

City of South San Francisco  
Human Resources Department

**Communications Director**  
Class Description

**Definition**

Under administrative direction, plans, organizes, coordinates and directs public information, media communications, issues management, crisis communications, and civic engagement activities of the City; and does related work as required.

**Distinguishing Characteristics**

This single-position classification is a department head level. Through subordinate management and professional staff, the incumbent is responsible for the City's public information and communications functions. This position exercises independent judgment and discretion in the coordination of communications and advocacy activities with other departments and outside agencies to engage stakeholders and provides highly complex administrative support to the City Manager.

**Typical and Important Duties**

1. Develops, plans and implements Communications Department goals and objectives; recommends and administers policies and procedures.
2. Coordinates Communications Department activities with those of other departments and outside agencies and organizations; provides staff assistance to the City Manager and City Council; prepares and presents staff reports and other necessary correspondence.
3. Directs, oversees and participates in the Communications Department work plan; assigns work activities, projects and programs; monitors work flow; reviews and evaluates work products, methods and procedures.
4. Directs the design and implementation of marketing and advertising campaigns to promote City services, activities, programs and special events.
5. Collaboratively develops, maintains and promotes the City's brand.
6. Identifies challenges and emerging issues facing the City; works collaboratively with leadership team to recognize internal and external communications opportunities and solutions and defines and executes appropriate strategies in response.
7. Establishes short- and long-range goals and implementation plans for department services.
8. Supervises and participates in the development and administration of the Communications Department budget; directs the forecast of additional funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials and supplies; monitors and approves expenditures; implements mid-year adjustments.
9. Selects, trains, motivates, and evaluates personnel; provides or coordinates staff training; conducts performance evaluations; implements discipline procedures; maintains discipline and high standards necessary for the efficient and professional operation of the department.

10. Plans, organizes, directs, and participates in the City's public information, civic engagement, and media relations activities including developing and implementing internal and external communications strategic plans.
11. Serves as the City's Public Information Officer; directs the communications content of press releases, City website information, electronic communication and newsletters; prepares speeches, responses and related materials for public information purposes.
12. Serves as main contact for the City in the event of an emergency; provides professional and technical support to emergency services departments.
13. Serves as media advisor to the City Council, City Manager, and City staff; provides communications training and marketing and outreach support.
14. Represents the department to outside agencies and organizations; participates in outside community and professional groups and committees; provides technical assistance as necessary.
15. Builds and maintains positive working relationships with co-workers, other City employees and the public using principles of good customer service.
16. Performs other related duties and responsibilities as assigned.

### **Job-related Qualifications**

#### Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of communications methods and marketing techniques.
- Modern administrative and management principles, procedures and techniques, particularly as applied to the overall management of a comprehensive communications program.
- Principles and practices of public relations and community outreach.
- Effective public presentation methods to attract and inform a variety of audiences.
- Political issues, community development issues, and legislative developments of importance to the community and City.
- Principles and practices of leadership, motivation, team building and conflict resolution.
- Applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- Organizational and management practices as applied to the analysis and evaluation of programs.
- Principles and practices of organization, administration and personnel management.
- Social media, web design, and graphic/visual presentation methods.
- Principles and practices of budget preparation and administration.
- Principles of management, supervision, training and employee development.

#### Ability to:

- Organize, supervise and coordinate the work of subordinate employees.
- Analyze difficult problems, develop a positive course of action and follow through on its implementation.
- Demonstrate sound professional judgment, reason logically, and think imaginatively and creatively.
- Respond to tight schedules and pressures.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally, and with others to assimilate, understand, and

convey information, in a manner consistent with job functions.

- Properly interpret and make decisions in accordance with appropriate laws, regulations and policies.
- Develop and maintain good public relationships with City Council, commissions, and boards.
- Actively manage the department's staff so that a strong orientation toward public service, teamwork, the development of high quality products, and the achievement of desired results is maintained.
- Prepare and present clear, effective, and accurate staff reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other oral and written materials.
- Make effective public presentations in routine and emergency situations.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Take a proactive approach to customer service issues.
- Organize own work as well as the work of others, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and followup on assignments with a minimum of direction.
- Plan, distribute, direct, coordinate, review, and evaluate the work assigned staff and train staff in work procedures.
- Represent the City effectively in contacts with elected and foreign officials, representatives of other agencies, City departments, and the public, occasionally in situations where relations may be difficult or strained.
- Work in a safe manner modeling correct City safety practices and procedures; coach others and enforce adherence to safety policies and procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information.

Skill in:

- Using a personal computer and associated applications.

### **Experience and Training**

Any combination of experience and training that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities would be qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge, skills, and abilities would be:

Experience:

Seven years of progressively more responsible professional communications or public relations experience, including at least three years in a supervisory capacity. Prior experience as a reporter (electronic or print) is desired.

Training:

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college with major coursework in communications, journalism, marketing, or a related field. A master's degree is preferred, preferably in business, communications or public administration.

### **Licenses and Certificates**

All licenses and certificates must be maintained as a condition of employment.

Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid appropriate California driver's license and a satisfactory driving record.

### **Special Requirements**

Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment:

#### **Physical Skills:**

Able to use standard office equipment, including a computer; sit, stand, walk, kneel, crouch, stoop, squat, twist, and maintain sustained posture in a seated or standing position for prolonged periods of time; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; hearing and speech to communicate in person, over the telephone, and to make public presentations; lift and carry 35 pound boxes, files, and materials.

#### **Work Environment:**

Mobility to work in a typical office and/or field setting.

#### **Ability to:**

Travel to different sites and locations; drive safely to different sites and locations; maintain a safe driving record; work protracted and irregular hours and evening meetings or off- shift work for meeting attendance or participation in specific projects or programs; available for evening meetings.

### **Additional Information:**

- Approved: December 2014
- Revised Date:
- Former Titles:
- Abolished:
- Bargaining Unit: Executive Management
- DOT: No
- Status: Unclassified/Exempt
- Job Code: N190