

LITHOGRAPHIC PRESS OPERATOR III

This is highly skilled work in the operation of the largest offset press or a large two-color press in a large printshop. Employees are responsible for printing books, magazines, brochures, maps, and other printed materials on a single-color offset press with a maximum sheet size of 25 x 38 or a two-color offset press with a maximum sheet size of 19 x 25.

Work in this class involves close registration work in reproducing straight line copy work, half tones, large solids, screened tints, color overlay work, and some complex four-color processing work requiring perfect registration. Employees perform all maintenance work with the exception of major overhaul on the presses as well as preventive maintenance. Work may involve training other employees to learn the operation of the offset press. Employees work independently under general supervision of a unit supervisor who makes assignments and reviews the work process to determine adherence to job specifications and established quality control standards. Employees may perform other duties as required.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity of Work – Employees print a variety of books, magazines, brochures, maps, and other printed materials utilizing all types and grades of paper and ink. Employees make close adjustments necessary to successful printing operations; clean and lubricate the press; make fairly complex repairs and keep the press in good operating condition.

Intricacy of Work – Employees pack and adjust the cylinders to within 1/32 of an inch and maintain the correct pressure and registration between the plate, blanket, and paper while maintaining the proper balance between water and ink in order to obtain a clear impression of the material being printed. Employees maintain perfect register for work involving color process to obtain desired results for life-like pictures.

Controls Over Work – Employees receive work in written and oral form with specific instructions. Employees set up, adjust, and operate their presses independently. If problems occur, employees resolve most situations.

Judgmental Demands – Employees must be able to judge the optimal mixture of ink and water to offset ink onto paper and adjust the air/vacuum for paper control. Employees must accurately mix inks and chemicals to obtain desired colors and densitometer is used to maintain color consistency.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Potential – Potential exists for damage to very expensive printing equipment and loss of expensive materials and supplies. Potential exists for fire due to the chemicals and paper used.

Care and Attention – Employees must closely and continuously monitor the product and printing press while in operation in order to maintain a consistent offset process. If problems occur, employees must make the necessary adjustments or shut down for repair if no adjustment can be made. Operators must clean the inking system after each run is completed and change the watering system weekly to assure quality offsetting. On the largest press, continuous attention is required to monitor large sheets of paper as they travel through the press to avoid folding and wrinkling. In operating the two-color press, close attention is required to monitor the even spreading and accurate offsetting of inks.

III. PHYSICAL EFFORT:

Intensity of Effort – Employees must stand, bend, climb, lift, and stoop to operate the press and related equipment.

Frequency and Duration – The majority of the work is done while standing for moderate lengths of time with several adjustments by hand. Considerable time is required to initially set up the press due to the perfect registration requirements.

IV. WORK SURROUNDING AND HAZARDS:

Work Surroundings – Employees work in a shop environment with proper lighting and ventilation but are exposed to continuously running machinery and printing chemicals and odors.

Hazardous Conditions – Employees must work around noisy printing equipment and ink and solvent odors. Potential exists for hearing loss over time.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities – Thorough knowledge of and skill in the operation of a large offset printing press. Thorough knowledge of, skill in, and ability to perform color process printing, to use pin register techniques, and to use of a densitometer. Thorough knowledge of the basic principles and fundamentals of lithographic printing operations. Thorough knowledge of the various kinds and grades of paper and ink. Ability to detect defects in printed materials while in process and make adjustments to correct them. Ability to understand and effectively follow oral and written instructions. A mechanical aptitude and physical stamina to lift, climb, stand and bend under medium to heavy physical strain.

Minimum Education and Experience – Completion of high school and five years of experience in the operation of a large lithographic press; or completion of a two-year graphic arts course and three years of experience operating a large lithographic press; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.