

University of Pennsylvania

Position Inventory Questionnaire (PIQ) Guide

Division of Human Resources, Compensation

The purpose of this guide is to help you collect and organize the information you will need to create a job description and summary that will be used to classify this staff position. The information you provide in the PIQ should take into consideration the following:

- Describe the position as it **currently** exists, not as it was in the past or may be in the future.
- Describe the position **as it is typically conducted** over an extended period of time (such as a year); do not describe just a particular dimension of the position or an assignment.
- **Avoid understating or overstating the position's requirements.** It may be helpful to think about the responses as though you were explaining the position to new staff.
- Consider **how your supervisor and subordinates would probably answer.** Make sure your answer is appropriate, given what you think they will answer.
- Consider **how the position would normally be performed** by the typical staff. Feel free to discuss responses with others in the position. The questionnaire is **not** a test of performance or competence.

POSITION SUMMARY

When writing the **Position Summary**, please briefly describe the primary purpose and function of the position. This should be a general description of what the position does.

PRINCIPAL POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES/ DUTIES

When writing the **Principal Position Responsibilities/ Duties**, please take into consideration the major tasks of the position and their critical levels. Please **list up to ten major position tasks, starting with the most important, for which the job is responsible.** Use statements that start with action verbs such as *type, compose, maintain, direct, develop, analyze, plan, etc.* Think in terms of what, why and how the duties of the job are performed. For example, a typical responsibility statement for a Programmer/ Analyst might be: *"Develop detailed design specifications for data processing systems."* An Administrative Assistant's duties may include: *"Type correspondence for review, edit and signature."*

You will also need to estimate the percentage of time spent performing each task. **The following chart will assist you in estimating time percentages on either a daily, weekly, monthly or annual basis.**

Percentage	Day	Week	Month	Year
5%	30 minutes	2 hours	1-1/2 days	2-1/2 weeks
10%	1 hour	4 hours	3 days	5 weeks
15%	1-1/2 hours	6 hours	4-1/2 days	2 months
20%	2 hours	1 day	6 days	2-1/2 months
25%	2-1/2 hours	1-1/4 days	7-1/2 days	3 months

Time spent for any task should account for at **least 5% of total time**, unless it is a critical part of the position (e.g., negotiating a purchase agreement every three years). If the time spent for any one responsibility **exceeds 25%**, consider splitting the task statement into two or more statements. **The total of all percentages should not exceed 100%.**

CRITICAL LEVEL

Finally, in the last column, for each task, identify **how critical the task is to the job**. Identify 1 to 5, 1 being less important, 5 being more important. Keep in mind that percent of time does not necessarily indicate how critical the task is to the position. Things done occasionally may still be critical to the job. Consider those tasks which define your job to be the most critical. There may also be more than one task with the same level of criticality (e.g. 2 tasks ranked 1, 3 tasks ranked 2, etc.).

Critical Levels Rated: Least Important (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Most Important

POSITION INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE DEFINITIONS

1. FORMAL EDUCATION

This factor identifies the minimum position requirements in terms of formal education which are required of the position in order for it to be performed at least **satisfactorily**. Knowledge may have been acquired through a formal diploma/degree program, training or a combination of both. **Remember:** This is the education level required for the position, **not necessarily your own level of education**. Please check only *one* response

1. **Basic ability to read, write, and follow verbal instructions.** Skill necessary to operate equipment such as photocopier or motor vehicle. **High School Diploma or GED preferred.**
2. **Ability to read, write, perform basic arithmetic, and follow verbal and written instructions.** Basic knowledge of grammar, spelling, and punctuation normally acquired through a high school education. May require limited training or knowledge in some specialized area such as typing, recordkeeping, or minor equipment repair. **High School Diploma or GED required.**
3. **Specialized training in basic principles or techniques in a specific area,** such as technical procedures, general repair, or bookkeeping. Training typically acquired through twelve to eighteen months of education or training beyond the high school level. **Vocational or other technical school, certification, training or apprenticeship required beyond high school.** Specialized training/certification required (please describe):
4. **Ability and knowledge in a specialty or technical field** such as complex technical procedures or office management. Education equivalent to an associate degree or completion of a technical specialty program of eighteen months to three years duration. **Associate's Degree or Two Year College equivalent required.**
5. **Knowledge of specialized principles or techniques equivalent to that which would normally be obtained through a formal four-year college/university** academic program or an in-depth specialized training program directly related to the type of work being performed. **Bachelor's Degree required.** Major(s) required:
6. **Broad or in-depth body of knowledge equivalent to that which would be acquired through formal advanced post-graduate education** or training in a recognized field of specialization directly related to the type of work being performed. **Master's Degree or more required.** Major(s) required:
7. Singular Knowledge of a **highly advanced professional discipline. MD., Ph.D., Law degree or equivalent doctoral degree required.** Major(s) required

