University of Houston-Downtown
Office of Human Resources

CAREER LADDER GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The UHD Career Ladder Program includes Pre-Defined Career Ladders through which staff employees are able to advance their career goals and move to a higher-level jobs within their department, division or the university…

The University of Houston-Downtown is committed to providing career opportunities and advancements to its staff employees. The UHD Career Ladder Program is established under PS 02.B.08, Staff Salary Compensation Program and Salary Guidelines and PS 02.B.12, Staff Training and Development Policy. The UHD Career Ladder Program includes Pre-Defined Career Ladders through which staff employees are able to advance their career goals and move to a higher-level jobs within their department, division or the university in accordance with the UHD compensation and classification program. In addition to the Pre-Defined Career Ladders, the Career Ladder Program allows for In-Range and Individualized Vertical Career Ladders when there is not a Pre-Defined Career Ladder.

In accordance with UHD'S Compensation Program, job reviews are required to determine the proper education and experience requirements, FLSA status and classification, title, salary grade and placement of the new position within its respective job family and job sub-family. The job families are used in the development of Vertical Career Ladders. Attention is given to external market factors and internal equity when setting standards for UHD jobs. The Compensation Program includes the creation and maintenance of formal job descriptions that accurately detail the duties and responsibilities of each job. Job descriptions are available to UHD employees who are interested in pursuing a specific career goal. Employees are encouraged to establish a career goal and develop a career path to serve as a guide in fulfilling the education, experience and training requirements of the desired higher-level positions.

The Career Ladder Program allows employees to move vertically through a career ladder to a higher-level job or horizontally to a position at the same level as their current job but in a different job family or sub-family in order to follow the desired career path.

Moving vertically or horizontally within UHD's Career Ladder structure is not a guarantee for any employee. There must be a need in the department for the new position and availability of funds for a salary adjustment, if appropriate. The employee must also meet the minimum requirements for the new position to be eligible for a career ladder job change.

DEFINITIONS

"Career Ladders are the progression of jobs in an organization's specific occupational fields ranked from highest to lowest based on level of responsibility and pay"
(SHRM)

CAREER LADDER

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), "Career Ladders are the progression of jobs in an organization's specific occupational fields ranked from highest to lowest based on level of responsibility and pay." A Career Ladder establishes a series of job levels within a job family or job sub-family where the nature of work is similar. The job descriptions outline the skills, knowledge and responsibility associated with each job required by the employee to develop a career path and move vertically throughout their career. A career ladder is usually limited to employees whose positions are at or below the director level, although an individualized career ladder may be initiated for employees at - or above - the executive director level as part of organizational succession planning.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS
Distinguishing characteristics are the key functional responsibilities of a job that make it significantly different from a job within the same job sub-group that is classified at a lower job grade.

JOB ANALYSIS/RECLASSIFICATION
The Job Analysis/Reclassification Process is an essential function in UHD's Career Ladder Program.

During the Job Analysis Process, detailed information related to a job, educational and experience requirements, internal and external factors and work environment are collected and reviewed. The review focuses on the job as it exists at the time of the analysis and with no attention given to the current incumbent in the position. The Job Analysis Process is a required step in the creation of all new jobsas well as the review and modification of existing jobs.

The Job Reclassification Process is the assignment of a new job title and/or grade to an existing position, either filled or vacant, following the submission of a Career Ladder Job Change Request form to HR. A position is considered for reclassification under the Career Ladder Program when there are substantial and permanent changes in the distinguishing characteristics of the job, the basic job duties, complexity and knowledge requirements. Reclassifications may result in a pay grade increase. Whenever a job goes through the job analysis/reclassification process, the job description is revised to reflect the updated job

information and competencies. Reclassifications may result in changes that affect the job family and career ladder and may require the reassignment of a new career ladder code.

