



ILLINOIS LOCAL CHAMBER GUIDES NO. 5 -- SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION of the COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN and HOW TO GET THE JOB DONE

**LOCAL CHAMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Sponsored by the Illinois Chamber and the Illinois
Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives**

Clear job descriptions for committee and task force chairmen are necessary elements in meeting, efficiently and effectively, the goals and objectives of the Chamber Program of Work.

Chambers of Commerce often stagnate and sometimes even lose their leadership roles within a community due to the ineffective use of volunteers. This is normally traced back to a combination of two major factors, one of which is the absence of direction of volunteers. The other factor is the absence of a current program of work which responds to the significant concerns of both the membership and community.

Leadership is available within all communities as well as countless hours of additional volunteer time. The key element in tapping these available resources is, again, direction. Job descriptions are the first step in the development of volunteer leadership resources.

Job descriptions should be reviewed annually and updated on an as needed basis depending on the current needs of the organization and reflective of any changes in the organization's structure.

This sample job description is provided to give Illinois chambers some guidance as to the content and suitable language for job description development.

Thanks should be given to the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management's materials which were drawn upon in developing this sample document.

Finally, this sample job description is only a guide. Each chamber, based on its own unique characteristics and structure, must determine the general and specific duties of its Committee and Task Force Chairmen.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMITTEE OR TASK FORCE CHAIRMAN

The basic function of a committee or task force chairman shall be to:

1. Get action from his/her committee or task force.
2. Get work done through his/her committee or task force.

The committee or task force chairman shall see to it that the committee or task force performs the functions prescribed or authorized by the Board of Directors. His/her authority and that of the committee or task force has been vested in him/her by the Board of Directors through the President. He/she shall be directly responsible to the Board of Directors.

The chairman shall be responsible for:

1. Calling meetings of the committee or task force.
2. Providing ample opportunity for all committee or task force members to express themselves.
3. Bringing about formal action from the committee or task force.
4. When this formal action requires work to be performed, he/she shall divide the responsibilities among the members of the committee or task force and assign specific responsibilities to each member.
5. It shall be the responsibility of the committee or task force chairman to set deadlines for work to be completed and to check from time to time with members of his/her committee or task force who have been assigned to work to see to it that the work is being done.
6. The chairman may assign certain portions of the work to himself/herself, but he/she should exercise caution in this direction since it is easy for too much of the workload to fall on the chairman's shoulders.
7. He/she may, at the discretion of the President, be called upon to report directly to the Board of Directors on the performance of his/her committee, or he/she may request an opportunity to report.

Specified functions of the committee or task force assigned to the chairman shall be outlined in written form and this outline shall serve as the basis for all committee or task force activity.

HOW TO GET THE JOB DONE

A. Getting Organized:

1. Acquaint yourself thoroughly with the specific purpose of the committee or task force and the problem to be solved or the action needed.

2. Select carefully the people who will work with you.
3. In some cases, a phone call to each member, explaining the purpose of the committee or task force and announcing the date and place of the first meeting, is very much in order.
4. Send, or cause to be sent, a card announcing your meeting and something about the agenda on it.

B. Conducting Meetings:

1. First meeting:

- a. Summarize the purpose of the committee or task force; what has been done previously; and the problems to be solved.
- b. Encourage every member to contribute to discussion.
- c. **Do not dominate discussion, but do steer it and keep it on the subject at hand.**
- d. Call for definite decisions as to a course of action. **This is important.**
- e. **This is even more important:** Delegate the workload the committee or task force has decided to do, to each member.

Do nothing yourself that someone else can do.

Leave no part of the workload to yourself except that of general coordinator.

- f. Set a definite time limit for each job to be done. That may be the time of your next meeting. **This is very important.**

C. The Follow-Through:

1. Do not just assume that everyone will do what he/she said he/she would do by the specified time. People are busy and it is easy to put things off or forget.
2. Call each member and remind him/her of his/her job by asking if it is completed a few days after the meeting. **This is very important.**
3. Call again as necessary.
4. Assist people with their assignments only where absolutely necessary.

Committee or Task Force Chairmanship isn't really difficult. **The answer is in how well you follow the plan.** If you discard much of the above procedure, you become a one-man/woman committee or task force doing the work yourself. Follow it to the letter, and you'll have a smooth-functioning program and your committee or task force will keep up their enthusiasm for it.

OUTLINE OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

(Name of Committee/Task Force)

(Name) _____
Chairman

Date and time of committee/task force orientation: _____

Committee/Task Force Meeting Schedule: _____ (When will they meet)

PURPOSE: _____

OBJECTIVES: 1. _____ (List goals of the committee/task force)
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

RESPONSIBLE TO: _____ (The Board of Directors)

REPORT TO: _____ (Generally a member of the Executive Committee)

CHAMBER POLICIES AFFECTING THE COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____