2. WORK EXPERIENCE

This factor evaluates the time normally required for a person with the necessary educational background to develop the required skills and abilities to do a specific job under normal levels of supervision.

Note: The factors of education and experience should be evaluated independently. However, it is recognized that when recruiting staff, these factors may be used interchangeably (e.g., a candidate may qualify for employment by supplementing a lack of formal education with significant position-related experience).

1. 0 to 1 year
2. 1 year to 2 years
3. 2 years to 3 years
4. 3 years to 5 years
5. 5 years to 7 years
6. 7 years to 10 years
7. Over 10 years

3. PLANNING

3a. Planning Scope

This factor explores how far into the future you are generally required to plan your highest level of work activities. Indicate the typical time frame for the **majority** of your planning (do not include one-time special projects).

1. **Daily:** Seldom plan beyond the current day.
2. **Current Week:** Plan events that are expected to occur within a few working days.
3. **One to Four Weeks:** Plan events that are expected to occur from one to four weeks or on a monthly basis.
4. **One to Three Months:** Plan events that are expected to occur in the next one to three months or on a quarterly basis.
5. **Four to Twelve Months:** Plan events that will occur during the year, and have some effect on the department's annual expenditures, and or revenues.
6. **One to Three Years:** Formal plans that exceed one year, but not three years beyond normal operational planning.
7. **Three Years or More:** Formal plans that are strategic in nature, and have future impact beyond three years.

3b. Planning Level

Choose the level which best portrays the **primary scope** of the planning activities in this position:

1. Individual (position only)
2. Unit or equivalent (< 15 faculty and staff)
3. Section or equivalent (> 15 faculty and staff)
4. Department or equivalent (> 15 faculty and staff)
5. School/Center
6. University-wide

4. IMPACT

IMPACT ON BUDGETS, REVENUES, AND GRANTS

Budgetary responsibilities involve the amount of control over decisions regarding the allocation of Penn's available spending in the current fiscal year. Revenue impact refers to the amount and degree of effect over generating the incoming funds of the University. Grant Funds are those resources of Penn that are generated through external sources typically used for research purposes. **If there is no budget, revenue or grant responsibilities, you should check the "none" box.**

Impact Definitions:

Incidental/Indirect: Provide **incidental services** indirectly related to the use or misuse of the expense or revenues (i.e., **data entry, recordkeeping, minor equipment maintenance**).

Supportive: Provide **supportive advice, analysis, or related services** which impact the expense or revenues but with **no authority to actually spend the budget**. May collect or process revenues/expenses.

Recommending/Contributory: Have a **strong, but not controlling** voice in decisions on the budget; can **authorize or recommend expenditures within an approved budget**. Actions may have a direct contribution on the methods used to generate revenues.

Controlling/Major Impact: Have the major **controlling/authorizing** influence on decisions affecting the expense/revenues, where the impact of others is mainly advisory; have full **authority to commit the work unit** to a specific course of action. May have a major impact on revenue.

Delegating/Directing: Have **full authority to delegate** control of the budget to subordinate personnel. **May plan and direct revenue generating activity.**

IMPACT OF DECISIONS

This factor identifies the impact of the position on the functions of Penn. Impact is measured by the importance of the decisions or final recommendations the position typically renders. Consider the impact of the position when everything is running smoothly, **not** when **unique situations** arise or **worst case scenarios** are presented.

Please check the box which most closely describes the impact of your decisions.

