Mapping & Matching Your Jobs
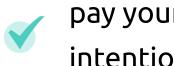
A job architecture primer for curious, action-oriented leaders

What is Job Architecture?

A job architecture is a framework for organizing your workforce. It defines your roles in relation to each other, and designates which roles require higher (or lower) levels of skill. It provides the structured approach required to compare positions, which allows you to:

- ✓ pay your employees competitively and intentionally,
- ✓ make fast, equitable, legally-defensible employment decisions,
- ✓ clarify how employees might advance through job levels or switch roles, and
- ✓ strategically align your talent to your business plan.

Job architectures are not organizational charts! They are independent of employees.

Why Implement a Job Architecture?

Job architecture provides the apples-to-apples comparisons needed to make decisions.

- ✓ Compare your roles to the market to attract the right talent and wisely counter offers.
- ✓ Compare employees and roles to each other to enable quick, market-based decisions when you run merit cycles.

Decisions that lower legal risk. A job architecture sets pay targets aligned to precise skills and responsibilities for each role so you can standardize pay and accurately compare roles. This consistency is required to avoid pay disparities, comply with pay transparency laws, and manage and reward performance.

Decisions that bolster reputation. When employees speak highly of their company, it boosts retention, employer brand, and candidate pipelines. Such positive press is more likely if a job architecture and compensation strategy keep pay practices consistent.

Efficient hiring decisions. When titles, pay, and expectations are not standardized, you waste time and money setting pay every time you open a role. Relying on candidates' desired compensation to set salaries is a great way to over or under pay and create pay disparities.

Strategic workforce planning. Once you identify the skills required (current or future) to meet your business goals, a job architecture can help you budget, hire, and develop that talent.

When & How to Implement a Job Architecture

While startups and earlier-stage growth-phase companies generally have fewer roles to map than later-stage companies, every company should establish a job architecture.

What you need to create a job architecture

1. Access to a compensation survey. There are many survey options (e.g., Radford, Mercer and Culpepper). Choosing the right survey for you involves many decisions.
2. The leveling guide and job descriptions from your selected compensation survey.
3. Job descriptions for each role in your company.
4. A focus on **roles and skill sets**, not individual employees or salary. Employee selection and pay are based on the role responsibilities - not the other way around!

How to implement a job architecture

The graphic below illustrates how job architectures may differ by maturity phase. Next, we provide step-by-step instructions for creating your job architecture.

	Startup	**Growth**	**Mature**
Common Structure	**Few, ambiguous roles; flat** Tactical HR	**Roles, clarity, & Management trees grow.** HR owners & strategies form	**Various, well-defined roles & managers** HR aligns strategy & practice
Maturity Benchmark	Hire & pay effectively Define roles	Shape employee performance lower legal risk	Retain talent Lower legal risk
Biggest Risks	Bad hires, poor performers Poor pay	Poor, unmotivated performers Legally indefensible employment decisions	Attrition Legally indefensible employment decisions
Job Architecture Purpose & Creation	**Adapt with your agility as you perfect products & service** • List roles' duties with the future in mind • Match duties to market job descriptions. • Align titles, expectations & pay. • Deepen descriptions to hire. **Get the Strategic Advantage** Define pay & expectations for roles at every possible level - including unoccupied levels.	**Define good at every level to guide talent decisions** • Formalize existing descriptions. • List duties for roles without descriptions. • Match duties to market job descriptions. • Align titles, expectations & pay **Get the Strategic Advantage** Use leveling matrix & job descriptions to promote, develop, and evaluate talent.	**Define good at every level to guide & retain talent decisions** • Complete high-level work analysis. • Formalize job descriptions. • Match duties to market job descriptions. • Deepen descriptions to manage talent. **Get the Strategic Advantage** Define pay & expectations for roles at every possible level - including unoccupied levels.

Job Architecture: Step-by-step

1. **Select your salary survey**. Review its leveling guide and job descriptions, and consider your options carefully.

2. **Match company roles to survey roles:** For each company role (**not** employee), find the survey role whose job description (**not** title) matches 70% of the company role's duties. Track the roles, titles, and employees aligned to each survey role.

   Startups

   For roles without job descriptions, leaders list the duties defining 70% of the role's time and purpose and select the matching survey description.

   Growth, Mature

   When multiple descriptions for a single role exist, consolidate or differentiate.

   Mature

   Work analysis (which can be more or less burdensome) is required to keep hiring, firing, and pay decisions legally defensible & effective.

3. **Group roles into job families:** Use education, skills, training, and function. Remember: a job architecture is **not** an organizational chart! E.g., an employee in a finance-family role (job architecture) can report to a sales leader (organizational chart).

4. **Level your roles:** Determine the job level of each company role using the survey's leveling guide, which levels roles based on skill (**not** salary).
   - Note each employee's level according to the survey in your spreadsheet.

   - Note the roles without employees in a given level in your spreadsheet or software.
   - **Startups** are likely to have few occupied levels per role, and that's totally fine.
   - **Growth and Mature** companies may wish to describe the skills, proficiency, and expectations for each level by role to facilitate strategic talent management.

5. **Compare your roles' company titles & levels to their market equivalent.**
   - Re-leveling for accuracy: If an employee's company title does not match the survey title, determine whether you should retitle them to be consistent with the market.
   - Re-level for consistency: If you have two employees with the same company title but different survey titles, determine if one employee must be remediated or releveled.

6. **Set targets for salary, incentives, and equity using your compensation strategy.**

7. **Use your architecture to make strategic, legally-defensible decisions.** Combine your new, market-matched job architecture with a compensation strategy to create pay targets and conduct pay analyses. Build out the survey job descriptions to make more effective, legally defensible hiring, performance, promotion, or exit decisions.

Are you implementing a compensation strategy, hiring processes, or performance management processes which require a job architecture? We can help!

Contact us at support@alotten.com.