

Two men, one white and one Black, both wearing blue baseball caps and work clothes, are looking at a tablet together. The man on the right is pointing at the screen. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a truck or industrial setting.

Describe & Deliver

Secrets to the career ads and
job descriptions that will
attract workers you need



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Do you want trucking recognized as a skill? The work begins with your job descriptions and career ads.

Driving a truck is **not** formally recognized as a skilled occupation.

Many people are shocked to learn this. But there is no mistaking it. Canada's National Occupational Classification (NOC) code – which groups more than 40,000 occupations into one of four skill levels – lists truck drivers as “low skilled”.

Why does this matter? A “low skilled” NOC code limits the access to training and retraining funds. Experienced drivers in other countries cannot be recruited through traditional immigration channels. There is also a matter of pride. Everyone wants to be recognized for the skills they bring to the job.

Every career ad that claims “no education required” or “no experience necessary” leads people to believe that the job of a truck driver is easier than it really is. Potential recruits are left with a negative opinion of the career. Under-trained employees become discouraged when they are unable to secure work with reputable carriers.

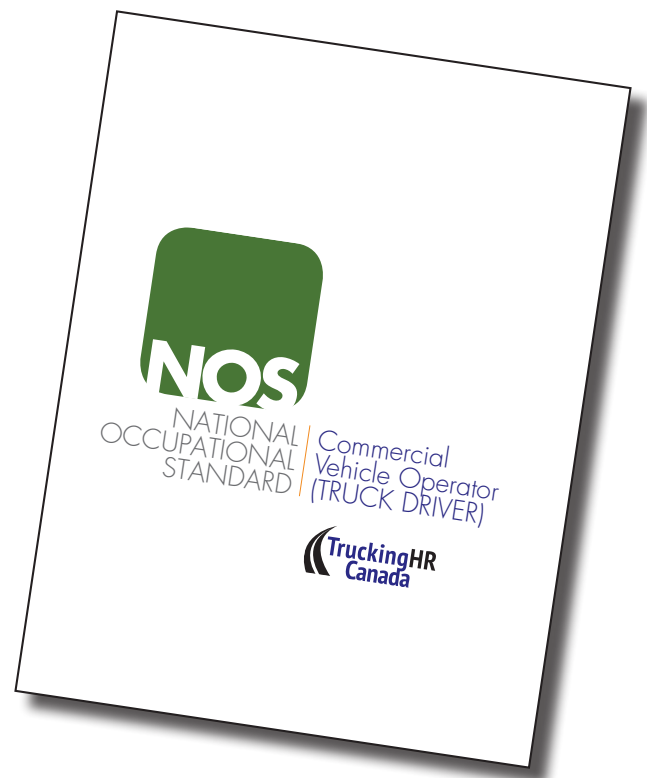
Employers can change this situation. Canada makes structural changes to NOC codes every 10 years, and researchers are now reviewing job descriptions and career ads to identify the skills that the trucking industry actually requires. The way you describe jobs today will demonstrate your actual needs.

The National Occupational Standard (NOS) can help clearly define your fleet's jobs.

Clearly defined job descriptions and career ads support many fleet activities, including:

- **Recruiting** – Job candidates can pre-screen themselves before applying for a job, while recruiters have a tool to compare different applicants.
- **Training** – Any gaps in required skills are easily identified, ensuring training programs can be focused and effective.
- **Orientation** – Newly hired employees have a clear understanding of what they will be expected to do.
- **Performance reviews** – Clearly defined and measureable skills can be used to measure an employee's progress and performance.
- **Legal defenses** – Clear job descriptions can help to demonstrate due diligence around hiring practices.

The recently updated National Occupational Standard for Commercial Vehicle Operator (Truck Driver) describes the job more clearly than ever before. It defines core knowledge, skills and abilities that are demonstrated every day. This information can be used to refine job descriptions and the related career ads.



How to build an effective job description

Effective job descriptions describe a job's responsibilities, licensing and certification requirements, working conditions, physical demands, required knowledge and skills. The more specific a job description can be, the better.

These descriptions are not meant to be a "wish list" describing the perfect employee. Some knowledge, skills and abilities will always be developed over time, while people are on the job. Effective job descriptions include:

- **Job summary** – three or four sentences offering a general overview of the job, including its purpose and level of responsibility (e.g. level of supervision provided). This information can serve as the foundation for career ads.

- **Duties and responsibilities** – duties and responsibilities that account for more than 5% of a person's time, listed in the order of importance and time involved.

- **Requirements** – minimum requirements including licences and endorsements, and the job's specialized skills or competencies. These are the things you believe a driver *must* have.