1. Decisions and impact are **normally limited to my position.**
2. Decisions and impact are limited to decisions and planning within a small group or activity and **normally affect only the assigned department.**
3. There is moderate responsibility for making recommendations or decisions which **usually affect the assigned department**, but **may at times** affect the operations, services, individuals, or activities **of others outside of the assigned department.**
4. There is moderate responsibility for making recommendations or decisions which **usually affect the assigned department**, but **may at times** affect operations, services, individuals, or activities **of the assigned school/center.**
5. There is major responsibility for making decisions and final recommendations which routinely affect the **activities of a school/center.** Position duties **may include** responsibility for developing strategic plans **for one or more schools/centers.**
6. The work involves leadership which **routinely affects schools/centers of Penn and/or the surrounding community** in a demonstrable way.
7. The position has **primary responsibility for the long-range future of Penn** and affects operations beyond the scope of Penn including the local jurisdiction and Philadelphia community.

5. COMPLEXITY

Complexity is measured in terms of:

- the nature of the tasks performed and the reliance on policies and procedures;
- the extent of problem solving capabilities necessary;
- the level of analytic and organizational ability required.

1. **Standardized:** Work consists of a **few repetitive duties**. Tasks are restricted in scope, well-defined and clearly-prescribed; standard procedures guide all work. Problems are solved by reporting them to a supervisor.
2. **Routine:** Work consists of **routine tasks, processes, or operations**. The incumbent selects and applies several clearly-prescribed, standard policies and procedures requiring little interpretation. Problems are solved by choosing between a few clear choices or discussing them with a supervisor.
3. **Basic:** Work consists of **moderately complex procedures and tasks** where basic analytic ability is required. Work may involve the comparison of numbers, selection of appropriate guidelines and procedures, or identification of appropriate actions to follow. Answers are usually found by selecting from specific choices defined in work policies or procedures.
4. **Varied:** Work is **complex and varied** and requires the selection and application of technical and detailed guidelines. Problems are not easy to identify, but are similar to those seen before. Moderate analytic ability is needed to gather and interpret data where results/answers can be found after analysis of several facts. Solutions can often be found by using methods chosen before in other situations.
5. **Analytic:** Work is **non-standardized and widely varied** requiring the interpretation and application of a substantial variety of procedures, policies, and/or precedents used in combination. Frequently, the application of multiple, technical activities is employed; therefore, analytical ability and inductive thinking are required. Problem solving involves identification and analysis of diverse issues.
6. **Highly Complex:** Work is **broad in scope covering one or more complicated areas**. Policy, procedure, or precedent are typically created by this position. A high degree of analytic ability and inductive thinking is required to devise new, non-standard approaches to highly intricate, technically complex problems.
7. **Multifaceted:** Work is **broad in scope covering virtually the entire University's operations**. Policy, procedure, and precedent are created and/or approved by this position. Problem solving requires understanding and evaluation of the impact on Penn.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decision Making is measured in terms of:

- the opportunity for independent action;
- the level of direction and supervision received.

1. **Standardized: Little, if any, independent judgment or decision-making is required.**
The incumbent follows standard procedures in a predefined order for each assignment.
2. **Routine:** Work may occasionally involve non-standard assignments; however, the methodology is normally prescribed in detail by the immediate supervisor. There is **limited opportunity for independent judgment.**
3. **Basic:** Ongoing supervision is provided on an "as needed" basis. **Some independent judgment is necessary** to select and apply the most appropriate of available procedures.
4. **Varied:** Supervision is present to establish general objectives **relative to a specific project**, to outline the desired end product and to identify potential resources for assistance. **Independent judgment is required** to identify, select, and apply the most appropriate of available guidelines and procedures, interpret precedents, and adopt standard methods or practices to meet variations in facts and/or conditions.
5. **Analytic:** Supervision is present to **establish and review broad objectives** relative to basic position duties or departmental responsibilities. **Independent judgment is required to study previously established**, often partially relevant guidelines; plan for various interrelated activities; and coordinate such activities within a work unit or while completing a project.
6. **Highly Complex:** Supervision is present to **review established departmental and/or school/center objectives**. Independent judgment is required to **recommend departmental or school/center objectives**, evaluate new approaches to problem solving, and assess changing facts or conditions.
7. **Multifaceted:** Supervision is present on a **limited time basis** to review broad objectives. **Independent judgment is required to review and approve** major recommendations, establish procedures, and coordinate technical and administrative recommendations with University-wide policies.

