

Job Description: My Addiction

Frame addiction as a job

Printable worksheet · 10 parts

Name _____ Date _____

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PART 1 OF 10

Welcome

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Job Description:

My Addiction

"It started as a side gig. Then it became my whole career."

Here's the truth nobody talks about: addiction is a full-time job.

Maybe it started as something fun—a weekend thing, a way to unwind, a "I can take it or leave it." But somewhere along the way, it punched a time clock. It had duties, responsibilities, and requirements. It demanded your time, your money, your relationships, your health, and eventually your identity. It paid you in false promises and charged you everything you had.

In this exercise, you're going to write the official job description for the position you held as an active addict—and then you're going to write your letter of resignation.

What You'll Create:

1. Job Title & Company — Name the position and the "employer"
2. The Hiring Process — When were you recruited? When did it stop being fun?
3. Work Schedule — Track the time investment across phases
4. Duties & Responsibilities — What the job actually required of you
5. Requirements & Qualifications — What addiction demanded you bring
6. Compensation & "Benefits" — What you thought you were getting
7. The Real Cost — What the job actually took from you
8. Performance Review — Rate your life while employed by addiction
9. Letter of Resignation — You're done. Time to quit.
10. Your Complete Job Description — See it all together

Therapeutic Note: Framing addiction as a "job" helps externalize it—separating the disease from the person. It highlights the enormous time, energy, and resources addiction consumed, making the unmanageability impossible to ignore. This exercise also honors a powerful truth: if you could work that hard for your addiction, imagine what you can do for your recovery.

Let's Write This Job Description

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The Hiring Process

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The Hiring Process

Every employee remembers their first day. And most people in recovery can remember when the job stopped being fun and started feeling mandatory. Let's map that journey.

When Were You "Hired"?

When did your addiction begin? What year, what age, what was happening in your life?

e.g., "I was 16, sophomore year of high school. Started drinking at a party because everyone else was..."

When Did It Stop Being Fun?

This is one of the most important questions in recovery. There was a moment—maybe a slow realization, maybe a single event—when you knew this wasn't recreation anymore. It was an obligation. When was that?

When did you realize this had become a job, not a choice? What happened? What did you feel?

What Was the "Job Interview"?

How did addiction recruit you? What was the pitch? What made you accept the "position"?

e.g., "It made me feel like I belonged. I was the funny one. The life of the party. It felt like the answer to every problem I had..."

Years Employed

e.g., "12 years"

Separation Date

e.g., "March 2025"

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Work Schedule

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Work Schedule

Addiction doesn't stay part-time. Track how your "work hours" escalated over time. Most people are stunned when they see how much time was consumed.

The Honeymoon Phase

"This is amazing. I've found the answer."

When did this "job" start? What was it like at first? How often were you "working"?

Describe what this phase looked like...

How much time per week did you spend on your addiction in the early days?

- ☐ A few hours on weekends ☐ A couple evenings a week ☐ Most weekends ☐ Several times a week
☐ Other

The Escalation Phase

"I might be doing this more than I planned..."

When did you notice it was becoming more frequent? What shifted?

Describe what this phase looked like...

How much time per week during the escalation phase?

- ☐ Most evenings ☐ Every day, a few hours ☐ Most of every day ☐ All day plus recovery time ☐ Other

The Full-Time Position

"I can't NOT do this. It's running my life."

When did it become a full-time "job"? When did every moment revolve around it?

Describe what this phase looked like...

How much of your life was consumed by the end?

- ☐ Every waking hour involved planning, using, or recovering ☐ It was literally a 24/7 operation ☐ More time than my actual job ☐ I lost track—it consumed everything ☐ Other

Notice the progression. That's the nature of this "job"—it always demands more hours. No addiction ever stays part-time. The time you spent on your addiction is time you can now invest in recovery, relationships, and rebuilding.

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Duties & Responsibilities

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Duties & Responsibilities

Every job has a duty list. What were your daily, weekly, and constant responsibilities as an employee of your addiction?