JOB DESCRIPTION

A job description is a summary of the most important features of a job. The job description describes the distinguishing characteristics of the job, duties, supervisory responsibilities (if any), experience, educational requirements, position-specific competencies and special requirements, such as required licenses or certifications. The focus of the job description is the job itself and not on any specific individual who may fill the job. Job descriptions are created in the Office of Human Resources (HR) following a comprehensive job analysis using the information provided on the Job Analysis Questionnaire. Job descriptions are used for several functions including:

- Determining job value or worth
- Assigning a job to a job family
- Recruiting/selecting candidates
- Determining appropriate career ladders
- Creating training programs for employee development

JOB FAMILY

The job family is the broadest grouping of jobs within UHD and is generally a grouping of jobs based on the division. Larger divisions that contain diverse jobs and responsibilities within several departments are separated by departments and the larger departments become separate job families. Recurring jobs with similar skills and responsibilities that exist across all divisions may be grouped into a job family. For PeopleSoft purposes, each job family is assigned a unique three (3) character Job Family Code. The first two characters identify the job family as belonging to UHD and the third is an Alpha Character assigned to the job family.

JOB GRADE

Job grade is defined as a collection of jobs that have the same value or worth for compensation purposes. Jobs that form a portion of a specific job grade have similar job descriptions, knowledge, skills, abilities and requirements, thus making the pay scale similar for those jobs. Salary adjustments resulting from a career ladder change are based on UHD's salary structures and the new job grade. These salary adjustments must follow UHD's staff compensation policy.

JOB SUB-FAMILY

The job sub-family further breaks down a job family into smaller units based of the department's structure or job functions. Job families that represent a single department within a division may be further divided into job sub-families. The job sub-family allows positions to be viewed based on specific job functions within a smaller department or unit.

JOB SUB-FAMILY SUB-GROUP

The job sub-family sub-group is the smallest grouping of positions into small units for the purpose of creating job hierarchies. The sub-group is made up of jobs within the sub-family with similar job duties. The job hierarchies arrange jobs from the highest to the lowest ranking based on the job grade. The jobs

are assigned Career Ladder Codes within the sub-group with the highest grade having the smaller numeric ranking. For example, a manager in a sub-group is ranked "1" to identify it as the highest level.

TYPES OF CAREER LADDERS
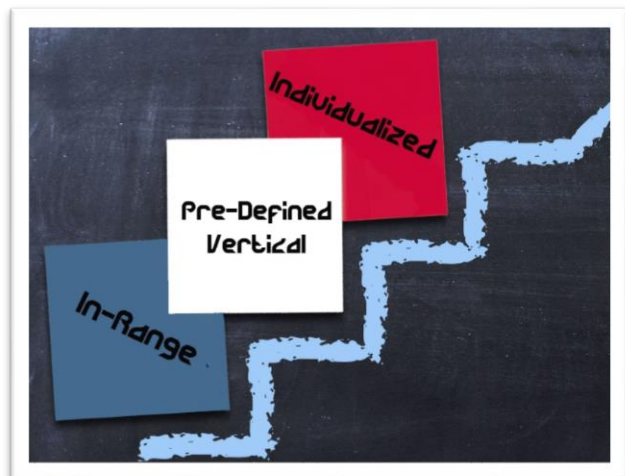
If an employee is in a position that does not have a pre-defined vertical career ladder and is assigned new <u>major</u> additional duties and/or responsibilities, an assessment will be conducted by HR to determine whether the added responsibilities merit a new title and higher grade.

PRE-DEFINED VERTICAL CAREER LADDER

Staff positions with a clearly defined hierarchy of job classifications are part of a pre-defined career ladder. These hierarchies consist of titles with multiple levels, such as Academic Advisor I, Academic Advisor II and Academic Advisor III. Employees may advance along the career ladder to the next level by achieving the required skills, knowledge and experience required for the higher-level job — provided the next higher level is available and necessary.

Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladders are also identified in a sub-group from jobs having similar duties and hierarchy based on their job grade. A career ladder may begin with Office Assistant as the lowest level and then advance to Administrative Assistant I, Administrative Assistant II, Administrative Assistant III and finally Department Business Administratror I. It is also possible for more than one job at a lower level to have the same next highest level job. For example, the Office Assistant and Records Technician I positions may both have the Administrative Assistant I as the next level job on their respective career ladders.

