Agency/Component: National Transportation Safety Board

2010 Hiring Reform Action Plan

Hiring Reform Initiative: Eliminate written essay-style questions (KSAs)

Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: Past practice has relied on assessment of applicant qualifications as presented in essay-style answers to questions probing for information on knowledges, skills, and abilities required for the job.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., what is the root cause?): The agency has not invested the resources to develop and validate descriptors of knowledge and experience that applicants can choose among to characterize their qualifications quickly and easily.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: A library of valid, reliable multiple-choice questions (occupational questionnaires) to replace essay-style KSAs in vacancy announcements.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Launch working groups (WGs), Managers work with HR, Sept 23 HRD/Offices, Exec Staff
- WGs develop Qs & As for jobs, Core and Job-specific Qs & As, Sept 23/ ongoing, HRD/Offices, Offices
- Pilot test automated assessment, Qs & As identified and tested, Sept 23/ ongoing, HRD/Offices, Offices
- Prioritize implementation, Convert vacancies by priority Sep 30/Oct 30, HRD/Offices, Exec Staff
- Eliminate KSAs at initial stage, Automated assessment, Nov 1/ongoing, HRD/Offices, Offices
- Evaluate, Analysis of implementation, Nov 1/ ongoing, HRD/Offices, Exec Staff

Hiring Reform Initiative: Use Category Rating

Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: NTSB delegated examining policy specifies that officials will make selections among highly qualified candidates for vacancies according to the "Rule of Three."

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): Agency delegated examining policy was established in conformance with law, regulation, and guidance for the competitive service prior to enactment of the Human Capital Officers Act of 2002, which allowed the use of category rating.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: Revised policy and practice to use category rating as the method for presenting highly qualified candidates for vacancies to selecting officials.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Draft policy, Draft document for discussion, Jun 1/Aug 15, HRD, AD
- Circulate policy for review and comment, Final Draft policy, Aug 15/ Sept 30, HRD, GC
- Work with AFGE to complete policy, Delegated examining policy describes use of category rating Sept 30/ Oct 15, HRD/AFGE, AD/AFGE
- Announce policy, Management Advisory, Oct 15, HRD, MD
- Train execs, mgrs, supervisors, Mgmt Information Briefing, Oct 22, HRD
- Implement category rating process in vacancy announcements, Certificates issued under category rating, Beginning Nov 1/ ongoing, HRD/Offices
- Revise Operations Bulletins, Incorporate Hiring Reform initiatives, August 1/Nov 1, HRD, GC/MD

Hiring Reform Initiative: : Allow individuals to apply with resumes and cover letters
Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: Past practice has resulted in specifying application procedures in vacancy announcements that include documents in addition to a resume and cover letter, such as written essays addressing KSAs, transcripts, etc.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): The process focuses on getting everything that might be needed from every applicant as a first step rather than on making a

subsequent request for more information from only the applicants who are under serious consideration for the position.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: HR uses the resume and cover letter in conjunction with online assessment to determine which candidates will be asked to furnish more information.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Mary Mikkola, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Review SOPs for recruitment and hiring, analyzing when information is needed from applicants, Identify changes that can reduce the information requested from all applicants, Aug 1/ Oct 15, HR Recruitment Team, HRD
- Modify SOPs, as needed, Revised procedures, Oct 15/ Nov 1, HR Recruitment Team, HRD
- Modify JOA templates   JOAs request that applicants provide a resume and cover letter, Oct 15/ Nov 1, HR Recruitment Team, HRD

Hiring Reform Initiative: : Notify applicants about their status

Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: Lack of consistent, timely notification to applicants about their status throughout the staffing process.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): Staffing shortages and the use of a manual staffing process reduced the NTSB's ability to provide timely notification to applicants.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: Applicants receive timely notification of their status at 4 points during the staffing process.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Mary Mikkola, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Run a pilot test of USA Staffing to manage the flow of applications, Administrative vacancies are posted and managed with USA Staffing, Mar 15/ongoing, HRD, MD/Exec Staff
- Use automated status notification through USA JOBS for vacancies not yet converted to USA Staffing, Applicants receive e-mail notifications of their status, Mar 15/Nov 1, HRD, HRD
- Expand the use of USA Staffing to manage the flow of applications, Technical vacancies are posted and managed with USA Staffing, Sep 30/ ongoing, HRD, MD/Exec Staff
- Continue to implement USA Staffing as a means of notifying applicants at 4 points, Applicants are notified at 4 points, Nov 1/ ongoing, HRD, MD/Exec Staff

Hiring Reform Initiative: Ensure manager responsibility and accountability for hiring

Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: Managers rely on HR staff to understand and fulfill their hiring needs with little involvement.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): Managers lack an understanding of their critical role in the hiring process.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: Managers work in partnership with HR staff to complete their complementary responsibilities for hiring qualified staff quickly and efficiently.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Hold initial briefing with execs about hiring reform, Briefing materials, Jul 15, HRD, MD/CHCO/Office Directors
- Train managers and supervisors on their roles and responsibilities, Workshop materials, Sept 23/ ongoing, HRD, AD
- Seek feedback from managers   Analyze survey data and collect informal feedback, Monthly/ ongoing, HRD/Mgrs, HRD
- Use managers feedback to improve the process Shorter, improved process, Ongoing, HRD, HRD
- Brief execs, managers, and supervisors on progress, Raise awareness and reinforce partnership, Quarterly/ ongoing, HRD, MD/CHCO

Hiring Reform Initiative: Improve quality and speed of hiring

Date: September 9, 2010

Describe the barrier, problem, or deficiency being addressed: The hiring process takes too long.

Describe what is causing the barrier/problem (i.e., What is the root cause?): The HR SWAT Team analysis revealed that both the HR and the management processes contained inefficiencies in several steps: planning to post a vacancy, gaining approvals, assessing applications, and scheduling interviews.

Define success or the desired outcome upon completion of applied tasks: Qualified applicants are selected and brought on board within the 80-day hiring timeframe.

Primary Action Planning Team

- Lead: Leslie McClam
- Members: Carol Belovitch, Emily Carroll, Mary Mikkola, Contractor Support

Action Steps

Actions to be Taken, Key Deliverables/Output, Start Date/End Date, Responsible Party (Parties), Budget, Resources, and Approvals Needed

- Project hiring needs, Agency consensus on hiring priorities/quicker approvals, Jul 15/Jul 30, HRD/Managers, MD/CHCO
- Assist managers in preparing to post jobs, Updated PDs, job analysis, crediting plan, and JOA template, Ongoing, HRD/Managers, AD
- Implement USA Staffing incrementally, Efficient management of applications/online assessment, as appropriate, Mar 15/ ongoing, HRD, HRD
- Brief managers on the process and their role, Managers understand their tasks and set aside the time, needed   , Ongoing, HRD, HRD