

This material is part of a collection that documents the harassment, discrimination, and retaliation perpetrated against Alaska's women research scientists by their supervisor, with full knowledge (and arguably, "tacit approval") of their federal employer, the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

Bower, Cindy

From: Bower, Cindy
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 8:23 AM
To: Pantoja, Alberto
Cc: Contento, Janis; Philibert, Juli
Subject: RE: Position descriptions Technicians- ACTION DUE June 30, 2010

Alberto,

I have prepared KSAs for a series 0404, GS-09, Biological Science Laboratory Technician.

After reviewing the major duties of the position, I wish to offer the job only at the GS-9 level, since the Position Description of a GS-09 tech is written to allow co-authorship (as described in Standard Job #404-09, which you included in your email):

- Interprets and documents findings by preparing information to be included in manuscripts or preparing reports summarizing progress or results of research.

- Possesses the skill to prepare segments of manuscripts or reports summarizing progress or results of project in proper format.

It has become clear that here on remote Kodiak Island, any technician who cannot fully contribute to my research program would be of limited value.

With that in mind, here are the KSA's you requested:

Specialized Experience is experience which has equipped you with the following Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA's) required to perform the duties of this position:

- (1) Knowledge of biochemistry, microbiology, and/or food science.
- (2) Skill in operating and maintaining laboratory equipment such as microscopes, spectrophotometers, and other instruments common to an analytical laboratory.
- (3) Ability to prepare microbiological media and work aseptically with cultures, as well as to perform analytical techniques such as laboratory separations, extractions, chemical analyses, SDS-PAGE, and other methods of protein and lipid analysis.
- (4) Proficiency in using personal computers and software for word processing and data entry/manipulation with experience recording experimental data and creating summaries, charts, graphs, and tables.

Thank you for considering my request.

Cindy

Cindy Bower
Research Food Technologist

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From: Pantoja, Alberto
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2010 8:38 AM
To: alberto.pantoja@ars.usda.gov; Cindy Bower (Cindy.Bower@ars.usda.gov); Peter Bechtel (Peter.Becht@ARS.USDA.GOV)
Cc: alberto.pantoja@ars.usda.gov; Janis Contento (Janis.Contento@ARS.USDA.GOV); Juli Philibert (Juli.Philibert@ARS.USDA.GOV)
Subject: Position descriptions Technicians- ACTION DUE June 30, 2010

Peter/Cindy
Attached Standard Job Position Descriptions (PD) for series 0404, GS-05/09, Biological Science Laboratory Technician.

Please review the major duties of the position and provide KSA's. The file PD-last is a copy of an announced PD from one of the technician in the Aquaculture program; this PD listed KSA's. The two positions, pending ARMPS approval, will be announced with Kodiak as the work site.

Please provide comments and KSA's no later than June 25, 2010.

Thanks

alberto

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Secretary: Juli Philibert Ph. 907 - 474 – 1806; juli.philibert@ars.usda.gov

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This email is confidential and may contain privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient or receive it in error, you may not use, distribute, disclose or copy any of it, and you must immediately notify and return it to alberto.pantoja@ars.usda.gov

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Typical, but not all-inclusive, duties are illustrated by performance of any combination of the following:

Actively participates in one or more phases of the research process by performing a variety of complex technical duties, in a laboratory, field, or greenhouse environment, common to the assigned area of work, and contributes ideas towards the planning and sequencing of the technical aspects of the research.

Adapts, modifies or develops new techniques and/or procedures to satisfy the needs of the research project.

Performs the full range of techniques and studies using a variety of specialized equipment.

Maintains, calibrates and modifies complex/specialized equipment and automated systems used for test and evaluation procedures.

Independently initiates action to resolve or correct technical difficulties and results, or recommends resolution to supervisor.

As directed, searches for literature pertinent to area of research for new procedures or techniques to use in the laboratory, field, or greenhouse.

Collects, prepares, evaluates and verifies samples and supporting records. Maintains records and locates and compiles data and other information from various sources.

Keeps detailed records of experimental data. Tabulates, statistically analyzes and summarizes data using personal computers and software packages.

Maintains inventory of chemicals, stock solutions, etc., prepares solutions and reagents for use in the laboratory, field, or greenhouse, and safely disposes of waste material (both chemical and biological).

Keeps work-site in a neat and orderly manner.

