

TITLE CONSOLIDATION

**Most job families
can be described
in four different
levels of work.**

**Visit our website for past
newsletters, clients in
your area and other
items of interest, or to
e-mail us a question.**

www.foxlawson.com



Is it getting harder to determine the differences between one job and the next? Are you finding that every small change in an employee's duties seems to call for a reclassification of the job? How many of those reclassifications result in the creation of a new job title?

For many of you, this is a familiar theme. Each reclassification request appears to call for the creation of a special classification that is geared to the individual who is currently performing the job. Over time, this leads to a proliferation of job titles, special hiring requirements and special pay considerations.

The effects on government can be that you are spending more time and effort studying reclassification requests, and having a harder time determining if the differences between one person's job and the next are significant. We also know that reclassifications are taking longer to resolve. What we don't know is if the two are related. We can assume that they are.

Short of denying all reclassification requests where the employee has not demonstrated that the job has changed by 25% or more, what is the solution? Many governments are going through the process of TITLE CONSOLIDATION.

Title Consolidation is not broad banding, as many people believe. Title consolidation is simply the process of broadening the definition of the classification so that more work of a similar nature and level can be described by one class

specification. With title consolidation, you can retain the same pay ranges that you now have.

What does this really mean? All jobs can be described by the nature and level of work performed. By nature of work, we can describe jobs in terms of their occupational characteristics. By level of work, we are referring to the difficulty and complexity of the work performed.

For example, the occupation of engineer broadly describes the nature of work. It does this by defining a general body of knowledge and the basic knowledges and skills needed to perform engineering work. The engineering body of knowledge can be defined further, into civil, electrical, mechanical, chemical and so forth. While each of these job families has their own special body of knowledge, it is understood only within the broader body of knowledge called engineering.

Most job families can be described in four different levels of work. These are:

Beginning:

Qualified to hold position, learning the significant technical aspects of the work, learns how "we" do things, masters the basic and routine tasks, demonstrates success on a portion of a larger task or project, willingly accepts supervision, shows directed creativity and initiative, performs well under time and budget pressure.

**Fox Lawson
& Associates LLC solves
strategic compensation
and human resources
issues of organizations
experiencing significant
change.**

**We assist organizations
to align their
compensation, benefits
and human resources
systems to their
organization objectives.**

**We have solutions for
people who pay people.**



FOX LAWSON & ASSOCIATES LLC
COMPENSATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALISTS

Offices:
1335 County Road D. Circle East
St. Paul, Minnesota 55109-5260

Phone: 800-383-0976
Fax: 651-635-0980
E-mail: jfox@foxlawson.com

P. O. Box 32985
Phoenix, Arizona 85064-2985

Phone: 602-840-1070
Fax: 602-840-1071
E-mail: blawson@foxlawson.com

Journey:

Developing proficiency; moving to full competence, and ability, assumes responsibility for definable projects, relies less on supervision, works independently and produces significant results, develops credibility and a reputation, builds a strong internal network of relationships (may typically be demonstrated by 2-5 years of experience.)

Advanced:

Fully competent to perform normal job duties, increases in technical breadth, develops a broad business perspective, stimulate other through ideas and knowledge, involved as a manager, mentor or idea leader in developing others, represents the organizations effectively to clients and external groups, builds a strong internal and external network; (may typically be demonstrated by 5-9 years of experience.)

Specialist:

Recognized expert, mentor to others, provides direction to the organization, defines/drives critical business opportunities and needs, obtains essential resources, sponsors promising individuals to prepare them for leadership roles, represents the organization on critical strategic issues; (may typically be demonstrated by 9 + years of experience.)

Yet, when you look at an occupation in government, organizations have created many more levels than this; many specialized classes have been created where very fine differences exist. It gets to be confusing.

If organizations follow this model for most of their classes, except supervisory and managerial classes, we have seen that most organizations can reduce the number of classification titles by half.

What are the benefits?

- * Simpler classification structure to manage
- * Less time involved in reclassification requests
- * Less administrative time keeping many classification descriptions up to date
- * Clearer career path distinctions, because the jobs are more clearly defined and the requirements clearer.
- * Better link to the pay plan
- * Increased managerial flexibility for personnel assignments

Governments that we know of that have reduced the number of classification titles have used this occupational approach. Wouldn't fewer classifications make your job easier? Call us, we can help you get started.