



Tip Sheet

CONFIRMING YOUR JOB TITLE & STANDARD JOB DESCRIPTION

The Title and Total Compensation (TTC) Project aims to establish meaningful and market-relevant job titles and position descriptions for employees at UW-Madison. Your supervisor or human resources (HR) representative will meet with you to confirm your new job title before September 10, 2021. The goal of this conversation is to confirm that your proposed title accurately describes the work you do. Your job title and the standard job description (SJD) associated with the title should capture the essential functions of your position and reflect how you spend the majority of your time.

The following tips help determine whether your updated title is appropriate based on your current job responsibilities.

GATHER INFORMATION

Review your current position description (PD) and responsibilities.

- Identify your essential job responsibilities. What are the three to five most critical responsibilities of your position?
- Review supporting documents such as your most current PD, your position vacancy listing (PVL), and most current performance evaluation (PMDP). Remember to focus on high level responsibilities rather than day-to-day tasks. Refer to the [Task vs. Responsibility fact sheet](#) for a description of their differences.
- If you do not have a copy of your current PD or PVL, contact your local HR representative. Visit hr.wisc.edu/contact to find your HR contact.

COMPARE

Compare your current job to your assigned title and standard job description (SJD).

- Does the proposed title and SJD reflect the essential role and responsibilities of your position?
- If you were to summarize your position in one or two sentences, would your summary look similar to the SJD job summary?
- Do you spend most of your time performing the essential responsibilities listed in the SJD?
- If you saw this SJD as a job posting, would you equate the posting to your position?

Remember, the SJD presents an overall picture of the work and is used to describe the similar jobs across the university. It will not include every task you perform, but it should reflect the core functions of the position.

EXPLORE

Explore the [Title and Standard Job Description Library](#).

- Review other SJDs in the same job sub-group as your proposed SJD.
- Look through SJDs in the job group and sub-group that relate to your position.
- Are there other SJDs with job summaries or job responsibilities that match your position more closely than your assigned SJD?

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE TITLE?

Contact your supervisor or local HR representative if you believe your new title is not a good match. Meet with your supervisor or local HR contact to discuss your questions and concerns.

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- **Gather documents.** Gather supporting documents like your most current PD, PVL, and performance evaluation.
- **Identify your concerns.** Identify the key responsibilities that are missing in your proposed SJD. Identify another SJD from the Title and Standard Job Description Library that better describes your current job responsibilities.

DURING THE MEETING:

- **Ask questions.** Seek to understand the reasoning for your title assignment. A clear understanding helps you to share your perspective and clarifies miscommunication.
- **Agree on next steps.** If you come to a resolution and can agree on a proposed title assignment, identify any action items to follow up on. If you cannot come to an agreement on a title, know that a formal [title appeals process](#) is available.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE CONVERSATIONS

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- **Take time to notice and name your feelings.** How might these emotions affect the conversation?
- **Affirm your intentions.** What do you want for yourself in this situation? What do you want for the relationship?
- **Find the right space.** Arrange a meeting place free from interruptions. If meeting virtually, use video, which allows you to see each other's body language and facial expressions. Put away distractions like email, phone, or instant messaging.

DURING THE MEETING:

- **Focus on seeking workable solutions.** Enter the conversation with the intent to find a solution.
- **Get curious.** Seek to understand the other person's perspective. Listening to other perspectives may help you see the issues in a new way. Others are also more likely to hear your perspective when they feel they have been heard.
- **Present the facts.** Share the information that you have. Explain how you arrived at your conclusion.
- **Be explicit about what is important to you.** Clarifying what is truly important allows both parties to find creative ways to meet those needs instead of being stuck on "your way" or "my way". Deeper needs can include values such as respect, recognition, security, and autonomy.