O*NET® Alternate Titles Procedures

Christina Gregory
North Carolina State University

Phil Lewis
National Center for O*NET Development

Prepared for

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Office of Workforce Investment
Division of National Programs, Tools, & Technical Assistance
Washington, DC

Submitted by

The National Center for O*NET Development
November 5, 2015

o*net®

www.onetcenter.org

Table of Contents

Section I: Overview

The Alternate Titles project develops a list of alternate or lay titles that are linked to O*NET occupations. The titles provide customers with a better understanding of the O*NET occupations and are important for helping them search for and find occupations. To date, there are 59,634 entries in the published database (45,472 distinct titles) covering the 1,110 occupational titles within the O*NET-SOC classification. The average number of Alternate Titles per occupation is 54, with the majority of occupations having a range between 10 and 100 titles.

The Alternate Titles populate the reported job titles within My Next Move and O*NET OnLine occupation reports, are provided as a downloadable file on the O*NET Resource Center website, and also contribute to O*NET information available through the O*NET Web Services. The project and its resulting files improve keyword searches (see: Keyword Search Report and Spanish Keyword Search Report) in several Department of Labor internet applications – O*NET OnLine, My Next Move, My Next Move for Veterans, and O*NET Code Connector. They are also incorporated into a number of public and private keyword searches through the O*NET Web Services.

A multi-method data collection approach is used to populate the Alternate Titles. Data sources include: incumbent/occupational expert data, employer job postings, Occupational Code Assignment (OCA) submissions, transactional analyses, customer and professional group requests, additional occupational classification systems, and other miscellaneous sources.

Section II: Alternate Titles Data Sources

Incumbent and Occupational Expert Write-in Titles

Incumbent and Occupational Expert (OE) data are collected through the O*NET data collection program on the background questionnaire. Job incumbents and OEs write in their job titles on these questionnaires, responding to the following question: "What is the title of your current job?" After data cleaning and write-in title collapsing, O*NET retains a list of these titles and their frequencies for inclusion in the Alternate Titles database.

Employer Job Postings

Employers post job advertisements on multiple national job boards. Alternate Titles data are gathered from these job postings and compared to current O*NET Alternate Titles data. If a job posting contains a title not currently present in the Alternate Titles database with a significantly high frequency of related job postings, the title is obtained for inclusion.

Occupational Code Assignment Submissions

An occupational code assignment (OCA) is a process established to help occupational information users relate a job title or occupational specialty to an O*NET-SOC occupation. Businesses, training and educational institutions, labor and occupational organizations, and professional associations can use the OCA process to determine if a job title or occupational specialty is recognized within the O*NET-SOC system and the U.S. labor market. Submitted job titles are obtained for Alternate Titles data.

Transactional Analyses

Analysis of customers' transactions on Department of Labor sponsored career and job seeker websites provides a source for Alternate Titles. For example, America's Career InfoNet (ACINet) collects user search terms that return no results on their website. Unmatched search terms are collected by ACINet and provided to the O*NET Center approximately every six months.

Miscellaneous Submissions

A variety of other sources of Alternate Titles information exist, inclusive of requests from associations that support and participate in the O*NET Data Collection efforts, professional groups, customers, and other occupational classification systems. All Alternate Titles submissions are catalogued throughout the year for Alternate Titles data.

Section III: Alternate Titles Procedural Summary

O*NET gathers data from all five data sources annually. Each title undergoes an extensive multi-step review process and is reviewed by multiple occupational analysts.

Step One

Incumbent write-in titles are reviewed to identify exclusionary titles, duplicates, acronyms, abbreviations, deletions, and compound titles. The goals of this first review are to reformat titles as needed to match style guidelines (see Appendix A), to expand any acronyms or abbreviations, and to mark titles as needed for exclusion (i.e., the title is generally associated with a different O*NET-SOC occupation) or deletion (the title contains no useful content).