- **Working conditions** – describing the physical environment, physical and mental demands, and health and safety needs.

The National Occupational Standard for Commercial Vehicle Operator (Truck Driver) already includes most of the details you will need.

It's all in the details

Key items to include in a job description

1. Job summary

Specific details in a job summary can be developed by a team of recruiters, supervisors and drivers who are already doing the work. The goal is to develop a summary that someone outside the fleet could understand.

Minimum requirements include necessary licenses, certifications and endorsements – and identify specialized roles such as international border crossings, handling livestock, or working with unique equipment such as reefers or cranes.

2. Duties and responsibilities

Most of these can be drawn from the Tasks and Sub-Tasks identified in the National Occupational Standard. There will be a combination of supportive competencies (soft skills), functional competencies (practical skills other than driving) and driving competencies (needed to move the vehicle). The idea here is to identify the most essential requirements, recognizing that some knowledge, skills and abilities are acquired while on the job.

3. Fleet-specific information

Review the information to ensure you have considered the specific equipment you operate, the goods you move, and other competencies specific to your fleet or this particular job.

4. Minimum requirements

There is a difference between a preference and a requirement.

Tip

Some Tasks and Sub-Tasks may be left to drivers with specific skill levels. If this is the case at your fleet, consider developing job descriptions for the different skill levels – such as entry-level, intermediate and senior drivers.

Tip

Job descriptions evolve over time to reflect changing regulations, work practices and equipment. Annual reviews of the descriptions will ensure they are accurate.

5. Working conditions

These can include hours on the job, physical and mental demands, health and safety requirements, and the pace of activities.

6. Company profile

Highlight your company culture, vision and values to illustrate why you provide a great place to work.

7. Disclaimers

Fleets may want to describe any "other duties as required" if the job often changes to meet supply and demand challenges.

8. Career paths

Identifying the potential for professional growth can motivate existing employees and attract potential recruits. It also helps to identify you as an employer of choice.

Sample job description

Company Profile: ACME Trucking is a for-hire trucking company offering full or less-than-load (LTL) rates for both refrigerated and dry goods. We pride ourselves in having an exceptional team of drivers who provide top-notch and courteous customer service. We run a fleet of top-of-the line tractors and trailers tailored for long-haul operations and ensure top-servicing and maintenance in our own shop. We treat our employees like family, providing competitive compensation and benefits and assisting our drivers to maintain a work-life balance.

Information can apply to a single company or role. It is highlighted in this example as purple text.

Position Title: Long-Haul Truck Driver

Position Level: Entry-Level

Job Summary:

The Long-Haul Truck Driver is responsible for delivering freight (both refrigerated and dry goods) safely and efficiently to customers across inter-provincial routes using a fleet-issued tractor trailer. The productivity of the driver (including effectiveness, efficiency and safety) is critical for overall fleet productivity to ensure that deliveries are made to customers without delays or incidents. The Long-Haul Truck Driver reports to the Dispatcher assigned to their route(s).

Job summaries clearly describe a role in terms that someone outside the fleet can understand.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The Long-Haul Truck Driver (Entry-Level) regularly performs the following duties and responsibilities:

Supportive Competencies:

- Relate and interact with others in the workplace
- Maintain health, wellness and relationships
- Communicate in the workplace - Including written, verbal, non-verbal (e.g. hand signals) communications
- Operate computer and electronic devices - Including routing, mileage and mapping software; GPS; cellular phones; radios; data-entry devices and tracking devices

Functional Competencies:

- Plan work, plan trips and solve problems
- Conduct daily vehicle inspections
- Operate vehicle air brake system
- Secure cargo for transport

Driving Competencies:

- Practice defensive driving techniques
- Couple and uncouple trailers
- Back, dock and park tractor-trailers

Specific driving and non-driving competencies needed to perform the job can be found in the National Occupational Standard.

Disclaimer:

The preceding section highlighted the most common and essential duties and responsibilities required for the job. However, this job description is not meant to contain a comprehensive list of all duties and responsibilities; the job incumbent may be asked to perform other duties as required within the scope of his/her role and skill level.

Disclaimers identify a job that can change to meet supply and demand challenges.

Qualifications:

The incumbent Truck Driver must:

- Possess a valid Commercial Driving Licence (CDL) and Air Brake Endorsement
- Provide proof of successful completion of an accredited commercial driver training program
- Provide proof of a clear driving and criminal record
- Follow written and/or oral instructions in English; complete written forms and documents in English

Minimum requirements identify specific attributes that a driver must have to perform the role.

