

WORKFORCE HORIZONS

Planning Tomorrow's Workforce Today

Louisiana Department of Civil Service

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PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF WORKFORCE PLANNING SURVEY

Civil Service sent an online workforce planning survey to Human Resources Directors in October. It was intended to assess what agencies are currently doing in workforce planning as well as identify major concerns, issues and needs.

We will be analyzing the results more completely this month and report on them in our next issue but some interesting trends have shown up in the preliminary analysis.

We divided the surveys into three groups – General Agencies, Medical (including LSU-HCSD, LSUHSC, and DHH), and Colleges and Universities. There were similarities and differences in the groups.

WORKFORCE PLANNING MAXIM OF THE DAY

*Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.” –
Peter F. Drucker*

Insufficient base pay was cited by all groups as the top challenge in recruiting and retaining employees. There was also a lot of agreement in the groups about major workforce planning issues. **The most frequently cited workforce planning issues were:**

1. *Large number of retirements in key positions within the next five years*
2. *Loss of institutional memory and specialized knowledge due to expected retirements*
3. *Need for training of current employees to prepare them for career advancement within the agency*

On the other hand there was more diversity in the jobs that are hard to recruit for. **The breakdown on hardest-to-fill jobs was as follows:**

General Agencies – Managerial and Supervisory, Fiscal and Accounting Professionals, Other Professionals

Medical – Nurses / RN, Managerial and Supervisory

Colleges and Universities – Skilled Trades, Information Technology Professionals

We'll have more on the survey results in the December issue.

USING COMPETENCIES IN HR PROCESSES AND WORKFORCE PLANNING

Much has been written and said about the need to identify and define critical competencies required of employees in organizations. Often competencies are separated into Core Competencies that are required to some degree in all jobs in the organization and more position-specific competencies that are needed for a more limited group of positions or even a single position. A good practical definition of "competencies" comes from the state of Iowa. On their workforce planning web site competencies are defined as:

“observable and measurable knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be applied to achieve results aligned with the goals of the organization”

The inclusion of the phrase “observable and measurable” is what distinguishes this definition from others, and it is a key distinction. As William J. Rothwell, Professor of Human Resource Management at Penn State stated in his article “The Do’s and Don’ts of Competency Modeling,” competencies are only useful when they are made observable and measurable.

Competencies can be studied at the organization level or at the level of jobs or even individual positions. When defining them at the job class or position level, a process called job profiling is sometimes used to identify and define required competencies. Job profiling and competency studies can be done for many purposes. Some are listed below.

Purposes for Job Profiling / Defining Competencies

- 1) Job design – developing position descriptions for newly established positions or job classes
- 2) Recruitment – developing vacancy announcements
- 3) Developing Minimum Qualifications
- 4) Hiring / Selection
 - i) Evaluating Resumés
 - ii) Developing Interview Questions / Evaluation forms
 - iii) Developing written tests or other assessments
- 5) Creating training or development plans for individual employees
- 6) Developing competency-based performance appraisal

The Department of Civil Service is developing a course to teach agency Human Resources professionals how to do job profiling and how it can be used. It is targeted for release in early 2007.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“It is our choices...that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.” – *J. K. Rowling*

STATE OF IOWA’S NEW WORKFORCE PLANNING WEBSITE

The state of Iowa has recently put up a workforce planning website that is well organized and laid out and full of useful information. One can access these categories of information from a menu on the workforce planning home page:

- ◆ *Workforce Analysis*
- ◆ *Competencies*
- ◆ *Hiring Resources*
- ◆ *Onboarding New Staff*
- ◆ *Succession Planning*
- ◆ *Retention*
- ◆ *Organizational Redesign*
- ◆ *Separations*
- ◆ *Knowledge Transfer*
- ◆ *Workforce Planning Workshops*

The site includes lots of job aids such as competency lists, a guide for developing competencies, sample exit interview forms, etc. Check it out at:

http://das.hre.iowa.gov/turnover_replace/index.html

CREDITS

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Purpose: The purpose of the Workforce Horizons is to educate readers about workforce planning issues and best practices, inform them about upcoming Civil Service workshops and training related to workforce planning and to provide practical job aids to assist agencies with workforce planning.

Comments and submissions: We welcome questions about workforce planning and suggestions for improvements to the newsletter as well as submissions of articles about what your agency is doing in workforce planning. Questions, comments, and requests to be added to the distribution list for the newsletter should be sent to the editor.

Current and Back Issues are accessible under “Workforce Planning Newsletter” in the HR Reference section of the Civil Service web page at www.civilservice.louisiana.gov