An employee's department may not incorporate the next level job outlined in the Pre-Defined Career Ladder. This does not limit the employee from advancing to a higher job and reaching their career goals. An employee may apply for a position within a different department as part of their career ladder path, provided the employee meets the job requirements outlined in the job description.

A Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladder may not include all jobs within the job sub-family. Jobs that are a part of a sub-family but not included in the Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladder are considered to have Individualized or In-Range Career Ladders.

INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER LADDER

Individualized Career Ladders allow employees to acquire the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to move into an equal or higher-level job within the same or a different job family or job-sub family. Employees requesting a vertical Individualized Career Ladder are usually at the executive/administrative level or at the highest level job within their current job sub-family where a Pre-Defined Career Ladder does not exist for their current job. Individualized Vertical Career Ladders are often associated with a division's succession plan. Jobs assigned to an Individualized Career Ladder hold the rank of Director or higher. Horizontal individualized career ladders also exist and are geared toward employees at the director level or higher who choose to move to a different position, at their current salary grade, but in a different job family or job sub-family. For example, the Director of Financial Reporting may decide to change career paths by moving to the Director of Student Accounting and Collections position if he/she meets the requirements of the position. These two positions are in different job sub-familes, as per below.

(G1) Finance & Accounting
       G1A   Administration
       G1B   General Accounting
       G1C   Accounts Payable
       G1D   Travel
       G1E   Student Accounting

IN-RANGE CAREER LADDER

In-Range Career Ladders are available for jobs that do not have Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladders. If an employee is in a position that does not have a Pre-Defined Vertical Career Ladder and is assigned new major additional duties and/or responsibilities, an assessment will be conducted by HR to determine whether the added responsibilities merit a new title and higher grade. As with Pre-Defined Career Ladders, salary adjustments are not automatic. There must be a documented need for the employee to take on the additional duties and all changes must be approved by the employee's supervisor in concurrence with the department head and HR. These assessments are made on a case-the employee's supervisor.ted by

Table I - Example Job Hierarchy

The table below is a sample job hierarchy used to develop a career ladder. This is only a example and does not reflect UHD current job titles. This chart depicts five departments and three job families. Existing job titles may differ in each department. The career ladder below moves the Administrator I to Administrator II then to Administrator III, as indicated in Department 5.

Highest Level 1	President				
Level 2	Sr. Vice President				
	Job Family A	Job Family A	Job Family B	Job Family B	Job Family C
	Department 1	**Department 2**	**Department 3**	**Department 4**	**Department 5**
Level 3	Vice President	Vice President	Vice President	Vice President	Vice President
Level 4		Associate/Assistant Vice President	Associate/Assistant Vice President t		
Level 5	Executive Director	Executive Director			Executive Director
Level 6		Director	Director	Director	
Level 7		Associate/Assistant Director	Associate/Assistant Director		Associate/Assistant Director
Level 8	Manager			Manager	
Level 9		Administrator III	Administrator III		Administrator III
Level 10	Administrator II	Administrator II			Administrator II
Level 11	Administrator I		Specialist IV	Administrator I	Administrator I
Level 12	Coordinator	Coordinator	Specialist III	Supervisor	
Level 13			Specialist II	Staff III	Staff III
Level 14	Specialist I	Staff II	Specialist I	Staff II	Staff II
Level 15	Staff I	Staff I		Staff I	Staff I

- Department 1 does not have the Administrator III job level. An Administrator II in Department 1 would follow their Pre-Defined Career Ladder to Department 2 where the Administrator III job level exists within the job family.

- A Specialist I in Department 3 could follow their Pre-Defined Career Ladder to the highest level of the job, the Specialist IV, in their current department. Once the employee reached Specialist IV, their career ladder would no longer be pre-defined but become an In-Range Career Ladder. If this employee is not interested in moving to a different job family, their career ladder growth will be established through the In-Range Career Ladder procedures.

- In Department 5 an employee at level Staff I could advance to the highest level of their job, which is Staff III. The job family does not contain the next highest level job. There are three job titles at the next level within the other two job families: Coordinator, Specialist III and Supervisor. The employee can plan his/her career path to obtain the required education, skills and experience to move into a higher job within a different job family. Gaining experience may require a transfer to a job within a different department that is at the same level. For example, the Staff III employee in Department 5 could request a transfer to the Staff III position in Department 4. From this position, the employee could acquire the skills to move into the Supervisor job in Department 4.

