

## **Hire Me for the House-Job Description**

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(Mike Tobias/Reporting) Americans will hire 435 people for the House of Representatives next week...including three Nebraskans. Applicants must be at least 25-years-old and a U.S. citizen for at least seven years. The job lasts for two years, but applicants may re-apply as many times as they like. These are the basics. For a more detailed description of the job, and the skills it takes to be successful, we turned to Paul Landow. Today he's chief of staff for Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey. From 1989 to 1995 he was the Washington-based chief of staff for 2nd district Congressman Peter Hoagland. Landow describes the life of a member of Congress as varied, hectic and unrelenting - trying to balance time in the district with long hours on the hill.

(Paul Landow/Former Congressional Staffer) The day generally began between 8 and 10 with meetings. Generally did not end until 7, 8 at night. The late evening stuff could be votes, could be constituent meetings, more likely was political meetings, dinners, events, social occasions, embassy parties, whatever you chose to do. Now you know you can curtail some of that to some extent, but the reality is that it was about a 12 hour day mostly meetings and voting.

(Mike Tobias/Reporting) Landow says that means a successful member of Congress needs to be a hard worker, willing to put in the time needed to become a part of the institution. That's not all.

(Paul Landow/Former Congressional Staffer) You deal with a lot of different people, not all those people agree with your position. And you've got to have the type of personality that's able to interact with people who are upset, angry, agitated about either the issue, and there are some pretty contentious issues, or a government service that isn't being performed to the level they believe it should be. You need to know how to prioritize your time and what to concentrate on. You've got to concentrate on the things you can make a difference on, and that matter to you and your constituents, and you've got to set the rest aside. Without the ability to prioritize, you're trying to deal with hundreds of issues literally on a daily basis, and it's really not possible.

(Mike Tobias/Reporting) Landow says being successful on Capitol Hill also means knowing how to hire the right people...understanding what services and which insiders and outsiders to rely on for information...and being a quick study.

(Paul Landow/Former Congressional Staffer) If it takes you a long time to distill information, consider it, ruminate on it, mull it around, you've got a problem. Because the pace of the institution is very quick in terms of the consideration of legislation. And when you couple that pace with the volume, the sheer volume of it all, you can't spend time worrying about what you did yesterday. You have to make decisions and move on.

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