CODESP

Cooperative Organization for the Development of Employee Selection Procedures

September 2009

CODESP

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**ONLINE TESTING
AVAILABLE THIS FALL**

**Currently in Test Phase
No Per Candidate Fees!
Instant Scoring
and
Item Analysis**

CODESP Products and Services

CODESP is a joint powers agency and consortium of public educational agencies. We provide online employment test materials and human resource services such as training and assistance in job analysis and job description development. Access to our online products and services is also available to other public agencies and private afterschool programs through a subscribership program. Our new brochure and more information about how agencies can access products and services are available on our website at www.codesp.com by clicking on **Products** in the blue toolbar.

Computer System Implementation

Implementation of any new computer system requires considerable research and planning. First learn everything possible about the current system. Make a list of all the things that will be gained from the new system and all the things that will be given up. Look at the fields that aren't used or those that are used for alternative situations. Engage employees who have used the current system regularly and determine if any complaints were due to improper training or because of inadequacies of the system. IT department support is also essential.

Conduct a vendor reference check. Talk with existing customers who use the system to the fullest extent and who have used it for at least one year to determine what the system does, doesn't do and the speed and quality of customer service response. Don't only speak to those agencies referred by the vendor, reach out to others. The references should be from similar size and type agencies that are using the version being considered. Visit the agency in person to see how it works. Ask when new upgrades will be offered and how long the version being considered for purchase will be supported.

Future CODESP Webinar Topics

Creating and Proctoring Online Tests: A tutorial and demonstration of the new Online Testing system.
CODESP HR Tools: Effective use of the automated CODESP Job Analysis Questionnaire and Job Description Builder.

Dates and times will be announced soon

Internet Applicant Regulations

The use of the Internet for job postings and online applications has become a standard practice with most organizations. The streamlined application process combined with current poor economic conditions has resulted in organizations receiving a record number of applications. Traditionally, under the Uniform Guidelines, everyone who was interested in a position was considered an applicant. However, at a time when job-seekers can apply to countless jobs at a time, employers are trying to determine who should be identified as an applicant under newer regulations.

As of February 2006, the Internet Applicant Regulations, enforced by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, became effective requiring employers to analyze only the applications that meet the criteria of an "Internet Applicant."

An Internet Applicant is defined as an individual who satisfies the following four criteria:

1. The individual submits an expression of interest in employment through the Internet or related electronic data technologies;

2. The employer considers the individual for employment in a particular position;

3. The individual's expression of interest indicates the individual possesses the basic qualifications for the position; and,

4. The individual at no point in the employer's selection process prior to receiving an offer of employment from the employer, removes himself or herself from further consideration or otherwise indicates that he or she is no longer interested in the position.

Using the definition of an Internet Applicant may be helpful for reducing the applicant pool. The Internet Applicant Regulations permit the use of standardized protocols by which employers can refrain from considering applications that are not submitted in accordance with established procedures. Requiring applicants to apply in a specific manner and within a specific time frame are strategies employers can use to reduce the applicant pool. Moreover, basic (minimum) qualifications can be used to further refine the applicant pool as long as they are established in advance and are legally defensible. Supplemental applications available through CODESP can assist in the screening process.

Here is an example of how this would work: Suppose an employer accepts applications based on three basic qualifications for a bilingual nursing supervisor job (a four-year nursing degree, state certification as an RN, and fluency in English and Spanish). The initial screen for the first three basic qualifications narrows the pool to 10,000. The employer then adds a fourth pre-established basic qualification, three years of nursing experience, and narrows the pool to 1,000. Finally, the employer adds a fifth pre-established basic qualification, two years of supervisory experience, which results in a pool of 75 job seekers. Under the Internet Applicant rule, only the 75 job seekers meeting all five basic qualifications would be Internet Applicants, assuming the other three prongs of the "Internet Applicant" definition were met.

For more information on the Internet Applicant Regulations visit
http://www.dol.gov/esa/ofccp/regs/compliance/faqs/iappfaqs.htm

For Supplemental Applications log-in at www.codesp.com click on Resources / Supplemental Application Forms

State Personnel Commissioners Association
Northern California Conference
Friday, October 9th though Sunday October 11th 2009
Embassy Suites Hotel   South Lake Tahoe
http://sigtour.com/embassy/lt/tiffany.html
"Strength – Optimism – Sustainability"

Planned Workshops:
- **Building a Model Merit System Program to Meet Today's Organizational Realities**
- **Classified Layoff Clinic: Legal Requirements, Processes, Displacements, Rehire Lists, Transfers (Tucker Decision)**
- **Legislative/Legal Update – Federal and State Laws and Court Cases We Should Know About**
- **CODESP Online Testing System Demonstration**

The hotel provides full complimentary cooked-to-order breakfasts each day, and complimentary beverages and snacks each evening, in pleasant surroundings ideal for socializing. The rooms are spacious, and self parking is free. www.Meritsystem.org or call Sharon Lampel at San Lorenzo USD at 510-317-4650

Job Opening

DIRECTOR PERSONNEL COMMISSION
Palmdale School District
Closing Date October 16, 2009
$98,757 - $109,009
Application and further information available at www.palmdalesd.org

Computer System Implementation
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When calculating costs, consider training, annual maintenance and upgrade fees. Set aside extra funds for customization that may be needed for the system to fit organization policies. Have a clear vision approved by top administration and a structure that will handle the finances. Be prepared to show the product early to those with the purse strings and also to the users so that they realize that the new system will make their jobs more efficient. During training and implementation ask if the vendor will be providing in-person visits from technical or sales staff, and determine who pays for travel, including per diem costs.