Table II – Determining the Career Ladder Type

Table II below illustrates how jobs are assigned to a Career Ladder Type. Using the job titles and levels from Table I, the two departments in the table below indicates the Career Ladder Type.

Department A			Department B		
Job Title	Next Level Job Exists?	Assigned Career Ladder Type	Job Title	Next Level Job Exists?	Assigned Career Ladder Type
Director	N/A	Individualized	Vice President	N/A	Individualized
Associate/Assistant Director	Yes	Pre-Defined	Executive Director	YES	Individualized
Manager	Yes	Pre-Defined	Director	Yes	Individualized
Administrator II	No	In-Range	Associate Director	Yes	Pre-Defined
Administrator I	Yes	Pre-Defined	Administrator II	No	In-Range
Coordinator	Yes	Pre-Defined	Administrator I	Yes	Pre-Defined
Specialist I	No	In-Range	Supervisor	Yes	Pre-Defined
Specialist I	No	In-Range	Coordinator	Yes	Pre-Defined
Staff II	No	In-Range	Staff III	Yes	Pre-Defined
Staff I	Yes	Pre-Defined	Staff II	Yes	Pre-Defined
Staff I	Yes	Pre-Defined	Staff I	Yes	Pre-Defined

- Departments A and B show the Director, Executive Director and Vice President with Individualized Career Ladder Type in accordance with the UHD definition for Individualized Career Ladder. UHD assigns any job at the director level or above as an Individualized Career Ladder Type.
- Department A contains two Staff I jobs and a Staff II level job. Since Staff II is the next highest level, both of the Staff I jobs would be assigned a Pre-Defined Career Ladder.
- Department A does not contain a Staff III level job, which results in the Staff II job being assigned an In-Range Career Ladder.
- Department A also contains two Specialist I but no Specialist II. Since the next level job does not exist, both Specialist I jobs are assigned the In-Range Career Ladder.
- Department B jobs appear to follow a job structure that contains most of the next level jobs at the lower level. Staff I job through Administrator I are assigned to a Pre-Defined Career Ladder.
- Department B does not contain an Administrator III level, which results in the Administrator II position being assigned to an In-Range Career Ladder.
- In Department B the Administrator I job is the next highest level for both the Supervisor and Coordinator based on the structure in Table I.

CONDITIONS RELATED TO UHD'S CAREER LADDER PROGRAM

New job titles may be periodically created through the Job Analysis Process and are then added to the Career Ladder Program.

1. Positions included in the Career Ladder Program must exist and have an assigned grade, FLSA classification and complete job description, including required experience, education, knowledge and skills. New job titles may be periodically created through the Job Analysis Process and are then added to the Career Ladder Program.
2. Vacant positions must be fully funded and posted in Taleo, UHD's applicant tracking system (ATS). **Staff employees may not be promoted into vacant positions**; however, they may apply for any open position for which they qualify, especially as part of the Career Ladder Program.
3. Duties and responsibilities may not be taken away from an existing employee solely for the purpose to create a career ladder for another employee.
4. Career ladder requests that are part of a succession plan should be identified as such at the time the request is submitted.

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The overall performance rating on the employee's most recent evaluation must be at the "Proficient/Meets Requirements" or higher.

1. The employee must be a regular staff employee. Student and temporary positions are not considered part of the UHD Career Ladder Program. Student and temporary employees may apply for a regular staff employee position.
2. Staff employees must successfully complete their probationary period to be eligible to apply for promotion or transfer to other positions within their own department or other departments. Exceptions to this provision must be granted by both the department head (or designee of the employee's current department) and the employing department and will only occur on a case-by-case basis.
3. The overall performance rating on the employee's most recent evaluation must be at the "Proficient/Meets Requirements" or higher. These ratings indicate the employee has the required skills and knowledge for their current position, which makes it possible for the employee to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the higher-level position. If the Career Ladder Request is for an employee who just completed their probationary period, only the Probationary Performance Evaluation is required.
4. The employee must not be on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or have any type of disciplinary action.

