

Dear Claudia,

# How can I make sure I'm paid enough for all the work I do?

Dear Claudia:

Three years ago when I started working here as a clerk-typist my job description outlined the responsibilities of the position as: typing all correspondence and reports, answering phones, and taking messages for department heads.

During the past year, however, I've taken on a few new duties. Now I gather and compile information for monthly reports, set up weekly meetings, and act as the department secretary when the manager's secretary is sick or on vacation.

In spite of the additional work, my position and salary remain the same. I feel uncomfortable approaching my supervisor to ask for a raise, but I feel like I'm entitled to one. How can I approach this?

"Underpaid"

Dear "Underpaid":

Your dilemma is quite common among new employees in the business world. Going beyond the prescribed limits of one's job is the mark of an upwardly mobile professional. But then, so

is a higher salary.

Many organizations review their job descriptions only every two to five years, which isn't really often enough. Consequently, new responsibilities are assumed by employees whose job de-

If you do get a chance to rewrite your job description, remember it should consist of four parts: First,



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scriptions quickly become obsolete.

As a rule of thumb, the job description should be reviewed when: the job content changes; the organizational structure changes; the employee or supervisor requests a review.

In your case, a review is definitely in order. And if your duties have really increased as much as you say, so is a raise.

When asking for one, remember to avoid the perception that you're being demanding or belligerent. Try presenting your case as though you're doing your supervisor a favor instead of delivering an ultimatum.

If, as you say, the job description clearly defines what is and is not your job, you are completely within your rights to resist taking on the new tasks until some salary adjustment has been made.

It's conceivable your employer doesn't realize what's going on and, when he does, he might very well realize that paying you a little more to do the extra work is still far cheaper than hiring someone else to do it and more convenient than doing it himself.

job identification. This should include job title, department, and status.

Second, there is the job summary. This lists major functions and activities you're expected to perform. Third, there is the listing of job duties. This section includes the major responsibilities but does not list specifics.

Finally, the job description should include job accountability. This describes the results expected when the job is performed satisfactorily. It defines the standards by which your performance will be measured.

You may also have to wait a while for results. But whatever happens, the discussion between you and your boss will increase the level of understanding between you, and that's ultimately to your advantage.

Questions? Questions for Claudia can be addressed to 5007 Pacific Highway East, #22, Tacoma, WA 98424.

(C) 1988 Dear Claudia

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