SOUTH COAST WATER DISTRICT

PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST

DEFINITION:
The Public Information Specialist- Website and Social Engagement- is in charge of the overall management of content and design of the District’s corporate website. Performs a variety of routine to complex professional-level duties. Participates in the development, implementation, and coordination of public relations and community outreach activities led by the Public Information Officer. Provides creative services and technical writing for newsletters, brochures, presentations, and information art pieces. This individual will oversee the website content publication process in which other District departments and office units can create, update and publish their material on the website. Recommends drafts and edits internet website content. Ensures that all website material is current and accurate. Coordinates with and advises all areas of the District on how to provide informative and customer-friendly information to the website audience. Works with others to maintain the District’s homepage and Department/Office pages. Recommends, creates and implements social media strategies and tactics including methods, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc. The incumbent will also be responsible for the general oversight of the District’s intranet site, including recommendations on how Departments and Offices can improve their own pages. The Website Content Administrator also serves as the primary liaison with the IT team to ensure systems are working properly. Manages content of the homepage. Expected to be available for emergency situations to manage website content to inform customers and other stakeholders. Could be called upon to write material to disseminate internally and externally.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:

Reports to the Public Information Officer. No supervision of staff is exercised.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS:

This is a journey-level class responsible for exercising a high level of discretion and independent judgment in performing the full range of routine and complex departmental assignments. Successful performance of the work requires thorough knowledge of website development and applications and the District’s computer network infrastructure. This class is distinguished from the Public Information Officer in that the latter provides overall responsibility for all functions of the department and for managing and accomplishing the complex and varied functions of the public information office.

The incumbent ensures that her/his activities are aligned with and support the South Coast Water District’s policies, mission, vision, core values, core strategies, and annual action items as well as performance measures.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:
The following statements describe the general nature and level of the work performed. They should not be considered an exhaustive list of all duties. Employees may perform other related duties as required.

- Oversees the day-to-day maintenance of website content and manages a proactive content authoring and review process to ensure content is accurate and current;
- Works closely with Departments and Offices to improve their internet and intranet pages;
- Drafts, edits and publishes website content;
- Coordinates with other content owners to ensure relevance, consistency, style and quality;

February 2017
Requests website content and graphics from Department Heads, Office Managers, and the Public Information Officer;
Ensures that all website content is correctly implemented within the current website standards and adheres to all District procedures relating to website content publication, security and information architecture;
Assists in the management of image touch-ups and resizing of collateral website materials to fit website specifications;
Develops and manages proactive user/customer-friendly programs for the District’s internet website;
Sets-up displays and exhibits for community fairs, school programs, and other community and civic events.
Plan, design and produce posters, signs, exhibits, displays and other informative materials. Operates audio-visual and video equipment for community or in-house informational presentations;
Plans, contributes to, and/or prepares monthly employee and customer billing inserts including researching, writing, copyediting and photography;
Provides assistance and training to employees on the use of web content management systems;
Coordinates website content projects with IT and acts as the primary liaison with IT in developing new website initiatives and solving system or access issues
Implements the use of video and social media on the Internet to communicate with customers and other stake holders;
Identifies and evaluates issues and advises management on how best to communicate issues via web and social media;
Develops social media training programs for designated District employees and conducts training sessions;
Assists with media outreach and the preparation of press releases and materials for press events, coordination and conduct of press briefings, and development of media outreach plans and maintaining media lists;
Supports via website content communications outreach programs for targeted audiences;
Coordinates responses to water quality issues and assists with the production of Annual Water Quality Report led by the Public Information Officer;
Implements a systematic website communications program for maintenance/engineering/construction projects;
Assists in the development and implementation of communication and marketing plans for external audiences;
Coordinates with departmental external outreach programs;
Produces graphics and various digital formats for newsletters, news releases, billing inserts, brochures, photo displays, slide shows and video productions;
Operates Customer Notification system and other application systems that support the community;
Provides photographic services for District events, projects, and employee events such as Service Award presentations, public relations functions and ceremonies, etc.;
Prepares, coordinates and assists in the District outreach program led by the Public Information Officer both in preparation and during emergencies;
Serves as secondary Public Affairs responder (Public Information Officer) in Emergency Operations Center during emergencies; and,
Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Knowledge of:
Comprehensive knowledge of website design principles for creating user friendly and visually attractive website pages;
Thorough knowledge of public relations and media relations principles, crisis communications and writing techniques and style for use by the media;
Knowledge of public relations and communication practices, effective oral presentation and written communication skills, including the correct English usage as applied to writing and editing informational materials of varying degrees of technical complexity;
Thorough knowledge of the media business and ability to promote the District;
Comprehensive knowledge of website design best practices;
Knowledge of and experience with Web 2.0 technologies, especially social networking and blogging.

Ability to:

Excellent writing and communications skills, with the ability to take sometimes difficult material and make it compatible with the audience;
Ability to analyze difficult issues and potential impact on public opinion;
Ability to cultivate and maintain positive relationships with employees and other stakeholders;
Ability to utilize HTML and CSS;
Ability to communicate effectively with printers and designers;

Create, develop and manage content for District’s website presence;
Ability to manage multiple projects in a fast paced, deadline driven environment;
Coordinate website projects across departments;
Copyedit and proofread all website content;
Learn to use new and existing software and hardware;
Keep current with emerging web technologies through relevant blogs, listservs, and events/trainings;
Track and report on all site metrics;
Use word processing, spreadsheet, and graphics programs;
Understand and follow oral and written instructions;
Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and software programs;
Organize own work, set priorities and meet critical time deadlines;
Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone and in writing;
Use tact, initiative, prudence and independent judgment within general policy, procedural and legal guidelines;
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

**EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING GUIDELINES**

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

**Experience:**

Three (3) years of experience in managing content and production for corporate or public agency websites;
Public Information Specialist

- Five (5) years of responsible experience in public relations, media or related field;
- Three (3) years of experience with enterprise content management and the use of content management systems (CMS);
- Experience with advanced website and graphic design software, such as Photoshop and Dreamweaver;
- Familiarity with other tools, such as CIVICA Content Management System, Sharepoint, IBM Website Content Management (WCM), or other similar content management tools;
- Experience in water and/or wastewater industry preferred.

Training:

- Bachelor’s degree in Communications, public relations, journalism, information technology or related field.

License:

- Valid California Class C driver’s license with satisfactory driving record.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various District and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 25 pounds.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

*The specific statements shown in each section of this classification description are not intended to be all-inclusive. They represent the essential functions and minimum qualifications necessary to successfully perform the assigned functions. Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.*