Decide how issues will be resolved by forming a technical advisory panel so when there are challenges a mediation process will be ready. Don't hesitate to ask questions. Ask who owns the code and content. Ask what happens if they go out of business or if the system crashes. And just in case it is available, ask for a CODESP discount.

Proper research and planning prior contract approval will help alleviate financial missteps and provide more satisfaction with the end product.

Using Competencies to Construct Structured Interviews

As the use of competencies in selection becomes more widespread, many are finding ways to incorporate them into selection tools. CODESP uses the Behavioral Competency Dictionary created by Bassett USD, which is posted on the CODESP website after login under the Job Description Builder / Glossaries. A new sample interview has been developed based on these competencies and is posted under Resources / Secretary / Administrative Assistant. Scroll down and click on Administrative Assistant - Competency Interview. The interview demonstrates how competencies can be used in creating both questions and the benchmark answers for rating candidate responses.

Competencies go beyond KSAs because they provide a description of the extent of performance expected. They recognize success in a position and include the interpersonal skills and behaviors necessary for success. For example, the competency Accountability, or Dependability, is described as "The extent to which one internalizes and outwardly expresses responsibility for timeliness, commitment to task, adherence to performance standards, and conformity with the rules and policies of an organization." Unlike competencies, a typical KSA may begin with, "Ability to …" without a description of the performance expected or the level of mastery required and the same statement may be used for all job levels.

For each competency, the Dictionary lists different Mastery Levels, defined as "the level of competency proficiency one must command to successfully perform essential job functions." Accountability in different jobs may be required at Level 1, "Adheres to basic instructions"; Level 2, "Independently completes routine tasks"; Level 3, "Functions under limited supervision"; and so on. Refer to task statements gathered during job analysis and consider organizational position as necessary. For instance the Administrative Assistant sample interview identifies Level 3 as the Mastery Level for Accountability, "Functions under limited supervision."

If current job descriptions include KSAs and the organization wants to explore the use of competencies, discuss the change with administrators and employee associations to enlist buy-in. Next, review each KSA and match it to the most closely related competency in the Dictionary. Suppose that the current Administrative Assistant job description included the statement "Ability to meet deadlines." Depending on information provided in the job analysis this could be linked to the Accountability competency.

The interview questions should be written using situations specific to the demands of the position, and should require candidates to provide examples of how they have behaved on the job in ways similar to the behaviors described in the definition of the competency. For instance, a sample question for Accountability could be, "Describe the most complex department activity or process for which you have been held accountable. How did you make sure you and those you supervised achieved the desired results in a timely manner?" A candidate's response to this question should describe how performance standards were adhered to, and specific measures that were taken to address any areas of weakness in the activity or process.

Finally, competency definitions can be used as a starting point for creating rating benchmarks. These behavioral benchmarks can and should be made even more specific to the position with the assistance of SMEs. The rating sample for Accountability describes what is expected from the answers provided by highly qualified candidates: "Answer demonstrates the applicant successfully completes complex tasks in time to make all the necessary revisions; takes appropriate measures to address team's or own short-comings and ensure excellent results; provides direction and feedback to others, if applicable; makes all necessary adjustments in order meet deadlines; and takes steps above and beyond his/her regular responsibilities to ensure project completion and/or excellence."

Start with the competency definition and work with SMEs to derive the behaviors that will identify Highly Qualified, Qualified and Unqualified candidate responses to each interview question. The more carefully interview questions and rating benchmarks are constructed, the better they will measure a position's essential competencies and differentiate between unqualified and highly qualified candidates.

The CODESP Job Description Builder now includes competencies by mastery level as a choice during the construction phase. Custom competency interviews can be requested during the CATS Request process.

WRIPAC

Western Region Intergovernmental Personnel Assessment Council
Long Beach, California
September 30 - October 2, 2009
30th Anniversary Celebration!

Location: **Renaissance Long Beach Hotel**
                  Ask for the $110.00 government rate.
Hotel Website: http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/lgbrn-renaissance-long-beach-hotel/

Training: September 30, 2009
Topic: *Pass Point Setting*
Presenter: Shelley Langan, CPS, IPMA-CP
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Fee: $125/members $150/non-member for full day training

Meeting: Oct 1 (full day) and Oct 2 (1/2 day)
Speakers: Speakers for the meeting will include nationally known HR and I/O professionals,
                  Harry Brull, Jeff Feuquay PhD., esq. and Karen Coffee
Networking: Thursday evening - 30th Anniversary Celebration!
Fee: FREE! There is no cost to attend WRIPAC meetings
Registration: www.wripac.org Separate registration is required for the meeting/training and
                  celebration.
Agenda: Posted on www.wripac.org and lists the meeting speakers and topics.

Training Course: Pass points signify the most basic of decision points in a procedure. Pass points on employment tests are most frequently used to differentiate among those individuals who demonstrate possession of job-related qualifications and those do not. This course will include discussion on the legal requirements of pass point setting, the intended and inadvertent use of pass points, and the background rationale of pass point setting. Participants will be introduced to the many considerations in setting effective pass points with an emphasis on the following:

- Job-relatedness
- Legal defensibility
- Adverse impact
- Utility of sound pass point setting practices

Through the use of hands-on activities and discussion, participants will be provided with a practical process and methodology for sound, legally defensible pass points.