
UNIT 6 JOB ANALYSIS

Objectives

After going through this unit, you should be able to understand:

- 1 the concept of job analysis and its significance to the organisations,
- 1 the different methods of collecting information for job analysis, and
- 1 job-analysis and its relationship vis-a-vis job description and job specification.

Structure

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Job Analysis
- 6.3 Some Considerations
- 6.4 Method of Collecting Information
- 6.5 Job Analysis: Process
- 6.6 Steps in the Job Analysis Process
- 6.7 Job Description
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- 6.9 Uses of Job Description
- 6.10 Job Specification
- 6.11 Summary
- 6.12 Self-Assessment Questions
- 6.13 Further Readings

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Organisation is described as a rational coordination of the activities of employees through division of labour, responsibility, authority and accountability. Built in this description is the realisation that organisations perform a series of activities and that to perform these activities different kinds of skills are required. Each activity carries its own set of responsibilities and the employees are given appropriate authority to perform these activities. Not only this, they are also accountable to the organisation through their immediate supervisors for accomplishing these activities according to specifications. Hence, a clear understanding of what they are supposed to do becomes a pre-requisite for effective utilisation of organisational resources. Job analysis helps us to achieve this objective.

6.2 JOB ANALYSIS

There exists a wide range of job evaluation methods. The choice of an evaluation method is dependent on the number and kind of jobs to be evaluated, the cost of the operation, available resources, the degree of precision required and the organisations' environments- both internal and external. However, whatever be the chosen method, systematic gathering and analysis of information about jobs is a prerequisite. The job analysis process involves gathering of such information.

Job analysis is the process by which data, with regard to each job, is systematically observed and noted. It provides information about the nature of the job and the characteristics or qualifications that are desirable in the jobholder. The data from job analysis could be used for a variety of purposes. The job analysis study attempts to provide information in seven basic areas:

1. Job Identification or its title, including the code number, if any.
2. Distinctive or significant characteristics of the job, its location setting, supervision, union jurisdiction, and hazards and discomforts, if any.
3. What the typical worker does: Specific operations and tasks that make up the assignment, and their relative timing and importance; the simplicity, the routine, or complexity of tasks, responsibility for others, for property, or for funds.
4. What materials and equipment the worker uses: Metals, plastics, grain, yarns; and lathes, milling machines, electronic ignition testers, corn huskers, punch presses, and micrometers are illustrative.
5. How the job is performed: The emphasis here is on the nature of operations, and may specify such operations as handling, feeding, removing, drilling, driving, setting up, and many others.
6. Required personnel attributes: Experience, training apprenticeship, physical strength, coordination or dexterity, physical demands, mental capabilities, aptitudes, and social skills are some attributes.
7. The conditions under which the work is performed: Working conditions and work environments is a major contributing factor in the performance of the job, and the satisfaction of the employee. A dimly highlighted, poorly ventilated and crowded place of work hampers efficiency. The workers are forced to spend more energy to accomplish tasks, which they can do, in much lesser efforts in otherwise conditions. Poor working conditions have been found to cause greater fatigue, negligence, absenteeism, indiscipline and insubordination among the employees.

Each of these piece of information is essential; it is not sufficient to merely list a series of tasks or duties, because each piece of information is used in determining the level of work and responsibility and the knowledge, skill and abilities needed to perform them to an acceptable level of proficiency.

The process of assembling and recording information on such essential characteristics of jobs is known as job analysis. In other words, jobs are subjected to analysis to find out precisely what the duties, responsibilities, working environment and other requirements of a job are and to present these in a clear, concise and systematic way. Job analysis should be undertaken by trained job analyst working in close collaboration with managers and jobholders.

Before proceeding further, certain terms used in job analysis and related stages in the job evaluation process need to be clarified.

Element: The smallest unit into which work can be divided.

Task: A distinct identifiable work activity, which comprises a logical, and necessary step in the performance of a job.

Duty: A significant segment of the work performed in a job, usually comprising several tasks.

Post (or): One or more duties, which require the services or activities of one worker for their performance;

Job: A group of posts that are identical or involve substantially similar tasks.

Occupation: A group of jobs similar in terms of the knowledge, skills, abilities, training and work experience required by workers for their successful performance.