☐ Procurement ☐ Deception ☐ Damage Control ☐ Isolation ☐ Mental Gymnastics

Procurement & Supply Chain

The constant hustle of getting, maintaining, and protecting your supply

☐ Maintain an elaborate network of dealers, contacts, and backup sources ☐ Monitor supply levels with the precision of a Fortune 500 inventory manager ☐ Develop contingency plans for when the primary source is unavailable (at 2 AM) ☐ Conduct covert procurement missions disguised as "running errands" ☐ Budget (poorly) to ensure supply never runs out before payday ☐ Rotate liquor stores/pharmacies to avoid suspicion ☐ Drive across town/county/state lines when local supply chain fails

Add Your Own Duties

☐ AI Suggest

What other duties did your addiction require in this area?

Total duties identified: 0

That's a lot of work for a "job" that never paid you what it promised.

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Requirements & Qualifications

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Requirements & Qualifications

Every job posting lists what you need to bring. What did your addiction require of you as an employee? What skills, traits, and sacrifices were mandatory?

Required Qualifications (Select All That Apply)

☐ Must be willing to lie to the people you love most ☐ Ability to function on minimal sleep and maximum chaos ☐ Willingness to abandon all hobbies, interests, and passions ☐ Expert-level denial skills (minimum 3 years experience preferred) ☐ Capacity to ignore all warning signs, including medical professionals ☐ Must provide your own excuses (training not provided) ☐ Ability to maintain two completely separate identities simultaneously ☐ Comfortable with progressive isolation and loss of support network ☐ Willingness to spend money you don't have on things that destroy you ☐ Must be able to promise "never again" with a straight face ☐ High tolerance for shame, guilt, and 3 AM existential dread ☐ Ability to prioritize addiction above health, family, career, and dignity ☐ Must surrender all self-respect—phased approach acceptable ☐ Experience converting genuine emotions into justifications to use ☐ Willingness to work holidays, birthdays, and every day in between ☐ Physical stamina to withstand repeated hangovers/withdrawal/comedowns

Add Your Own Requirements

What else did addiction demand of you specifically?

What unique qualifications did YOUR addiction require?

"Skills & Experience" You Developed On The Job

What did you get really, really good at while working for your addiction? (Lying? Hiding? Manipulating? Multitasking chaos?)

e.g., "Expert-level lying. Could hide bottles like a CIA dead drop. Could function at work on 2 hours of sleep. Professional-grade excuse making..."

Flip the Script: Many of the "skills" addiction forced you to develop—persistence, resourcefulness, crisis management, pain tolerance, planning under pressure—are actually incredible strengths when redirected toward recovery. The same work ethic that kept your addiction running can power your recovery.

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Compensation & "Benefits"

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Compensation & "Benefits"

Every job has a benefits package. What did your addiction promise in the brochure? And what did the benefits actually look like?

The "Benefits Package" (Select What Was Promised)

☐ Stress Relief Reality: Actually doubled your stress within months ☐ Social Lubrication Reality: Eventually made you the person nobody invites ☐ Sleep Aid Reality: Destroyed any chance of actual restorative sleep ☐ Liquid/Chemical Courage Reality: Replaced real confidence with chemical dependency ☐ Creative Enhancement Reality: Killed creativity along with motivation ☐ Pain Management Reality: Created 10 new pains for every 1 it masked ☐ Mental Vacation Reality: The "vacation" became a hostage situation ☐ Sense of Belonging Reality: Belonging to a group of people also destroying themselves ☐ Guaranteed Fun Reality: "Fun" became "can't function without it" ☐ Reward After Hard Day Reality: Every day became a "hard day" that required a reward ☐ Better Love Life Reality: Made you emotionally unavailable to everyone who mattered ☐ Improved Focus Reality: You focused on one thing only—your addiction

Your Own "Benefits" That Were Promised

What other "benefits" did your addiction promise you?

The Actual Compensation

Looking back honestly, what did this "job" actually pay you? What was the real return on your investment?

e.g., "It paid me in hangovers, regret, broken relationships, and a bank account that matched my self-esteem—nearly empty..."

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The Real Cost

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The Real Cost

Every employee gives something to get something. But this "job" operated at a massive loss. What did working for your addiction actually cost you?