ALLOWABLE CAREER LADDER REQUESTS

It is necessary to allow sufficient time to evaluate employee's performance and how well they have adapted to the new position.

An initial Career Ladder Request may be submitted when the employee meets eligibility requirements. Future requests should be submitted following a review period since it is necessary to allow sufficient time to evaluate employee's performance and how well they have adapted to the new position.

In the case of Individualized Career Ladder Requests associated with a formal succession plan, the need to develop an action plan to move the employee into the higher-level job must first be established. The Career Ladder Request in this case is primarily for the purpose of establishing an action plan for the employee to acquire further skills.

STEPS IN SUBMITTING A CAREER LADDER JOB CHANGE REQUEST

HR will verify eligibility, assess the new job title and grade, if appropriate, and ensure the proposed salary is within compensation guidelines.

1. Identify the need for the higher-level job or added responsibilities to the current job at the existing level.
2. Prepare a brief justification to substantiate the need for the job change.

3. Determine is funding is available for a salary adjustment that may result from the career ladder job change.
4. If funding cannot be identified, follow standard procedures for requesting additional funding.
5. Review the effect of the career ladder change on the department's incumbents and organizational structure.
6. Discuss the proposed career ladder job change with the employee to determine if the employee is interested in pursuing a career ladder change.
7. If the employee is interested, have him/her submit a current resume and official college transcript(s), if the required education for the new position is at a higher level than for their current position.
8. Complete the Career Ladder Job Change Request form.
9. Initiate an electronic Position Request Form (ePRF) and attach the Career Ladder Job Change Request form, a Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) (if the proposed new position does not exist or if there are changes to the existing job description), a current resume, official college transcript(s) (if the required) and any other supporting documents.
   - A JAQ is not required on Pre-Defined Career Ladder requests since the higher-level job description already exists, unless changes to the existing job description are proposed.
10. Submit all documentation for approval.
11. HR will verify eligibility, assess the new job title and grade, if appropriate, and ensure the proposed salary is within compensation guidelines.

STEPS IN IMPLEMENTING THE CAREER LADDER CHANGE

…the manager must initiate the job change and salary adjustment through the submission of an electronic Personnel Action Request (ePAR) to update the salary and other job data.

1. Upon receipt of an approved Career Ladder Job Change Request form and executed ePRF, the manager must initiate the job change and salary adjustment through the submission of an electronic Personnel Action Request (ePAR) to update the salary and other job data.
2. Once the (ePAR) executes in PeopleSoft, the job data panels will reflect the new job title, grade and salary.
3. If a new/revised job description is developed, it will be uploaded to the HR website.

Appendix

University of Houston-Downtown Career Ladders
Job Families/Sub-Families

DTA - Academic Administration
- (A1) College Administration
- (A2) Program Administration
- (A3) Academic Affairs
- (A4) Research
- (A5) Library

DTB -Enrollment Management
- (B1) Enrollment Management
- (B2) Admissions
- (B3) Student Records
- (B4) Testing

DTC - Student Operations
- (C1) Student Affairs
- (C2) Academic Advising
- (C3) Financial Aid
- (C4) Student Success
- (C5) Academic Support
- (C6) Student Support

DTD - External Relations
- (D1) Communications & Marketing
- (D2) University Advancement

DTE - Office of Human Resources
- (E1) HR Services
- (E2) HR Operations

DTF - Administrative Operations
- (F1) Administrative Operations
- (F2) Facilities Management
- (F3) Police

DTG - Financial Services
- (G1) Finance & Accounting
- (G2) Budget/Procurement

DTH - Administrative Support
- (H1) Business Administration
- (H2) Administrative Assistance
- (H3) Customer Service

DTI - Technology Services
- (I1) Administration
- (I2) Enterprise Systems
- (I3) Web Development
- (I4) Technical Services
- (I5) Computing/Telecom
- (I6) Instructional Technology
- (I7) User Support
- (I8) IT Projects
- (I9) Non-IT Technical Staff