6.3 SOME CONSIDERATIONS

Job analysis might give the impression that while identifying components of job, we are looking at everything that concerns the job. However, in analysing the job, following considerations must be kept in mind:

1. Job analysis is not a one-time activity. Jobs are changing continuously. What was a job yesterday is not the same job today and would not remain the same in future. These changes are caused by changing technology, competition, changing profile of the workforce, changing expectations of end users and a host of other factors. Hence, analysis must be continuously done to update the nature of job.
2. The Job and not the person—an important consideration in job analysis is conducted of the job and not of the person. While job analysis data may be collect from incumbents through interviews or questionnaires, the product of the analysis is a description or specifications of the job, not a description of the person doing the job.
3. All activities relating to job analysis give us only the minimum requirements of the job. No analysis can identify either the ultimate or full and complete requirements. What it does is simply highlights what are minimum activities that are entailed in a job. The reason is simple. No one can foresee the final outcome because of changes taking place in the nature of job.

6.4 METHOD OF COLLECTING INFORMATION

There are several ways in which information about a job can be collected. In order to have a full understanding of the job contents, a number of sources should be explored. By and large, the following sources are generally used. In all the following three methods, verification of the information collected from the holder of the job is necessary. Very often, while collecting information people tend to describe those aspects of the job that they are not doing or would like to do. Hence, after the information has been collected from the employee, an interview with immediate supervisor must be conducted to verify the authenticity of the information.

1. Job Questionnaire

To make a start, a job questionnaire could be administered to all concerned employees asking them about the job, its various components, time spent on each of them, and so forth. The completed questionnaire could be given to the supervisors for their comments. In some cases, job-reviewing committees are formed, consisting of union representatives and specialists from the personnel, work-study, or industrial engineering department. The questionnaire has the following advantages:

1. First of all, it is the most cost effective method, since it can elicit information from a wide number of workers and their immediate superiors in a relatively short period of time. The main task of the analyst becomes one of planning the questionnaire well and checking the responses provided.
2. Secondly, workers take an active part in completing the questionnaire providing intimate detailed knowledge of their jobs, which is not available elsewhere.
3. Thirdly, the questionnaire has to be structured in advance, and this facilitates the processing of the results.
4. In some cases, once the responses to the questionnaire have been verified, they can conveniently be used with little further processing to prepare a job description.

The questionnaire method however has the following disadvantages:

1. To start with, the people required to complete it must have a certain level of education; and even then, questions may be interpreted in different ways so that the answers may be beside the point.
2. Furthermore, not everyone is able to describe fully and exactly the task that constitute their job. One may, for example, over-emphasise some features of it and completely ignore others when they are important.
3. There is less risk of this with a detailed questionnaire that includes a checklist of points, questionnaire suited to all jobs is not easily drawn up and may be unduly long.

In practice, while a well-structured questionnaire can get essential information quickly, it is virtually impossible to get complete comparable information solely by questionnaire, and this method is generally used in combination with interviews and direct observation.

2. Interview

In practice, an interview is almost always necessary in order to obtain precise, complete and comparable information. The interview conducted by the analyst is an effective way of checking on the information already available on job. The analyst asks the jobholders questions on the duties and main tasks of their job, generally working from a previously prepared list of questions as with a questionnaire. After the interview, the analyst draws up a report, which is shown, to the jobholder and his immediate superior for their approval. The analyst usually drafts the report in the form of a job description, which effectively speeds up the preparatory work of job evaluation.

Following are some of the disadvantages of this method:

1. Interviews are time consuming. At least an hour or two may be necessary for each case, plus the time spent by the analyst in drawing up his report and by the jobholder and his immediate superior in checking it. In a large enterprise a team of analysts would be necessary.
2. The main difficulty of the interview lies in finding high quality analysts who can win the jobholder's confidence. As has been noted, "too many imagine interviewing to be relatively simple whereas nothing could be farther from the truth." Obtaining information from a jobholder about his job is difficult.
3. Many workers show a natural distrust of the analyst who comes to examine their work, while others will give a lot of information, much of it useless. It is accordingly essential to have a well trained and experienced team of analysts if the interview is to be the only method used.