7. PROBLEM SOLVING

Indicate the level of problem solving required in the job. This does not mean the most difficult problems faced, but **the typical level encountered over an extensive period of time.**

1. Work **tasks** are well-defined with clearly stated directions and guidelines. The work steps tend to be the same from day to day and usually cannot be modified. **Problems are solved by reporting them to a supervisor.**
2. Work **tasks follow the same order** and require little interpretation. Problems can be solved by choosing between a few clear choices which are clearly spelled-out through **talking with a supervisor.**
3. Problems generally involve the **selection of standard procedures**, organizing work, and checking results. Answers are usually found by **selecting from specific choices defined in standard work policies or procedures.**
4. Problems are not easy to identify, but are **similar to those seen before.** Solving them requires judgment such as setting priorities, evaluating results, or coordinating with others. Solutions can often be found by **using methods chosen before in similar situations.**
5. Problem solving involves **identification and analysis of diverse problems;** answers are usually found by **reviewing standard technical manuals and administrative procedures and modifying them for unusual situations.** Guidance is usually provided on what sources to review and solutions are reviewed before acceptance.
6. Problems are **complex, varied and only mildly related to those seen before.** Simply determining what the problem is requires major individual effort and/or consultation with others within the department or university. A high degree of analytical ability and inductive thinking may be required to solve highly intricate, technically complex problems. **Must be able to develop new and nonstandard approaches.**
7. Problem solving requires choice of courses of action which are limited by broad company policy and **requires understanding and evaluation of impact upon the University.** The problems may involve exceptional technical difficulty requiring consultation with outside experts. Policy, procedures and precedent are created and/or approved by this position. **Solutions affect University policy or the operation of Schools.**

8. COMMUNICATION

This factor identifies the responsibility for working with or through other persons to obtain results. The contacts or relationships may be inside or outside of Penn. In measuring this factor, consider: *why the contact is necessary, the importance and frequency of the contact(s), the amount of tact and persuasion typically required and whether your position must handle confidential information.* Contacts which are not work-related should not be considered.

8a. Internal Contacts Other departments, the student body, or other staff **within Penn.** Consider the importance of such contacts.

1. **Little or no contact** required except with immediate associates and the supervisor.
2. Requires **regular contact within the department** and **periodic contacts with other departments**, supplying or seeking information.
3. Requires **regular contact within the department** and **with other departments**, supplying or seeking information.
4. Requires **regular contacts** to carry out programs and to explain specialized matter. **Occasionally requires** contacts with officials at higher levels on matters requiring cooperation, explanation and persuasion.
5. Requires **regular contacts** to carry out programs and to explain specialized matters. Also **requires continuing contacts** with officials at higher levels on matters requiring cooperation, explanation and persuasion.
6. Requires **regular contacts with internal persons of importance and influence** involving considerable tact, discretion and persuasion in obtaining desired actions and/or the handling of **difficult personal relationships**.
7. Requires **continuing contacts involving difficult formal negotiations** calling for well-developed sense of timing and strategy and detailed explanation and interpretation of policies, rules and regulations and/or the handling of **very difficult personal relationships**.

8b. External Contacts Extent of contact with individuals **outside of Penn**, such as suppliers, the general public or other organizations. Consider the importance of such contacts.

1. **External communication with others is minimal.** Requires ordinary tact and courtesy.
2. Requires **occasional contact with outside agencies and the general public**, supplying or seeking information.
3. Requires **regular contact with outside agencies and the general public**, supplying or seeking information.
4. Requires **regular external contacts** to carry out organization programs and to explain specialized matters. **Occasionally requires personal contact** with the public involving the enforcement of regulations, policies and procedures.
5. Requires **regular external contacts** to carry out organization programs and to explain specialized matters. Also **requires continuing personal contact** with the public involving the enforcement of regulations, policies and procedures.
6. Requires **regular contacts with external persons of importance and influence** involving considerable tact, discretion and persuasion in obtaining desired actions and/or the handling of **difficult personal relationships**.

7. Requires **continuing external contacts involving difficult formal negotiations** calling for well-developed sense of timing and strategy and detailed explanation and interpretation of policies, rules and regulations and/or the handling of **very difficult personal relationships**.

9. MANAGERIAL SKILLS

This factor identifies the responsibility for directing others. Only the formal assignment of responsibility for directing others should be considered. Informal working relationships or temporary assignments should not be considered for the following questions. Tasks involved include:

- selecting staff,
- structuring and assigning work,
- guiding and advising staff, and;
- evaluating and disciplining staff.

