

Exhibit #3: Identifying Essential Functions

All job descriptions should include a job's *essential functions*. Identifying these functions is a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended) and is critical to the search for qualified job applicants. The following considerations in and basis for identification of *essential functions* are by no means exhaustive. The institution's HR office or attorney should be consulted for further guidance.

Some considerations in identifying essential functions are:

- Whether functions are limited in number;
- The frequency or regularity with which they are performed;
- Whether the former incumbent actually performed the functions;
- Whether the new individual in the position will be expected to perform the functions;
- Whether removing any of the functions would change the job.

A function is essential if

- The position exists to perform it;
- The number of other employees available to perform it is limited;
- The person performing the function is hired for his or her ability to perform it.

Essential functions are identified on the basis of

- Employer's judgment;
- Job description;
- Position announcements and advertisements;
- Proportion of time spent performing the function;
- Work experience of incumbents and individuals in similar positions;
- The nature of the job.

Beyond meeting the requirements of the law, identifying *essential functions* helps hiring managers gain a greater degree of clarity about what the position requires. This information is useful in delineating the requirements for the position, compared to factors that are preferred, although not essential, but that make one candidate more competitive than another.

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