However interview has some advantages:

1. Interview does provide in- depth information, which cannot be achieved through any other method.
2. It also helps in collecting data about tasks that are not part of the job and yet the jobholder has to do it.
3. At the same time it can also help in finding ways and means to simplify some of the operations involved in the job.

3. Observation

For jobs of a simple and repetitive nature, the observation technique could provide adequate information on the job being performed. A clear picture may be obtained regarding the working conditions, equipment used, and skills required. Although all

jobs could be usefully observed, this technique alone is not enough for more complex jobs, especially those that have many components or interactions.

Some advantages of this method are:

1. It is most suitable for simple and repetitive jobs.
2. Direct observation by the analyst can clear up points left unclear by other methods.

At the same time, some of the disadvantages of this method are:

1. The presence of analyst causes stress. The workers may dislike being observed.
2. The jobholders may purposely reduce the pace of activity to justify overtime.
3. Observation cannot be a suitable method where the job calls for considerable personal judgment and intellectual ability.
4. It may not take into account all the tasks in a work cycle stretched over a week or a month.

4. Independent observers

In addition to the employees themselves providing information about the jobs they are doing, trained observers could also be used to supplement the employees' data and to discover inadequate performance in "crucial tasks", which would lead to job failure.

In addition there are some not so often used method of job analysis. Some of them are presented here:

1. *Diary*: One or more incumbents are asked to keep a diary of duties noting the frequency of the tasks performed. These diaries then become the basis for doing job analysis.
2. *Critical incidents*: Ask one or more incumbents to brainstorm (if there is only one person you will have to participate in the brain storming) about critical incidents that happen routinely and infrequently while working. Separate these into two lists. Generate one list of incidents indicating good or excellent performance and one, which indicates poor performance. This approach is excellent for determining training and selection strategies. The results lend themselves to meeting discrimination complaints concerning selection choices where the person chosen clearly possesses the skill and knowledge to perform the most critical duties indicating success on the job. The analyst will have to extrapolate a list of duties to be performed from the incidents.
3. *Photo tape recording of job performance*: This is a good approach because it can be watched over and over again to perform analysis and because it can be pulled out later to re-evaluate. Having such a tape is excellent source for undertaking job analysis.
4. *Review of records*: Records of work such as maintenance requests is reviewed and a list of requested repairs is made. In this situation it is important to take representative samples so that seasonal variations in work requests do not mislead. This is a good approach for such jobs as mechanic or electrician. The kinds of repairs being performed and, thus, the duties being performed most often can be itemized. However, this approach could also be used for computer programming and computer trouble-shooting jobs in which incumbents have records of work requests or work completed.

The data to be gathered by all these methods is dependent in large part on the purpose the analysis is to be put to. Information about training needs requires information about the transaction of the work so that the trainer can determine the critical skills and knowledge that must be improved. Selection decisions require the same information usually on a broader scale. A lot of information can be inferred from well-written task statements.

Some of the examples of the kind of data, which can be gathered for job analysis, are given below.

- 1 List of tasks
- 1 List of decisions made
- 1 Indication of results if decisions are not made properly
- 1 Amount of supervision received
- 1 Supervision exercised
- 1 Kind of personnel supervised
- 1 Diversity of functions performed by supervised staff
- 1 Interactions with other staff (description of the staff interacted with)
- 1 Physical conditions
- 1 Physical requirements (For instance how heavy are the objects that are lifted. How much stooping and bending is conducted and under what conditions)
- 1 Software used
- 1 Programming language used
- 1 Computer platform used
- 1 Interpersonal contacts with outsiders (customers)
- 1 Interpersonal persuasive skills or sales skills
- 1 Amounts of mental or psychical stress
- 1 Necessity to work as a team member
- 1 Needed contributions to a work group
- 1 Authority or judgment exercised
- 1 Customer service skills

Generally, it is preferable to use a combination of several methods to get information about the job. One method could well supplement the other, where the objective is to gain as much information as possible about the job, the crucial tasks, and the essential qualifications required to perform them satisfactorily. An objective data gatherer would avoid introducing his own ideas, and also avoid describing the employees performing the job, rather than the “job” itself, for many of the employee’s personal traits may have little or no relevance to the job.