DTJ - President and Cabinet
- (J1) Executives

University of Houston Downtown
Job Family/Job Sub-Families/Sub Groups

DTA- Academic Administration

(A1) College Administration
- A1A   Business
- A1B   Humanities & Social Science
- A1C   Public Services
- A1D   Sciences & Technology
- A1E   University College

(A2) Program Administration
- A2A   Business
- A2B   Project/Program Administration
- A2C   Criminal Justice Training Center
- A2D   Urban Education
- A2E   Continuing Education
- A2F   Applied Business Technology Center
- A2G   Distance Education
- A2H   Theater

(A3) Academic Affairs
- A3A   Administration
- A3B   Assessment
- A3C   Institutional Research

(A4) Research
- A4A   Sponsored Programs
- A4B   Science Lab

(A5) Library
- A5A   Library Administration
- A5B   Librarians
- A5C   Library Support

DTB – Enrollment Management

(B1) Enrollment Management
- B1A   Administration

(B2) Admissions
- B2A   Undergraduate
- B2B   Graduate/International
- B2C   Veteran's Services
- B2D   Operations

(B3) Student Records
- B3A   Retention/Release
- B3B   Electronic Systems
- B3C   Process Planning

(B4) Testing
- B4A   Testing Operations

DTC - Student Operations
(C1) Student Affairs
      C1A   Administration
(C2) Academic Advising
      C2A   Advising
(C3) Financial Aid
      C3A   Administration
      C3B   Counseling/Processing
      C3C   Operations
      C3D   Compliance
(C4) Student Success
      C4A   Teaching & Learning Excel
      C4B   QEP
      C4C   Specialized Services
(C5) Academic Support
      C5A   Academic Centers
(C6) Student Support
      C6A   Counseling
      C6B   Sports & Events
      C6C   Disability Services

DTD - External Relations
(D1) Communications & Marketing
      D1A   Communications
      D1B   Web Content
      D1C   Marketing
(D2) University Advancement
      D2A   Administration
      D2B   Operations

DTE - Office of Human Resources (E1)
HR Services
      E1A   Talent Management
      E1B   Employment
      E1C   HR Systems Management
      E1D   Communications
(E2) HR Operations
      E2A   Benefits & Compensation
      E2B   Payroll & Records

DTF - Administrative Operations
(F1) Administrative Operations
      F1A   Safety & Compliance
      F1B   Emergency Management
      F1C   Business Services
(F2) Facilities Management
      F2A   Administration

        F2B   Operations
        F2C   MEP
        F2D   Building/Grounds Maintenance
        F2E   Heating/Air Conditioning
        F2F   Electrical
        F2G   Carpentry
        F2H   Painting

(F3) Police
        F3A   Police
        F3B   Electronic Security
        F3C   Dispatch
        F3D   Support

DTG - Financial Services
(G1) Finance & Accounting
        G1A   Administration
        G1B   General Accounting
        G1C   Accounts Payable
        G1D   Travel
        G1E   Student Accounting

(G2) Budget
        G2A   Administration
        G2B   Budget
        G2C   Purchasing
        G2D   Contracts

DTH - Administrative Support
(H1) Business Administration
        H1A   Business Administration
(H2) Administrative Assistance
        H2A   Administrative Assistance
        H2B   Executive Assistance
(H3) Customer Service
        H3A   Customer Service

DTI - Technology Services
(I1) Administration
        I1A   Administration
(I2) Enterprise Systems
        I2A   Enterprise Systems

(I3) Web Development
        I3A   Web Development
(I4) Technical Services
        I4A   Systems Administration
        I4B   Data Warehousing
        I4C   Network Administration

(I5) Computing/Telecom
        I5A   Computing
        I5B   Multimedia
(I6) Instructional Technology
        I6A   Learning Services
(I7) User Support
        I7A   IT User Support
(I8) IT Projects
        (I8A)   Administration
(I9) Non-IT Technical Staff
        (I9A)   Functional Systems
        (I9B)   User Support
        (I9C)   Management Systems

DTJ - President and Cabinet

(J1) Executives