B. EVALUATION FACTORS

1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION (FLD 1-5: 750 pts)

Extensive practical knowledge of the principles of biological science (e.g., plant pathology, plant physiology, entomology, biochemistry, microbiology, genetics, etc.) of the research being conducted, and ARS' policies and programs to lay out, schedule, organize, and execute the details of either: (1) a wide variety of types of

limited operational projects; and/or (2) one-at-a-time (and often long range) multi-phased projects, at least some of which have nonstandard technical problems that must be coordinated with others.

Practical knowledge of the basic theories and practices of the scientific discipline(s) supported.

Ability to adapt, develop or improve techniques and procedures.

Knowledge of the processes, methods, procedures and management practices necessary to perform a full range of complex duties in area of assignment.

Knowledge and understanding of the application of instrumentation used in analyses so that prescribed procedures can be modified to accommodate existing sampling and analytical conditions.

Skill to operate and maintain complex equipment systems common to the specific area of research which must be calibrated and synchronized to achieve desired results.

Ability to locate, organize and adapt information from published literature for use as guidelines for new procedures.

Skill in keeping exact and detailed records of data obtained from experiments.

Knowledge of the research project objectives sufficient to plan the technical aspects of experimental design and execution.

Skill to recognize results that are unexpected, unusual or erroneous and to independently initiate action to overcome technical difficulties or refer for professional resolution or interpretation.

Skill to obtain, tabulate, statistically analyze, and summarize data by graphic or other means. Familiarity with electronic and microprocessor-based calculators and equipment, and with computerized data storage and manipulation. Skill in the use of personal computers and software packages in the data collection, analysis, and presentation processes.

Knowledge of safe laboratory procedures.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS (FLD 2-3: 275 pts)

The supervisor or other designated authority initially provides direction on the priorities, objectives, and/or deadline for kinds of work previously performed by the unit and therefore covered by precedent. Assignments new to the organization or unusual assignments may be accompanied with a general background

discussion, including advice on the location of reference material to use.

The technician identifies the work to be done to fulfill project requirements and objectives, plans and carries out the procedural and technical steps required, seeks assistance as needed, independently coordinates work efforts with outside parties, and characteristically submits only completed work. The technician seeks administrative direction or decision from higher authority on the course to follow when encountering significant technical or procedural problems with the work.

Review is usually in the form of an assessment as to how the technician resolved technical and related administrative problems encountered. Accuracy of the data produced, quality of observations made, and the sufficiency of steps employed in planning and executing the work assigned are customarily accepted without detailed review.

3. **GUIDELINES** **(FLD 3-2: 125 pts)**

Procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines are applicable.

Incumbent uses judgment in selecting the appropriate guideline because of the number, similarity, linkage, and overlapping nature of the guides. The guidelines contain criteria to solve the core question or problem contained in the assignments, though the applicability may not be readily apparent, i.e., the guides often require careful study and cross-referencing.

4. **COMPLEXITY** **(FLD 4-3: 150 pts)**

The work requires the performance of various technical duties which involve differing and unrelated processes and methods. A number of possible courses of action for planning and executing the work exists, and the incumbent is given leeway or otherwise exercises discretion in choosing from among them.

Judgment is required to apply a wide range of conventional, established approaches, methods, techniques and solutions to new situations. The technician: identifies and recommends resolution of discrepancies in data based on a study of how the data interrelate; adjusts work methods to accommodate unusual conditions; and/or recommends or determines what data to use, record or report.

5. **SCOPE AND EFFECT** **(FLD 5-3: 150 pts)**

The work involves applying conventional technical and administrative solutions and practices to a variety of problems. Incumbent is involved in almost all phases of the scientist's study, and has responsibility for selected phases or conducts test applications of scientific and technical theories when the methods, techniques, and procedures are clearly outlined.

Work products directly affect the design and execution of experiments or the adequacy of such activities as long range work plans, field investigations, testing operations, or research conclusions.

6. **PERSONAL CONTACTS** (2b: 75 pts)
7. **PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Personal contacts are with employees in the agency, inside and outside of the immediate organizations, e.g., personnel from higher level organizational units, or, occasionally, resource individuals from State or local government units, or other Federal agencies.

The purpose of personal contacts is to: plan and coordinate work efforts; discuss technical requirements of equipment with manufacturers and resolve problems concerning the work or the peculiar needs of the organization; interpret data obtained and explain its purpose and significance; or reach agreement on operating problems such as recurring submission of inaccurate, untimely, incomplete or irrelevant data. The persons contacted are usually working toward a common goal and generally are reasonably cooperative.

