

Helpful Hints for Completing Duties Questionnaires

1. Try to use the terminology of the target job spec. when describing your job duties, without making it seem like you copied them word for word. For example, if the job spec. requires that you prepare reports for your Commissioner and higher level staff, and you do, say that. If the spec. requires you to reconcile payment vouchers with approved budgets, and you do that, say it in the DQ. If the higher job spec. requires you to “prepare,” “review,” or “compile,” something and you do, use those terms.
2. **ALWAYS BE ACCURATE AND HONEST.** It’s o.k. to try to present what you do in the most favorable light, or to mirror the language of the job spec. of the target class, but you have to do what you say you do on your DQ. If not, once your credibility is destroyed, it’s very hard to get it back.
3. Try to keep your description of each job duty to between 2 – 5 sentences in length.
4. List the duties you perform in descending order; i.e., from those performed the most (highest percentages) to those performed the least (lowest percentages). However, make sure to indicate that you perform the duties of the target class well above 50% of your time.
5. Try to list no less than five, or more than twelve, separate job duties.
6. Avoid use of acronyms and specific document titles. For example, “I research and prepare complicated reports for my Commissioner,” rather than “I prepare the XYZ report on Division ABC’s current PQR budget expenditures.”
7. You must be clear about what you do. Describe your job duties in concise generic terms.
8. Try to avoid overly subjective adjectives like “most important,” “critical,” “extremely difficult,” etc. to describe what you do. Use less value laden terms like “complex,” “extensive,” etc. when possible. It’s also o.k. to say that you prepare reports for your Commissioner, the Legislature, the State Auditors, etc. if accurate. Sometimes, who you prepare something for can convey the importance of your work product better than any descriptive term you can use.
9. It’s very important to have your immediate supervisor agree with your description on your DQ. Therefore, try to run a draft of the DQ by your supervisor before submitting the final version. Be willing to negotiate. If changing a few words around, dropping an insignificant duty, or changing a couple of percentages slightly will get your boss to sign “yes,” on the DQ – DO IT. But try and check with the Union first.