization in a worse off position. There are a lot of expectations from both sides of the table- from an employer's viewpoint and that of the employees as well. The employer generally expects a clear and objective picture of the relative importance of jobs in their organisation, whilst the employees inadvertently link job evaluation to a review of work conditions and remuneration. So what exactly is job evaluation and what does the average process constitute for it to be considered successful

Job evaluation originated in the 1920s with the first points-based system being established to cater to the principles of

- Equal pay for equal work
- More pay for more valuable work.

There are various systems of job evaluation that are used from unique from organization to organization. In the African context, some of the popular job evaluation systems that are used include the Paterson system and the Castellion systems.

Despite which job grading system might be in use at your organization there are some basics that remain consistent on job evaluation.

Gives a framework for determining pay

A fair and objective job evaluation exercise that is done correctly is expected to yield a coherent ladder of the jobs within an organisation. From this, the compensation system of the organisation can be established. E –reward a research company from the United Kindom found that the most recurring reasons organisations undertook a Job Evaluation Exercise were;

- To provide a basis for the design and maintenance of a rational and equitable pay structure
- Ensure equitable structure
- Ensure the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

A job evaluation exercise that is executed with integrity becomes the basis for future pay policies and decisions.

Job Evaluation is focused on the job and not the person currently in the role

An essential element of evaluation that it is the actual job that is looked at, not the job holder. The unfortunate reality on the ground is that there is a conflation of the person and the job. A person

normally associates themselves with the job they do that a possible downward review of a job grade can be taken personally. The job description which details factors such as the decisions taken, controls that are in place, education needed for the role and experience determines the rank as opposed to characteristics of the incumbent.

Not concerned with the volume of work

A lot of appeals that happen after the initial report of a job grading exercise has been made available have to do with concerns of disparity of the volume of work that the incumbent does as opposed to the grade they would have been awarded. A job

Allows input from the incumbent and supervisors

A job evaluation exercise is not a third party event that happens without the input of stakeholders that are likely to be affected, who in this case are the current titleholder, their supervisor and HR.

The job incumbent has the responsibility to accurately detail the job content during job description writing. A true and accurate representation of the duties and responsibilities of the job on the ground will go a long way into ensuring that the job is given the right grade and also minimises the likelihood of appeals as all the relevant information would have been available.

The role of the supervisor in the job evaluation process is to that of moderation. The supervisor needs to review and approve as true the job descriptions as written by their subordinates, monitor changes in the job content and check the grading results for posts within the relevant departments.

The role of Human Resources is to oversee the updating of the job descriptions and prescription of mining hiring standards as required in some sections.

Managing the process

The upsides to the job evaluation process include;

- The involvement of all concerned stakeholders within the job evaluation process. Employees are also given a chance to appeal the grade if they disagree with the outcome
- Manning structures and lines of responsibility will have been examined, and any defects or weaknesses will have become apparent and can be rectified.
- Jobs and workers in anomalous pay positions, either high or low, will have been identified.
- The establishment of a pay structure that is based on an objective and fair process

The potential downsides to job evaluation include;

- Misinformation around the process spreading around workers causing unwarranted panic
- It is costly for the organisation, both in terms of monetary value and time
- Workers will naturally expect an increase after the exercise and this can be problematic

accounting for issues around affordability

The biggest asset of the organisation is, however, the employees and managing expectations around job evaluation exercises is important for everyone involved. The employer must make sure to conduct adequate sensitization exercises that address the expected outcomes, reassure the employees of their position and also bring up the role and freedom to appeal that they have in the process.

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