6.5 JOB ANALYSIS: PROCESS

To be meaningful and useful for personnel related decision-making, job analysis must be carried more at frequent intervals. Jobs in the past were considered to be static and were designed on the basis that they would not change. While people working on these jobs were different, the jobs remained unchanged. It is now realised, that for higher efficiency and productivity, jobs must change according to the employees who carry them out. Some of the major reasons leading such change are:

Technological Change: The pace of change in technology necessitates changes in the nature of job as well as the skills required. Word processing has drastically changed the nature of secretarial jobs. Computerization and automation likewise give rise to new requirements of certain jobs while older requirements become redundant.

Union- Management Agreements: The agreements entered between management and the union can bring about change in the nature of job, duties and responsibilities. For example, under employees participation scheme, the workers are encouraged to accept wider responsibilities.

People: Human beings are not robots; each employee brings with him his own strengths and weaknesses, his own style of handling a job and his own aptitude. There is a saying that the job is what the incumbent makes of it.

Thus, the job analysis process must take into account the changing nature of job on account of the factors listed above. Often, role analysis techniques are used in dealing with the dynamic nature of job requirements.

6.6 STEPS IN THE JOB ANALYSIS PROCESS

The major steps to be followed in carrying out job analysis in an on-going organization are given below:

1. *Organization Analysis:* The first step is to get an overall view of various jobs in the organisation with a view to examine the linkages between jobs and the organisational objectives, interrelationships among the jobs, and the contribution of various jobs towards achieving organisational efficiency and effectiveness. The organisation chart and the work flow or process charts constitute an important source of information for the purpose.
2. *Uses of Job Analysis Information:* Depending on organisational priorities and constraints, it is desirable to develop clarity regarding the possible uses of the information pertaining to job analysis. In the previous pages it has been already indicated that such information could be utilised practically for all personnel functions. Nevertheless, it is important to focus on a few priority activities in which the job analysis information could be used.
3. *Selection of Jobs for Analysis:* Carrying out job- analysis is a time- consuming and costly process. It is, therefore, desirable to select a representative sample of jobs for purposes of analysis.
4. *Collection of Data:* Data will have to be collected on the characteristics of job, the required behaviour and personal attributes needed to do the job effectively. Several techniques for job analysis are available. Care needs to be taken to use only such techniques, which are acceptable and reliable in the existing situation within the organisation.
5. *Preparation of Job Description:* The information collected in the previous step is used in preparing a job description for the job highlighting major tasks, duties, and responsibilities for effective job performance.
6. *Preparation of Job Specification:* Likewise, the information gathered in step (4) is also used to prepare the job specification for a job highlighting the personal attributes required in terms of education, training, aptitude and experience to fulfil the job description.

Job Analysis thus carried out provides basic inputs to the design of jobs so that it is able to meet the requirements of both the organization (in terms of efficiency and productivity) as well as the employees (in terms of job satisfaction and need fulfilment). Developing appropriate job design is then the outcome of the job analysis process.

The most important use of job analysis is to produce a basic job description of what the job is to facilitate basic human resource problem solving. The second is to provide employees and supervisors with a basic description of jobs describing duties and characteristics in common with and different from other positions or jobs. When pay is closely associated with levels of difficulty these descriptions will help foster a feeling of organisational fairness related to pay issues. Other important uses of job analysis are given below:

- 1 Indicate training needs
- 1 Put together work groups or teams

- 1 Provide information to conduct salary surveys
- 1 Provide a basis for determining a selection plan
- 1 Provide a basis for putting together recruitment
- 1 Describe the physical needs of various positions to determine the validity of discrimination complaints
- 1 As part of an organisational analysis
- 1 As part of strategic planning
- 1 As a part of any human relations needs assessment
- 1 As a basis for coordinating safety concerns

Job analysis is indeed an essential part of any modern human resource management system. The kind of information gathered through job analysis varies considerably depending upon the specific uses to be made of it. Accordingly, job analysis programmes are usually tailor-made for the specific purpose.

Activity A

“Smaller organisations do not need job analysis for their jobs because most of their employees conduct a myriad of activities, too far-reaching for a standard job analysis”. Give your view point.

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Activity B

Discuss the sources of errors in your own organisation or any organisation you are familiar with, that can distort or render job analysis information inaccurate.

