



**American Water Works
Association**



GET THE JOB

Putting Your Best Foot
Forward on Paper and
in Person

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Know the Job Description:

This resource gives insight on what is expected of you if hired for the job and can be very beneficial to you during the recruitment process. The Job Description gives you a summary of the position responsibilities, duties that will be required of you on a daily basis and what the minimum requirements (experience, certification/licensing or education) must be fulfilled before you apply.

If Currently Employed by a Recruiting Agency:

Working for the agency gives you the inside scoop over candidates not currently working for your organization, so use it to your advantage. Set up a time to speak with the hiring manager for the position or to others in that role about what that position entails. Request to volunteer time in that department or job shadow those in that position to get a better understanding of what will be expected of you if chosen for the position. Doing this will help you determine whether the position is a fit for you and your long-term goals.

For External Recruitments:

Make sure the position and the hiring agency are right for you. Research the organization, go to their website and learn as much as you can about their operations, where they get their water and how many people work there. Learn about the departments and positions they have. Also learn about their employee benefits. The more you know, the better you can relate your experiences to the application, your resume and interview process.

Example Water Treatment Plant Operator Job Description

The Water & Sewer Authority seeks a highly responsible, detailed-oriented individual to operate the Example Water Treatment Plant.

The ideal candidate is a team player with excellent work ethic and adaptability. Candidates should have a positive attitude, excellent communication skills and the willingness to work with the team to fulfill the goals of the organization.

Position requires knowledge of the principles and practices applied to the operation and maintenance of a water treatment plant. This is accomplished by monitoring processes and maintaining proper plant balance to include adjusting chemical feeds. Position completes plant inspections and performs preventative maintenance. Utilization of various types of machinery and equipment including SCADA, forklift, lab equipment and general office equipment. Job requires working weekends, holidays, nights, and rotating shifts.

This position requires a High School diploma or equivalent and a valid North Carolina Class C Surface Water Operator's Certification with one year of experience. Applicants should have a good working knowledge of mathematics, chemistry and bacteriology. Must meet and maintain requirements of a safety sensitive position (ability to wear a full-face respirator, complete HAZWOPER training, etc.). Physical requirements include the ability to frequently exert 10-25 pounds and occasionally 20-50 pounds.



“BE SO GOOD THEY CAN’T IGNORE YOU.”

– STEVE MARTIN

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Now that you know all about the position, it is time to fill out the application. It is imperative to use what you have learned about the position to tailor your strengths, work and educational experience to match the job description. If the job skills of the position are completely new to you, then you will have to be creative on how you fill out the application. Use key words from the Job Description on both your application and resume, such as: “Knowledgeable of various safe work practices,” “Experienced in the use of hand tools and equipment,” “Highly motivated individual,” etc. Remember, you have to resemble the candidate described in the Job Description as best as possible.

RESUMES

The majority of agencies will not allow resumes to replace an application, so remember the resume is to highlight your strengths and experiences in your own format to complement the application. Like on the application, tailor your resume to your strengths, work and educational experience specific to the position. Keep it short and to the point: one page, one side should be plenty of space to highlight who you are and what you bring to the table. Avoid using over-the-top fonts and symbols; try using Calibri for the font as it is clear, readable and simple.

John/Jane Water Professional Smith

12345 West Water Road • Phoenix, Arizona 85013

Email Address • Phone Number

Make sure that critical information (name, contact information) is front and center

EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Safety-conscious with extensive experience operating large-scale equipment involving industrial, municipal, and residential construction-site preparation

- Proficient with backhoes, excavators, graders, rollers, aerial buckets, skip loaders, boom trucks, water trucks, dump trucks, stompers, breakers, and sweepers.

- Excel at coordinating site preparation and guiding crews to complete jobs on time and to specifications.

Provide an overview of key job responsibilities and make sure that they align with the job you are applying for.

Use an "About Me" section to highlight important things that you would like to showcase to employers

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABC WATER UTILITY — PHOENIX, ARIZONA

6/2010 to Present

Lead Equipment Operator

Oversee and directly perform extensive site preparation activities for company specializing in major industrial construction projects. Examine site conditions and conduct soil analyses. Operate earthmovers, graders, backhoes, and front loaders. Coordinate major equipment repairs with vendors and perform daily safety and operability inspections. Supervise team of four equipment operators, providing training to optimize workflow and ensure operations comply with regulatory requirements.