Level of Supervisory Responsibility

1. Involves **no responsibility or authority** for the direction of others.
2. Has responsibility or **authority which is limited** to the direction of student or temporary workers.
3. **Responsible for orienting and training others**, and assigning and reviewing their work. May also be responsible for acting in a "**lead**" or "**senior**" capacity over other positions performing essentially the same work, or related technical tasks and reporting to a higher level on a formal basis.
4. Responsible for **providing limited supervision for one or more functions within a department**. Formally plans, assigns, directs, and coordinates the work of these functions. Typically responsible for performing some non-supervisory duties in addition to supervisory responsibilities. May perform staff evaluations and make recommendations regarding pay and/or performance.
5. **Responsible for making recommendations within a department** in the areas of compensation, staff selection, disciplinary action, complaints, staff performance appraisal, and similar supervisory duties. **Plans, assigns, and evaluates the work of subordinates** for effective operation and results of the unit.
6. **Responsible for supervising multiple functions**, with full responsibility for effective operation and results.
7. Has **overall responsibility for providing direction and guidance** for Penn.

10. SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE

Job-related Knowledge

While your position may require skills of more than one of the levels below, check the *one box* or level which most closely matches the knowledge and skill required. Keep in mind that the position may not require all of the skills listed for a given level.

- 1. Basic Skills:** Able to understand and use simple math and follow basic written or verbal instructions with a number of steps. Able to use simple hand tools or office machines.
- 2. Intermediate Skills:** Has knowledge of office or operational procedures. Perform basic typing/word-processing, bookkeeping, checking of records and posting of information to a database/spreadsheet, following instructions.
- 3. Advanced Skills:** Able to read reference materials, obtain information and/or perform intermediate mathematics. Prepare letters and/or reports, following policies and procedures. Able to operate various standard office machines.
- 4. Formal Technical Skills:** Requires extensive knowledge of a distinct trade or technical function. Know policies and procedures, and can recommend a course of action based upon these guidelines, modifying existing methods, procedures or forms as necessary. May work with software applications and retrieval of data.
- 5. Entry Professional Skills:** Requires entry-level knowledge of theories and practices of a professional field (e.g., theology, law, education, accounting, etc.). This level of skill is typically reserved for an individual with a four-year degree or with high-level vocational skills demonstrated by a number of years of on-the-position experience (i.e., management). Writes reports using technical data requiring considerable interpretation, developing new methods and procedures. Frequently apply knowledge to practical issues.
- 6. Advanced Professional Skills:** The professional theory and practice of the level above, but applied at the advanced level of a "seasoned" professional. Requires extensive knowledge of their professional discipline and a working knowledge of related fields. Understands information in several unrelated professional disciplines.
- 7. Multiple Professional Skills/External Expert:** Requires extensive knowledge in several professional disciplines and/or singular knowledge of a specialized advanced discipline. Has extensive ability to integrate information from many diverse areas. Requires extensive theoretical or highest level of organizational and/or business knowledge to manage a major segment of the University. Recognized expert in the field and consultative resource by others outside the University

11. INNOVATION/ CREATIVITY

This factor measures to what extent the job requires developing or improving procedures, policies, systems (computer), products, teaching methods and/or technologies in order to create competitive advantages for the University. Consider involvement as an individual as well as part of a work unit or project team.

1. Ideas contributed affect primarily **the job. Opportunities for innovations are rare.**
2. Work requires occasional involvement in projects that result in new ideas or methods. Improved methods generally affect **the immediate department.**
3. Work requires improving methods or procedures affecting delivery of **service to selected customers or students** or the completion of **small projects**
4. Work requires using original and creative thinking to develop new, moderately complex results. The results generally impact **several work groups, a large project or an extended customer base.**
5. Work requires developing imaginative and complex methods, procedures, products or systems. This is an important part of the job and results **generally affect a School/Center within the University.**
6. Work requires the development of innovative methods, procedures, products or systems. This is a significant part of the job and **results generally affect several School/Centers.**
7. Work constantly requires the development/enhancement of innovative and complex methods, procedures, policies, products or systems. **Results generally affect the University as whole. May impact the overall competitive position of the University.**