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6.7 JOB DESCRIPTION

Data collected for job analysis provides the basis for preparing job description. It refers to the job contents and the expectations that an organisation has from its employees. Job descriptions usually outline the minimum requirements of jobs for many reasons:

- 1. First, despite all the attempts, a perfect and fully inclusive job description is not possible. In fact, as one moves up in the hierarchy of an organisation, a detailed job description becomes very difficult.
- 2. Secondly, most organisations would prefer not to describe the job fully, if it is possible, because employees would then stick to what has been described and would not do anything beyond it.
- 3. Thirdly, if a job were fully described, supervision would automatically be taken care of by the duties performed, making some of the duties of the supervisory staff redundant.
- 4. Fourthly, technology is changing fast and hence the nature of job is also changing. Unless an organisation continuously updates the job description, it would be difficult to monitor the performance of the employees.

6.8 DESIGN OF JOB DESCRIPTION

A primary output or result of job analysis is job description. Information obtained by job analysis is shifted and recorded concisely, clearly and fully in the job description. The job description must assemble all the important elements of a job, such as essential tasks, responsibilities, qualifications required and the functional relation of the job to other jobs.

There is no universally accepted standard format for job descriptions for the reason that the form and structure of the job descriptions must depend on the kind of work being analysed and the job evaluation plan being used. For example, if the job evaluation form comprises factors such as physical and intellectual effort, knowledge, skills, responsibilities and working conditions, it follows that job description should be structured to reflect these factors so as to facilitate factor by factor comparison and evaluation of the jobs. With non-analytical methods, job description may be more flexible and simpler but most specify the title of the job and its position in the organisation, summarises the tasks performed and list the skills and abilities required.

It is helpful to follow the following guidelines when writing a job description:

1. Always be accurate about what is expressed.
2. Omit expressions which are attributes— such as uninteresting, distasteful, etc.
3. Personal pronouns should be avoided— if it is necessary to refer to the worker, the word “ operator” may be used.
4. Do not describe only one phase of the job and give the impression that all phases are covered.
5. Generalized or ambiguous expressions, such as ‘prepare’, ‘assist’, ‘handle’ etc. should be omitted unless supported by data that will clarify them.
6. All statements should be clearly defined and simply set down- promiscuous use of adjectives only reflects one’s own opinion.
7. Describe the job as is being done, by the majority of workers holding the designation.
8. Write in simple language— explain unusual technical terms.
9. Description of a job, which is part of teamwork, should establish the team relationship.
10. The length of description is immaterial; it is not expected even with printed forms that all job descriptions should be of equal length but write concisely.
11. When the job analyst finds that the data he has to work with is insufficient, s/he should stop until sufficient data is available.
12. Put the date of completion of each description and revise it as often as changes in jobs and occupation require.
13. Job description should have the concurrence of the concerned supervisor.
14. Description should contain the initials of the persons who compile them.

6.9 USES OF JOB DESCRIPTION

Apart from being a basis for job evaluation, the job descriptions can be put to many uses. They are as under:

1. *Supervisor- Employee Communication:* The information contained in the job description outlines the work, which the incumbent is expected to perform.

Hence, it is an extremely useful document for both the supervisor and the subordinate for purposes of communication. Furthermore, it helps employees to understand just what work their associates are expected to perform, thus, facilitating integration of efforts at the work site by the employees themselves.

2. *Recruitment, Selection, Promotion, Transfer:* Information pertaining to the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the work to an acceptable standard, can be used as a sound basis on which to base standards and procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer.
3. *Work Performance Appraisal:* To be sound and objective, a performance appraisal system must be rooted in the work performed by the employee; such work is indicated by the duties in the job description. In such an approach, using each duty as the basis for discussion, the employee and the supervisor agree on work performance goals for the period to be covered by the subsequent evaluation report; they also agree on the criteria to be used to determine the extent to which the goals have been attained. The reports resulting from this methodology minimize subjectivity by focusing attention on the job, as distinct from the personality traits, habits or practices of the employee. As a consequence, the results are more factual; valid and defensible than is the case in other types of systems.
4. *Manpower Planning, Training and Development:* These three processes are closely interrelated. The job description showing, in specific terms, the knowledge, skill and ability requirements for effective performance of the duties, is a sound and rational basis for each of these processes. Analysis of various types of jobs at progressively more senior levels will indicate logical sources of supply for more senior posts, as part of manpower planning. It will also indicate the gap to be bridged in terms of knowledge, skill and ability, thus providing a sound basis for preparing job-related training and development programmes.
5. *Industrial Relations:* Frequently, issues arise in the industrial relations field, which have their origin in the work to be undertaken. In these instances the job description may be used to form a factual basis for discussion and problem resolution.
6. *Organization and Procedure Analysis-*The duties and responsibilities outlined in the job description may be used to a great advantage by management in analysing organisation and procedures, because they reveal how the work is organised, how the procedure operate and how authority and responsibility are appointed.