Financial Losses

Estimate total money spent, lost income, legal fees, medical bills...

e.g., "Spent roughly \$40,000 over 5 years on alcohol alone, not counting DUI costs, lost wages, and bar tabs I don't remember..."

Relationship Losses

Who did you lose or damage relationships with?

e.g., "My wife stopped trusting me. My kids learned not to count on me. My best friend from college stopped calling..."

Health Costs

What did this job do to your physical and mental health?

e.g., "Gained 40 pounds. Developed anxiety and depression. Liver numbers were alarming. Hadn't been to a dentist in 3 years..."

Lost Opportunities

What did you miss out on because of your addiction?

e.g., "Passed over for promotion twice. Missed my daughter's first steps. Could have finished my degree..."

Loss of Self

How did you lose yourself in this job?

e.g., "I don't know who I am without it. I stopped doing everything I loved. I became someone I don't recognize..."

Legal Consequences

Any legal issues, arrests, court dates, professional sanctions?

e.g., "Two DUIs. One night in jail. Probation. Almost lost my professional license..."

The Unmanageability Inventory: Look at what you just wrote. If this were an actual employment contract—if someone laid out these costs in an interview—would you have taken the job? This is what Step One means by "unmanageable." Your life wasn't working, and now you can see exactly why.

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Performance Review

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Performance Review

Time for your annual performance review. Not of your performance at addiction's job—but of how your REAL life performed while you were employed there. Rate each area honestly.

Attendance & Reliability

How reliable were you at your actual life responsibilities while working this "job"?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Team Player Rating

How well did you work with others (family, friends, coworkers) while employed by addiction?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Integrity Score

Rate your honesty level while working for addiction (1 = professional liar, 5 = completely honest)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Self-Care Rating

How well did you take care of yourself physically and mentally?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Job Satisfaction

By the end, how satisfied were you with what this "job" was giving you?

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Would You Recommend?

Would you recommend this "job" to someone you care about? Why or why not?

Average Performance Rating: — / 5

This is what your life looked like while employed by addiction.

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Letter of Resignation

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Letter of Resignation

You've seen the job description. You've reviewed the costs, the duties, the false benefits, the terrible performance reviews. It's time to quit. Write your official letter of resignation to your addiction.

Prompts to guide your letter:

- Why are you resigning? What's your reason for leaving?
- What did this "job" take from you that you want back?
- What are you walking toward now?
- What do you want to say to addiction on your way out?
- What will you NOT miss about this "job"?
- What does your new future look like without this employer?

☐ AI Draft Letter

Dear Addiction, // Please accept this letter as my formal resignation from the position of your employee, effective immediately. // After ___ years of service, I have come to realize that... // [Continue your letter here]

Your New Position: Recovery

You're not just leaving a job—you're starting a new one. What does the new gig look like?

New Job Title

e.g., "Chief Recovery Officer", "Full-Time Human Being"

New Employer

e.g., "Myself", "Recovery & Rebuilding, LLC"

New Benefits Package

What does recovery actually offer? Real benefits this time...

Your First Goal In The New Position

What is the first thing you want to accomplish in your new role?

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Your Job Description

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Your Complete Job Description

The full picture of the position you held—and the one you're leaving.

OFFICIAL JOB DESCRIPTION

Untitled Position

Addiction, Inc.

EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Date Hired:

Years Employed:

Separation Date:

Reason for Leaving:

Voluntary Resignation

Position: → Person In Recovery

Status: RESIGNED • Effective: IMMEDIATELY

Post-Exercise Reflection

Looking at the full job description, what strikes you the most about how much energy addiction required?

If you had invested the same time, effort, and creativity into something you actually cared about, where might you be today?

What's the difference between the "benefits" addiction promised and the real benefits recovery offers?

How does it feel to write a resignation letter to something that controlled your life?

What "skills" from your addiction career can be redirected to serve your recovery?

If someone you loved showed you this job description, what would you tell them?

Suggested Uses: Share in group therapy. Read your resignation letter aloud. Discuss with your counselor or sponsor. Revisit when you need a reminder of why you quit. Celebrate the new position you've accepted in recovery.

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