ESTABLISHING MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Tools & Techniques to Help Determine What's Really Needed

Minimum requirements are used to establish clear and appropriate eligibility standards for a specific position. Requirements:
- should not be so restrictive that they exclude candidates who might reasonably have the ability to do the job;
- should not present artificial barriers to employment;
- need to be practical in the sense that they are obtainable in the general labor market;
- should address Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) and the "soft" skills (i.e., characteristics, values and work ethics) required at the time of hire. KSAs that can be obtained on the job should not be factored into the requirements.
- need to be tied directly to the job duties;

"Minimum" means --- the cut-off point; the lowest level of acceptable education and/or experience needed to successfully perform the job duties.

Minimum Requirement = MMR:
- Mandatory – Absolutely required; least amount possible; "minimum"
- Measurable – Able to determine if the requirement is met
- Realistic – Likely to exist

Do not inflate requirements.

Ask for too much and you may find that too few applicants respond.

In order to be selected, a candidate must meet every minimum requirement.

Do a "reality check" by asking yourself -- How many people have ALL of the required KSAs? Of these, how many are likely to apply to, and accept, the job?

Avoid ambiguously written requirements. Make sure they're easily understood by all stakeholders – the job seeker, Human Resources, the interview committee and the hiring manager. Requirements should not be open to interpretation.

Take advantage of the "Preferred Qualifications" section of the job description. Preferred or desirable criteria enhance a person's capacity to do the job. These qualifications are "extras" that can help set applicants apart and can be used to establish the primary (Y1) and secondary (Y2) candidate pools.

Educational Requirements:
- If a "related degree" is acceptable, be prepared to define the appropriate degrees before the position is posted. See the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) website for assistance.
- When a degree is required, is a specific field necessary or would just the level/type of degree be sufficient? This could make a significant difference in the applicant pool.

Experience Requirements:
- Determine the <u>variety/type</u> of experience necessary to be successful in the role.
- List the <u>least amount</u> of acceptable experience.

Equivalencies:
- Equivalencies allow you to be more flexible which should result in a larger applicant pool.
- Preference can still be given to applicants who have the exact education and/or experience you'd like.
- If appropriate, you may want to consider one of the following options:
  - substituting experience for education;
  - substituting education for experience;
  - allowing a combination of experience and education

Software Proficiency Levels:
- To help determine appropriate proficiency levels, use the skills checklist provided by HR.
- When in doubt, set "basic" as the minimum requirement and make the higher level a preferred qualification.

<u>Additional Tools (to assist in writing job descriptions and requirements)</u>

- **Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP):** **http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/**
  Created by the U.S. Department of Education, the CIP contains titles and descriptions of primarily postsecondary instructional programs; useful for determining appropriate fields for educational requirements.

- **Occupational Information Network (O*NET):** **www.onetcenter.org**
  The O*NET program is the nation's primary source of occupational information. Central to the project is the O*NET database, containing information on hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation. Information from this database forms the heart of O*NET OnLine, an interactive application for exploring and searching occupations. *(After accessing the website, click on: Products; Toolkit for Business; download Toolkit for Business PDF; see page 8 for Guided Tour which describes the features and capabilities of the O*NET program; see pages 20 – 26 for Job Description Writing Tools.)*

- **Online Occupational Information Network:** **www.online.onetcenter.org**
  A free database created by the Department of Labor that provides information on employee characteristics and requirements; occupation specific information and requirements; and workforce characteristics. The database helps you develop job descriptions; allows you to search information on hundreds of occupations, including typical work activities and tasks as well as knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs); and provides information on employment outlook and wages. For position information, click "Browse" under "Find Occupations" then enter title or keyword in "Keyword" field.