A Job Description should include a:

1. *Job Title:* It represents a summary statement of what the job entails.
2. *Job Objective or Overall Purpose Statement:* This statement is generally a summary designed to orient the reader to the general nature, level, purpose and objective of the job. The summary should describe the broad function and scope of the position and be no longer than three to four sentences.
3. *List of Duties or Tasks Performed:* The list contains an item-by-item list of principal duties, continuing responsibilities and accountability of the occupant of the position. The list should contain each and every essential job duty or responsibility that is critical to the successful performance of the job. The list should begin with the most important functional and relational responsibilities and continue down in order of significance. Each duty or responsibility that comprises at least five percent of the incumbent's time should be included in the list.
4. *Description of the Relationships and Roles:* the occupant of the position holds

within the company, including any supervisory positions, subordinating roles and/or other working relationships.

6.10 JOB SPECIFICATION

Workload analysis helps in identifying the minimum qualification needed to perform a particular job. These may include academic qualifications, professional qualifications, age, years of experience, relevance and nature of previous experience, and other skills and attitudes. They form the minimum eligibility requirements, which the candidate must have, for the appointment to a job. A clear indication of specifications helps in generating eligible applications, because of self-selection. The candidates who do not possess those qualifications do not apply. On the other hand, lack of clear-cut specifications may generate a large number of applications, leading to high costs, in terms of man-hours, in processing them.

There is a great deal of disagreement with regard to developing complete and correct job specification unlike the job description, which provides more objective assessment of job requirements. The decision to specify minimum human requirements for a job is a difficult one as it involves considerable degree of subjectivity. There is a general feeling that organisations generally tend to establish relatively high requirements for formal education and training, resulting in a situation where highly qualified people end up doing jobs of routine nature. Particularly, in India, highly qualified personnel are recruited for jobs where their abilities, skills and knowledge are under-utilized.

Despite these problems, however, minimally acceptable human requirements need to be specified for various jobs and category of jobs. The format for job specification should include the following items:

- 1 Position Title
- 1 Education/ Training
- 1 Experience
- 1 Knowledge
- 1 Abilities
- 1 Skills
- 1 Aptitude
- 1 Desirable Attributes
- 1 Contra-indicators, if any.

From job analysis to jobless world

Job enrichment means redefining in a way that increases the opportunities for workers to experience building of responsibility, achievement, growth and recognition by doing job well.

- 1 Analysing together the job
- 1 Establishing client recognition
- 1 Vertical loading
- 1 Job-Sharing
- 1 Flexible job doing pattern etc.
- 1 Open feedback channels.

Whether specialised, enlarged or enriched, workers skill generally like to have

specific job to do and the job require job descriptions. But in the emerging organisation today jobs are becoming more amorphous and more difficult to define. In other words the trend is towards “do-jobbing in many modern organisation.

6.11 SUMMARY

Job Analysis is the process of job-related data. The data collected will be useful for preparing job description and job specification. Job description lists job title, duties, machines and equipment involved, working conditions surrounding a job and the like. Job specification lists the human qualifications and qualities necessary to do the job.

Job analysis is useful for HRP, recruitment and selection, training and development, job evaluation, remuneration, performance appraisal, personnel information and safety and health programmes. It also aides analysis of the organisation structures and the work systems/procedures and contribute towards improving the productivity of the organisation.

A logical sequence to job analysis is job design which is nothing but organisation of tasks, duties and responsibilities into a unit of work.

6.12 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What do you mean by job analysis? Explain the process of job analysis.
2. Explain various methods of collecting information for job analysis.
3. Define job description. Explain the uses of job description.

6.13 FURTHER READINGS

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