

Hiring Central Cancer Registry Staff

Getting the Right Person in the Right Job

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Background

Generic job titles are used with broad categories

- Senior Staff
- Upper Management
- Middle Management
- Professional
- Para-Professional
- Technical
- Clerical



Background

Job titles have generic job specifications

- Intentionally vague to encompass the variety of work that might be done
- Cross numerous agencies
- Outline basic functions of the position

Background

All hiring is through Central Management Services (CMS)

- Central repository for applications
- Applications are “graded”
- Lists of qualified applicants are maintained by CMS

Positions must be established within the unit

Each position has a number and specific job description with duty statements and requirements for knowledge, skills, education and abilities

Background

All hiring follows the same process

- ePAR form is completed and approved
 - Six levels of approval
 - Division, Office, Human Resources, Budget, Fiscal Deputy Director, and Governor
- Six months to 1 year to complete approval process
- Positions are posted for 10 days

Background

Interviews are conducted via the Rutan system

- Internal applicants are interviewed based on union contract
- If no internal applicants, external applicants are chosen from the open, competitive list for interview
- Based on the interview only, the successful candidate is chosen and approval to hire is requested
- Approval is received (4 levels) and position is offered to candidate

Problems

We can't get the right person in the right job

We can't "get to" qualified candidates to interview and select

We can't promote existing registry staff

Problem #1 - Generic job titles

Generic job titles don't allow for the specialization needed for cancer registry positions

- Specialized skills were added but couldn't always be used to get to the most qualified candidate
- Some external CTR applicants couldn't get a passing grade because of college requirements
- Job titles weren't indicative of the work cancer registrars do
 - Methods & Procedures Advisor
 - Vital Records Quality Control Inspector

Problem #2 – Union Positions

Union contracts require hiring based on seniority

- Specialized skills, such as the requirement for CTR certification, can be utilized, but results in delays
- More delays if assessment of the applicant's specialized skills is challenged through the union grievance process
- Promotions are especially problematic because the person with seniority may not be the most qualified or most deserving

Problem #3 - Veterans Preference

Veterans are given absolute preference

- Regardless of any required specialized skills
- Could potentially have a veteran qualify for position who is not a CTR

A Perfect Storm

Recruitment of potential candidates is not an option because we can't "get to them" to interview

- Difficult to reach external candidate list
- Specialized skills not always considered

Existing staff can't be promoted without moving out of the registry because they are in a generic title

- Negative impact to staff retention
- Negative impact to job satisfaction

A Perfect Storm

After waiting 6 months to a year, we could end up with an employee who is not qualified

- Not a CTR, or not CTR-eligible

If we hire and terminate during the probationary period, we are back to square one

- 6 months to a year for new interviews

Can we fix the problem?

Can't fix absolute veterans preference – it's a federal law

Can't change the union contract

Can't change the generic job title to make it more specific – it's used in agencies all over the state

What are our options?

Create an option under an existing job title that would require a CTR designation to be deemed qualified?

Create a new job title?

Give up and never hire a new employee?

Solution

Create a new job title series specifically for cancer registry staff

- Provide a career path for promotion of existing staff
- Provide a mechanism for external applicants to be selected for hiring through the CMS process

Process to Implement

Met with our agency Human Resources department

Met with CMS job classification staff

- CMS staff required a great deal of education
 - how a cancer registry works
 - CTR requirements

CMS determined a new job classification series was the best route

Tasks

Defined different levels of the job title

- Duties and work statements
- Knowledge, skills, abilities, education, and certification required
- Suggested pay grades

Wrote new job specifications

Categorized existing positions into the new series

Followed up with CMS staff via agency HR

Progress

It took **YEARS** for CMS staff to create new job titles

- Not a high priority for CMS staff
 - Delays caused by the creation a new web-based application system
 - State layoffs caused additional delays
- Had to be approved by the Union
- Had to go through the Labor Relations Board process

Results

In 2012

- New Cancer Registrar series was approved
 - Cancer Registrar Manager
 - Cancer Registrar Assistant Manager
 - Cancer Registrar 3
 - Cancer Registrar 2
 - Cancer Registrar 1

Job Classification Series

Cancer Registrar Manager

- Manages the cancer registry
- 4 years of college (or equivalent) plus 4 years progressively responsible experience in a registry along with a CTR certification

Cancer Registrar Assistant Manager

- Assistant to the Registry Manager
- 4 years of college (or equivalent) plus 3 years progressively responsible experience in a registry along with a CTR certification

Job Classification Series

Cancer Registrar 3

- Lead worker for registry units – Operations, QC/Audit, and IT
- 2 years of college (or equivalent) plus 3 years experience in a registry with CTR certification

Cancer Registrar 2

- Operations and Field Staff
- 2 years of college (or equivalent) plus 2 years experience in a registry with CTR certification

Cancer Registrar 1

- Support staff
- 2 years of college (or equivalent) plus 1 year experience in a registry and CTR-eligible

What does this mean for the registry?

Existing staff can be promoted

- Better retention
- Better job satisfaction

Eligible candidates are qualified

- Veterans without CTR certification or who are not CTR-eligible will not be deemed qualified

Union seniority rules still apply

- Seniority within the job title

It was worth it!

In 2013, all but two of the positions were migrated into the new series

In 2013, recruited and hired our first new Cancer Registrar 2 from an external, open and competitive, list

In early 2014, the remaining two positions were migrated into the new series

Lessons Learned

It took 11 years (!) – start to finish

Be persistent

Do your homework and fully understand the hiring process

Be prepared to teach others about cancer registration and why it's different

- **Note:** The CMS job classification person actually retired before the new job series was finalized

Questions?

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