8. **PHYSICAL DEMANDS** (FLD 8-2: 20 pts)

The work requires some physical exertion, such as regular and recurring walking or bending. In many situations the duration of the activity (such as most of a work day) contributes to the arduous nature of the job. In other situations, there may be special requirements for agility or dexterity such as exceptional hand/eye coordination.

9. **WORK ENVIRONMENT** (FLD 9-2: 20 pts)

The work involves regular and recurring moderate risks or discomforts which require special safety precautions, e.g., working with contagious diseases or irritant chemicals or working outdoors. The employee is required to use protective clothing such as gowns, coats, boots, goggles, gloves.

C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (Check if applicable)

- Supervisory Responsibilities (EEO Statement)
- Training Activities - Career Intern, Student Career Experience Program
- Motor Vehicle or Commercial Driver's License Required
- Pesticide Applicators License Required
- Safety/Radiological Safety Collateral Duties
- EEO Collateral Duties
- Drug Test Required
- Vaccine(s) Required
- Financial Disclosure Required
- Special Physical Requirements/Demands
- Other:

TOTAL POINTS: 1,565 points
(GS-7 Range: 1355 - 1600 points)

August 14, 1996

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A. MAJOR DUTIES

Typical, but not all-inclusive, duties are illustrated by performance of any combination of the following:

Participates as a team member with the scientist in all phases of the research process and assumes full technical and operational responsibility for specific phases of the research. Provides input into the initial planning of experiments.

Independently develops or designs various aspects of research projects on the basis of overall objectives outlined by the supervisor.

Contributes to the planning of various steps in experiment or project and to interpretation and documentation of findings.

Selects appropriate methods and procedures for carrying the project plan to completion.

Operates and maintains a variety of highly specialized complex equipment which must be calibrated and synchronized to achieve desired results.

Develops various procedures, devises new or improved methods or designs specialized equipment.

Performs highly complex techniques with unusual skill.

Determines the kinds and frequency of tests, observations, etc., to be made and the amount of data to be recorded.

Interprets and documents findings by preparing information to be included in manuscripts or preparing reports summarizing progress or results of research.

Keeps exact, detailed records of experimental data. Tabulates, statistically analyzes and summarizes data using personal computers and software packages.

Searches for literature pertinent to area of research for new procedures or techniques to use in the laboratory, field, or greenhouse.

Collects, prepares, evaluates and verifies samples and supporting records. Maintains records and locates and compiles data and other information from various sources.

Maintains inventory of chemicals, prepares solutions and reagents for use in the laboratory, field, or greenhouse, and safely disposes of waste material (both chemical and biological).

B. EVALUATION FACTORS

1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED **(FLD 1-6: 950 pts)**

Knowledge of the technical methods and procedures, management practices, ARS' policies and programs, and an extensive familiarity with the methods and practices of biological science (e.g., plant pathology, plant physiology, entomology, biochemistry, microbiology, genetics, etc.) in order to:

- a. design, coordinate, and execute complete conventional experiments when they are well preceded in scientific literature and within the organization's technical and administrative guides but require the exercise of judgment based on critical analysis and evaluation of objectives, past practices, source materials, alternatives among available work processes, and recognition of the intended use of completed work; **OR**
- b. participate responsibly with the scientist in most phases of the experimental process (development of original hypothesis and proposal excepted) and assume full technical and operational responsibility for specific phases of the experiments; **OR**
- c. administratively maintain a significant function or area of responsibility continually.

Expert knowledge of techniques to perform a large number of procedures, tests and experiments.

Ability to adapt, develop or improve techniques and procedures, and/or design special equipment.

Intensive knowledge of the project objectives sufficient to contribute ideas to the planning and sequencing of experimental designs.

Knowledge of the scientific processes, methods, procedures and management practices necessary to perform a full range of complex duties in area of assignment.

Knowledge and understanding of the application of instrumentation used in analyses so that prescribed procedures can be modified to accommodate existing sampling and analytical conditions.

Skill to operate and maintain complex equipment systems common to the specific area of research which must be calibrated and synchronized to achieve desired results.

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Biological Science Laboratory Technician
Agricultural Science Research Technician
GS-404-09**

Standard Job #404-09

Ability to locate, organize and adapt information from published literature for use as guidelines for new procedures.

Skill to interpret and document findings.

Skill to prepare segments of manuscripts or reports summarizing progress or results of project in proper format.

Ability to independently prepare a project plan and carry out experiments upon approval.

Skill to recognize results that are unexpected, unusual or erroneous, and to independently initiate action to overcome technical difficulties or refer for professional resolution or interpretation.

