



QUALITY STANDARDS FOR **ECO-COUNSELLING** IN EUROPE

ADDENDUM **Job profile**

Motto:
AN ECO-COUNSELLOR SHOULD KNOW
SOMETHING ABOUT EVERYTHING
AND EVERYTHING ABOUT SOMETHING

EUROPEAN WIDE PERSPECTIVE OF THE JOB PROFILE „ECO-COUNSELLOR“

The general job specification describes the job content, desired knowledge and skills on the European level. The general job specification is important for further improvement of knowledge and skills of the eco-counsellors and their professional development and career advancement. Thus it is a basis for development of the curriculum for vocational training for eco-counsellors. It can also be used for the staff recruitment.

It is important to identify key features and knowledge and necessary skills to hold the position of eco-counsellor. Soft skills, qualifications, personality traits and personal interests of the employee are of great importance. These aspects are likely to play an important role in successful mastering the requirements of eco-counsellor position.

JOB PROFILE SPECIFICATION

Information and consulting activities:

- inform the target groups (public, municipalities, companies) via phone and e-mail or in person
- retrieve, search, assemble, classify and process environmental data and information
- communicate with the target groups and use systemic counselling method to help them to deal with environmental issues of various kinds, such as:
 - wastes – waste prevention, waste management (separation, recycling)
 - prevention of pollution (water, air & soil)
 - nature protection and landscape conservation
 - energy savings, alternative energy resources
 - chemical substances – handling, prevention and use
 - environment-friendly household
 - green public procurement
 - environmental management systems
 - eco-labelling
 - bio-farming
 - sustainable consumption
 - administrative proceedings, public participation
 - right of access to environmental information – availability of environmental information, administrative procedures
 - resolution of complaints – to which authority submit a complaint, provide contacts to the authorities to be appealed to
 - environmental legislation, legislation concerning public authorities or administrative proceedings

- manage data – data and information analysis, handling and distribution to the applicants
- register and archive documents and data
- communicate with the media.

Communication and coordination:

- of negotiations between the public and representatives of local authorities and/or business representatives regarding environmental issues or local Agenda 21
- of draft amendments to the legislation instigated by the public
- in finding solutions and optimum procedures (process consulting)
- of actions related to administrative proceedings, e. g. landuse planning
- mediation
- conflicts´ solving.

Publicity:

- prepare publicity materials on ecology and environment
- create leaflets, brochures, articles, papers and other documents for various purposes.

Organizational activities:

- arrange events and activities focused on raising environmental awareness, e. g. educational events (seminars, workshops, public lectures, conferences), organic food fair, Earth Day, World Environmental Day
- prepare, coordinate and launch such events and activities.

Instructing activities:

- deliver papers for the public and professionals at seminars, forums and conferences
- conduct lectures, meetings or discussions on various environmental topics.

Self-financing, fundraising:

- locate funds to finance activities of the organization
- assistance in project preparations.

OFFICIAL POSITION WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION, DUTIES AND ROLES

Superiors:

In case of NGO:

As the organizational structure type employed in non-profit organizations is usually flat, subordination to the chief executive (director) of the organization is assumed.

Other possibilities include:

- a) consulting office manager
- b) environmental education centre manager
- c) project manager.

In case of local authority:

Subordination to the head of the department of environment or that of public relations is assumed.

Subordinates:

The position of eco-counsellor is autonomous. However, in large organizations the eco-counsellor may be responsible for the supervision of the staff members including:

- counsellors
- office team members
- volunteers
- interns and trainees.

Cross-functional activities:

Eco-counsellor in its work is also involved in activities related to:

- project management
- office team work
- financial management
- public relations.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Expected education qualifications:

Secondary/university/higher education in the following fields of study is considered to be most appropriate:

- Ecology and Environment Protection
- Protection and Formation of Environment
- Ecology and Landscape Conservation
- Water Management and Ecology
- Administration of Environment Protection
- Applied Landscape Ecology
- Industrial Ecology
- Water Management and Waste Management

- Engineering Ecology
- Veterinary Hygiene and Ecology
- Environmental Engineering

Professional knowledge and skills are of importance; the eco-counsellor should have a good grasp of environmental issues in general and specialize in a specific area of interest (energy, wastes, landscape conservation, etc.).

Ecology, biology, chemistry, agriculture, veterinary medicine, teaching profession or civil engineering background is also considered acceptable.

In case of education in studies not focused on ecology or environment protection it is important to receive further specific vocational training.

Further knowledge and skills:

- communicative command of English or German is an advantage
- competence in computer skills (HW and SW) and modern technologies
- advanced use of information and communication technologies
- wide comprehension and general knowledge
- good knowledge of legal requirements

WORK EXPERIENCE

Previous experience (public relations, non-profit sector, information services etc.) is welcome though not essential. The job is also suitable for university graduates with no work experience (they will gain experience while employed as trainings will be provided).

PROFESSIONAL AND PRACTICAL QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

The following skills and qualifications are considered to be an advantage:

- experience in non-profit or non-governmental organizations
- public sector work
- work experience in ecology or environment protection field
- interpersonal skills (supervision of interest groups, volunteers, organizing events or activities)
- instructing practice, presentations to the public
- awareness of and interest in a function of non-profit or non-governmental organizations

- project implementations, dissertation, thesis or other activities related to ecology or environment protection

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Desired personal attributes:

- responsibility, reliability and trustworthiness
- communication and presentation skills
- high self-motivation
- client focus
- stress resistance, effective problem solving
- ability of autonomous work
- creativity, ability to improvise and bring out new solutions
- analytic skills
- ability to work in team and to cooperate
- ability to deliver technical information to the public in layman's language
- openness to the ideas represented by non-governmental sector
- self-improvement, self-financing
- positive attitude to the nature and environment

OPPORTUNITY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Professional development:

Professional development of employees holding the position will be achieved through attendance at short-term trainings and workshops or long-term educational courses and programmes related to ecological and environmental topics, such as:

- waste prevention
- alternative energy resources
- law and legislation.

They will also be provided with trainings on topics necessary for their work, such as:

- communication skills
- ability to act under pressure

(the above mentioned trainings will be provided for all applicants and employees at the position of the eco-counsellor).

Further education will differ according to the individual specialization and focus of the employees.

Experience gained:

Employees will be given the opportunity to gain experience in the following:

- interpersonal skills
- communication and negotiations with institutions and their representatives
- communication and negotiations with the management of organizations and enterprises
- communication with foreign organizations in pursuance of international seminars or internships.

Career advancement:

Within the organization there will be opportunities to be promoted to the position of:

- consulting office manager
- project manager
- organizational manager

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Working hours:

- routinely from 8–9 a. m. to 4–5 p. m.
- 1–2 times a week working hours to 5–6 p. m.
- presumption – 3 times a month staff mission or weekend event
- full time employment – main status

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Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

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