

2004-2005 GRAND JURY REPORT

Riverside County Human Resources Recruitment Process

Background

In December 1997, the County of Riverside Human Resources (HR) Department purchased an automated resume processing system, Resumix, for the purpose of expediting the recruitment process. The total cost of the Resumix System was \$347,575. There is also an annual cost for licensing, maintenance and tax. The annual cost from April 2003 to April 2004 was \$36,608.

The two most important functions of the Resumix System are recruiting and hiring. There are approximately 18,000 employees countywide. In the first step of the recruitment process, an HR Recruiter will receive a Candidate Request Form (CRF), see Attachment "A," from the hiring department where a vacancy exists. The HR Recruiter will then consult with the hiring manager to discuss recruitment strategy and qualifications for the "best" candidate. Prior to conducting a *JobMatch resume search, requisitions and job classifications are reviewed for appropriate knowledge, skills, or abilities the candidate should possess to be considered for a position. The recruiter enters all the data into the JobMatch database that compiles a certified hiring list of qualified candidates. Employees must update their resumes annually to become eligible candidates for desired positions. Lastly, the list of candidates and their resumes are sent to the hiring department for interviews. The entire process takes approximately seven to ten (7-10) working days.

Riverside County's HR Department subscribes to the QWIZ assessment testing services to measure an applicant's ability to perform specific functions at basic, intermediate and advanced skill levels depending on a job's requirements. Assessment tests are administered through HR on a continuous basis and individuals may schedule an appointment or walk-in. The applicant's score is factored into the recruitment process when testing is required for the open position.

**JobMatch is Human Resource's recruitment system utilizing an electronic resume scanning system, enabling applicants to submit only one resume to be retained in the database for all County positions for which they may qualify. This system enables recruiters to better serve the employment needs of the department by utilizing a database of resumes, and speeding up the process overall.*

Riverside County HR operates on a merit system. County Ordinance No. 440, Section 6. (a), entitled Employment Procedures states:

“The personnel administration under the ordinance is designated a merit system. Appointments and promotions shall be made on the basis of merit and ability. Each officer shall appoint all necessary employees allowed for his/her department by this ordinance only from among persons certified to him/her by the Human Resources Director as eligible for the respective positions. The Human Resources Director shall determine the methods of evaluating the qualifications of applicants. The methods shall be practical in nature and may involve any combination of written test, oral test, performance test, rating of education, training and experience and shall take into consideration a system of veterans preference as may be adopted by the Board of Supervisors, by resolution. The veterans preference program shall be administered by the Human Resources Director.”

Findings

1. In some departments, there appears to be a breakdown in communication between management and line staff regarding the recruitment process, particularly employees hired prior to the installation of the Resumix System. Many of these employees are unaware that they are required to update their resumes annually to be placed on a certified candidate list in order to compete for open positions either intra-departmentally or inter-departmentally.
2. Unknown to HR Recruiters, some hiring managers encourage “favored” employees to modify their resumes to mirror the CRF’s job requirements to ensure a higher position on the candidate list.
3. In some cases, management will forego the open recruitment process by filling promotional positions with inter-departmental transfers and/or Temporary Assistance Pool (TAP) employees. This is contrary to County Ordinance 440, Section 6(a) entitled Employment Procedures and the Riverside County Human Resources Department New Employee Handbook (Merit System). Grand Jury interviews indicate that these practices have significantly lowered employee morale.
4. The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) recruitment process for social workers may take up to two (2) months from requisition to hire. Due to the prolonged process many applicants may accept employment elsewhere.
5. Based on information furnished to the Grand Jury from the Auditor-Controller’s Office, the cost of utilizing the QWIZ assessment testing for fiscal year 2002-03, including a \$99 training fee for one employee, was \$510,699. In fiscal year 2003-04, the cost was \$250,000 making the total cost for both years \$760,699.

6. The County of Riverside Board of Supervisors Policy A-18 5(a) Procedures states:

“Subject to the availability of funds, the department head shall prepare a request for proposal which shall include specifications, conditions and any other requirements deemed necessary for the provision of such services.”

PROCEDURES FOR CONTRACTING FOR
PROFESSIONAL OR PERSONAL SERVICES

(f) “Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 25502.5(a), the County Purchasing Agent may process and execute contracts for personal and professional services which do not exceed, in aggregate, the appropriate statutory limit, currently \$100,000. This policy, however, shall limit such contracting authority of the Purchasing Agent to \$25,000 without prior Board approval if the contract was not competitively bid.”

The Grand Jury could find no evidence that a Request For Proposal (RFP) or a request for purchase had been submitted on a **Form 11 to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

***A Form 11 is a standard request form used for all requests for Board of Supervisors action.*

Recommendations

Riverside County Board of Supervisors Riverside County Human Resources Director Riverside County Purchasing Department

1. Post a written notice in the employee break room and remind employees at department staff meetings of the importance of updating resumes to ensure an equitable and competitive process.
2. Adhere to the established standard recruitment process and comply with County Ordinance 440, Section 6(a) entitled Employment Procedures, and the Riverside County Human Resources New Employee Handbook (Merit System).
3. The Deputy Director of Human Resources must review all new hires, transfers and promotions to ensure that each employee has advanced through the proper process.
4. Riverside County Human Resources Department develop a procedure to streamline the hiring process for DPSS social workers.
5. The Riverside County Purchasing Department follow established County Policy A-18 5(a) and seek comparable testing services to obtain the best value for Riverside County.
6. The Riverside County Human Resources Director adhere to County Policy A-18 5(a) and submit a Form 11 to the Board of Supervisors for approval of purchases exceeding \$100,000.

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