Step Two

Identification of write-in titles with a frequency of three or greater and non-write-in titles (e.g., SOC, DOT) for inclusion within Alternate Titles deliverables. Write-in titles with a frequency of one or two are not included.

Step Three

Selection of titles appearing in the sample of reported job titles for the occupation. The sample of reported job titles is a subset of the full list of Alternate Titles for any given occupation and represents the top incumbent/OE write-in titles from the current year and across all years.

Section IV: Alternate Titles Deliverables

Deliverables include:

1. Reported job titles that appear in O*NET OnLine, My Next Move, and Web Services. These titles represent the highest frequency incumbent/OE write-in titles from the current year and across all years.

2. A published Alternate Titles database that includes Alternate Titles appearing in the downloadable database, keyword search, and Web Services. Data sources include incumbent/OE write-in titles, transactional analyses, OCA submissions, employer job postings, and other miscellaneous submissions.

References

Morris, J. (2013). A Weighted O*NET Keyword Search (WWS). http://www.onetcenter.org/reports/WWS.html

Morris, J. (2013). Spanish Keyword Search (as Used in Mi Próximo Paso). http://www.onetcenter.org/reports/SpanishWWS.html

Appendix A: Alternate Titles Style and Formatting Guidelines
General Guidelines for Preparation of Alternate Titles

Acronyms and Abbreviations

- Research acronyms in Google to ensure correct translation (e.g., CNA can mean Certified <u>Nursing Assistant</u> OR Certified <u>Nurse's Aide</u>).

- Avoid including most abbreviations, especially those such as Mgr. or Admin. Instead, change to complete word (Manager, Administrator). The few acceptable abbreviations are generally those that commonly occur in spoken language: deli, auto, TV.

Compound Titles

- When the data include compound titles, such as "Receptionist/Switchboard Operator; Receptionist/Billing Clerk; Receptionist/Medical Assistant," separate the two titles for independent analyses. The same should be done for titles that include a separate term in parentheses, such as Customer Leader (Consultant). Treat these as two separate titles.

- When a compound title occurs multiple times and not as separate titles, the compound title may be retained. Always use "AND" or "/", not "&." (Example: "Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator."

Too Specific and Too General Titles

- Discard specific descriptors such as "Golf" in "Golf Shop Assistant" – "Shop Assistant" is sufficient. There are likely thousands of specific retail types. Another example is "Sixth Grade Art Teacher." Retain "Art Teacher," but discard "Sixth Grade." There is no need to list each type of teacher for each possible grade.

- In general, discard proper nouns, such as brand names, names of institutions, and names of places. For example, "UNIX Systems Administrator" – retain Systems Administrator, but discard the brand name UNIX.

- Discard simple titles that are too general, such as "President, Supervisor, Assistant Manager, Team Member, Owner, Partner, Associate, Principal (unrelated to education), and Student." Retain variations, such as "Office Manager" or "College President" that are related to specific O*NET occupations.

Level Indicators in Titles

- Discard level indicators, such as "<u>Head</u> Secretary, <u>Assistant</u> Secretary, and <u>Chief</u> Surveyor." ("Vice President" can be retained if it is part of a more descriptive title. See "President" above).

- Delete numbers from titles (Secretary I).

- Retain variations such as registered, certified, or licensed.

Singular and Plural Titles

- All Alternate Titles should be singular nouns. Change plural forms to singular.

- Use plural forms of adjectives in titles when appropriate (to ensure more matches in keyword searches). Examples: Claims Adjuster rather than Claim Adjuster; Human Resources Officer rather than Human Resource Officer.

Formatting

- Arrange titles so the noun appears last. For example, change "Manager of Operations" to "Operations Manager" and "Operator, Flatsorter" to "Flatsorter Operator."

- A title like "Assistant Manager Export Traffic Dept" becomes "Export Traffic Department Manager." That is, delete "assistant," spell out "department" and rearrange words so the noun, manager, appears last.