Skill to obtain, tabulate, statistically analyze, and summarize data by graphic or other means. Familiarity with electronic and microprocessor-based calculators and equipment, and with computerized data storage and manipulation. Skill in the use of personal computers and software packages in the data collection, analysis, and presentation processes.

Knowledge of safe laboratory procedures.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS (FLD 2-3: 275 pts)

The supervisor or other designated authority initially provides direction on the priorities, objectives, and/or deadline for kinds of work previously performed by the unit and therefore covered by precedent. Assignments new to the organization or unusual assignments may be accompanied with a general background discussion, including advice on the location of reference material to use.

The technician identifies the work to be done to fulfill project requirements and objectives, plans and carries out the procedural and technical steps required, seeks assistance as needed, independently coordinates work efforts with outside parties, and characteristically submits only completed work. The technician seeks administrative direction or decision from higher authority on the course to follow when encountering significant technical or procedural problems with the work.

Review is usually in the form of an assessment as to how the technician resolved technical and related administrative problems encountered. Accuracy of the data produced, quality of observations made, and the sufficiency of steps employed in

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planning and executing the work assigned are customarily accepted without detailed review.

3. **GUIDELINES** (FLD 3-3: 275 pts)

Incumbent works with new requirements or applications for which only general guidelines are available or with assignments where the most applicable guides are limited to general functional statements and/or work samples which are not always directly related to the core problem of the assignments, have gaps in specificity, or are otherwise not completely applicable.

Incumbent exercises judgment independently in applying the guidelines or extending their applicability to situations not specifically covered.

4. **COMPLEXITY** (FLD 4-3: 150 pts)

The work requires the performance of various technical duties which involve differing and unrelated processes and methods. A number of possible courses of action for planning and executing the work exist and the incumbent is given leeway or otherwise exercises discretion in choosing from among them.

Judgment is required in applying a wide range of conventional, established approaches, methods, techniques and solutions to new situations. The technician: identifies and recommends resolution of discrepancies in data based on a study of how the data interrelate; adjusts work methods to accommodate unusual conditions; and/or recommends or determines what data to use, record or report.

5. **SCOPE AND EFFECT** (FLD 5-3: 150 pts)

The work involves applying conventional technical and administrative solutions and practices to a variety of problems. Incumbent is involved in almost all phases of the scientist's study and has responsibility for selected phases or conducts test applications of scientific and technical theories when the methods, techniques, and procedures are clearly outlined.

Work products directly affect the design and execution of experiments or the adequacy of such activities as long range work plans, field investigations, testing operations, or research conclusions.

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6. **PERSONAL CONTACTS and** (2b: 75 pts)
7. **PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Personal contacts are with employees in the agency, inside and outside of the immediate organizations, e.g., personnel from higher level organizational units, or, occasionally, resource individuals from State or local government units, or other Federal agencies.

The purpose of personal contacts is to: plan and coordinate work efforts; discuss technical requirements of equipment with manufacturers and resolve problems concerning the work or the peculiar needs of the organization; interpret data obtained and explain its purpose and significance; or reach agreement on operating problems such as recurring submission of inaccurate, untimely, incomplete or irrelevant data. The persons contacted are usually working toward a common goal and generally are reasonably cooperative.

8. **PHYSICAL DEMANDS** (FLD 8-2: 20 pts)

The work requires some physical exertion, such as regular and recurring walking or bending. In many situations the duration of the activity (such as most of a work day) contributes to the arduous nature of the job. In other situations, there may be special requirements for agility or dexterity such as exceptional hand/eye coordination.

9. **WORK ENVIRONMENT** (FLD 9-2: 20 pts)

The work involves regular and recurring moderate risks or discomforts which require special safety precautions, e.g., working with contagious diseases or irritant chemicals or working outdoors. The employee is required to use protective clothing such as gowns, coats, boots, goggles, gloves.

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C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (Check if applicable)

- Supervisory Responsibilities (EEO Statement)
- Training Activities - Career Intern, Student Career Experience Program
- Motor Vehicle or Commercial Driver's License Required
- Pesticide Applicators License Required
- Safety/Radiological Safety Collateral Duties
- EEO Collateral Duties
- Drug Test Required
- Vaccine(s) Required
- Financial Disclosure Required
- Special Physical Requirements/Demands
- Other:

TOTAL POINTS: 1,915 points
(GS-9 Range: 1855 - 2100 points)

August 14, 1996