- Achieved 96% operability rate for equipment due to continual emphasis on regular maintenance and inspection.
- Demonstrated strong capacity for team building by leading site preparation team to complete mission-critical projects on time or ahead of schedule.

ARIZONA WATERWORKS — PHOENIX, ARIZONA

3/2007 to 6/2010

Senior Maintenance Worker

Use additional bullets to show major accomplishments that you are proud of

Operated several types of heavy construction equipment including backhoes, skip loaders, stompers, boom trucks, and sweepers. Identified equipment needs to complete multiple projects targeting street, sidewalk, and sewer line construction, maintenance, and repair. Ensured optimal operating condition of equipment; performed minor fixes and reported major repair needs to management. Trained junior maintenance staff on equipment safety.

- Commended for dedication and commitment; held perfect attendance record for three years.
- Maximized equipment uptime by suggesting improvements for reporting and completing repairs.

PHOENIX INDUSTRIAL — PHOENIX, ARIZONA

1/2003 to 2/2007

Equipment Operator

Performed site preparation work for residential construction company; operated various equipment such as backhoes, graders, front loaders, dump trucks, aerial buckets, water trucks, and sweepers. Prepared foundations, leveled sites, prepared drainage and sewer lines, and performed gravel backfilling. Communicated with site manager and contractors to ensure completed work met specifications.

Include the training and license information that you have

- Proactively learned to read and interpret blueprints with accuracy.
- Commended as hardworking team player; remained flexible and committed to ensuring on-time project completion

LICENSURE / TRAINING

- State of Arizona Class 'C' Commercial Driver's License
- On-site Equipment Safety Program

THE INTERVIEW

First Impression:

The initial interaction you make in the interview is very important: shake everyone's hand, look them in the eye and start by expressing your thanks for the opportunity. Understand that self-awareness is key—you have to be confident in your abilities and what you can contribute to the organization as well as be honest about what you do not know. The first 5 minutes of interaction are crucial so make sure to bring great energy and enthusiasm, and be assertive.

Your Responses:

You researched the position and the organization, and you should feel confident in answering how you have prepared for the position and why you are the best candidate, as well as discuss some of the technical duties required of the position.

Stay Focused:

It is important that you stick to the questions being asked of you, and not to ramble on and on. When they ask you each question, before you answer, repeat the question aloud or in your head so that you understand what they are asking...nothing more, nothing less.

Stay Positive:

Some questions they may ask you are to test you on how you view certain situations—always keep your answers positive! “What do you like least about your current job?” STOP, think about your answer, and spin the question around with an answer like, “I really like my current job and the work that I do. I am sure we would all like to change a few things about our organization but I tend to look at the positives and stay focused on the goals and my work.”

Honesty:

Remember the panel created the interview questions, so they know the answers or are looking for certain responses, so if you are unsure of an answer there is nothing wrong with admitting that you do not know or are not experienced in the subject matter. Honesty goes a long way.

Example Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why do you want this job? What attracted you to this company?
- Where would you like to be in your career five years from now?
- Tell me about a challenge or conflict you've faced at work, and how you dealt with it.
- What type of work environment do you prefer?
- How would your boss and co-workers describe you?

**REMINDE YOURSELF,
THIS IS THE BEST
OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE
SO SEIZE THE MOMENT,
PUT YOUR BEST FOOT
FORWARD AND GET THE
JOB!**



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Send the agency's human resources department and hiring managers a follow-up email or a hand-written thank you card. Taking the time to express your gratitude for considering you for their position shows humility and that you respect their time and efforts. Although this might not change the outcome of their decision, it will make a great last impression.

IT'S UP TO YOU: YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS IF YOU ARE READY TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITIES OR TO MAKE A CHANGE.

The American Water Works Association and WaterWisePro Training have teamed up to create resources for operators looking to start or advance their careers.

We hope that these resources offer motivation and guidance for those front-line workers who are or will be making a difference in the future of water.

AWWA's Water System Operations (WSO) brand includes a variety of certification resources that fit any study style.

WaterWisePro Training offers distribution and treatment exam prep courses in various states and represents the California-Nevada section.



Steve Hernandez, WaterWisePro Training



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Association**



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