Working Conditions:

The Long-Haul Truck Driver (Entry-Level) must be able to work under the following conditions:

- Adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures (both governmental and fleet-specific)
- Interprovincial runs required
- Week-long periods on the road
- Fast-paced deliveries required
- Extended periods of time in vehicle (driving and bunking required)
- Physical demands associated with periods of standing and sitting; bending, crouching, stooping; frequent lifting of moderately heavy items (up to 50 pounds)
- Mental demands associated with solo driving and extended periods of solitude
- High level of distraction in urban routes
- High demand for accuracy, efficiency and safety

Newly hired drivers are more likely to stay on the job if they are provided a clear idea of the working conditions they will encounter.

Potential Career Progression:

After a minimum of 2 years as an Entry-Level Driver, job incumbents may pursue additional training and experience to progress into driving positions within the fleet such as intermediate driver or senior driver. Following the required number of years of experience and training, job incumbents may progress into non-driving positions within the fleet such as Driver Trainer/Assessor, Safety Officer, or Dispatcher. The job incumbent's professional development goals and action plan will be discussed with his/her manager during annual performance assessments.

Clearly defined career paths can motivate existing employees and attract job candidates.

How to build an effective career ad

Effective career ads identify a role's duties and responsibilities, as well as required personal attributes, skills and characteristics. They also demonstrate why an organization is a great place to work.

Appeal to the job seeker – Consider what makes the job appealing, including the work environment, opportunities for career advancement, work/life balance, location, and compensation.

Illustrate why the job is important – Qualified candidates are looking for meaningful work where they will be recognized and appreciated. Show why the advertised position is important to the overall organizations.

Identify the essential job requirements – The career ad does not need to be as detailed as the full job description. In fact, too many details can overwhelm a job seeker. Offer just enough details to pique someone's interest so they will apply.

Describe what sets your organization apart – Details about a positive corporate culture, excellent benefits and other perks will offer you a competitive edge when job seekers are deciding where to apply.

Career ads include a realistic description of the job, including claims and promises the fleet can meet. The most effective ads are simple, engaging and accurate.

Sample career ad

ACME Trucking is a for-hire trucking company offering full or less-than-load (LTL) rates for both refrigerated and dry goods. We pride ourselves in having an exceptional team of drivers who provide top-notch and courteous customer service. We run a fleet of top-of-the line tractors and trailers tailored for long-haul operations and ensure top-servicing and maintenance in our own shop. We treat our employees like family, providing competitive compensation and benefits and assisting our drivers to maintain a work-life balance.

We are currently looking for a dedicated and safety-focussed Entry-Level Long-Haul Truck Driver to join our team. The Long-Haul Truck Driver is responsible for delivering freight (both refrigerated and dry goods) safely and efficiently to customers across inter-provincial routes. The productivity of the driver (including effectiveness, efficiency and safety) is critical for overall fleet productivity to ensure that deliveries are made to customers without delays or incidents.

All applicants must possess a valid CDL (commercial driver's license) and air brake. While our ideal candidate will be a graduate of an accredited commercial driver training program with 6-12 months of driving experience, we are willing to provide on-the-job training to drivers who are committed and eager to learn. Applicants should have the physical and mental stamina to spend extended periods of time on the road (one week spans), drive at night and maintain health and wellness while on the road.

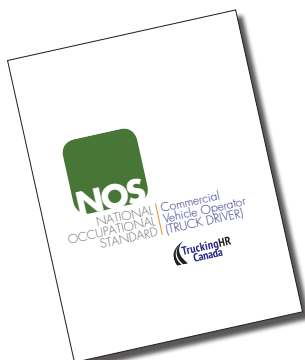
Essential skills and abilities for hire include:

- Ability to plan work and trips;
- Ability to safely operate a tractor-trailer including: preparing to drive; conducting pre- and post-trip inspections; driving; backing; turning; docking; parking; coupling and un-coupling trailers;
- Ability to maintain the health and safety of self and others at all times.

Specific examples of required knowledge, skills and abilities can be found in the National Occupational Standard for Commercial Vehicle Operator (Truck Driver).

All candidates will be asked to complete a road-test with a Senior ACME driver to demonstrate the skills and abilities noted above.

ACME Trucking offers a competitive compensation package, medical dental and life insurance, as well as an Employee and Family Assistance Plan. We value your health and safety and believe in supporting the work/life balance of our drivers - we offer predictable work scheduling to allow for weekends and/or periods at home and paid time off. Our drivers are provided with top-of-the-line tractors and trailers and are supported by a full-service maintenance team. ACME Trucking is a great place to start and build a career. If you want to be a member of the ACME family, apply today.



Free copies of the National Occupational Standard for Commercial Vehicle Operator (Truck Driver) are available at www.TruckingHR.com.