

>> Hi , fol ks.

I'm here with Bill Fuller, and he is joining us as a human resource specialist from the region 9 human capital office.

He's going to be talking with us today about the hiring process and going over an overview of what that looks like.

Welcome, Bill .

Glad you could join us.

So, I am a supervisor, and I've had somebody recently retire and the workload is starting to become a little overwhelming and I need to fill this vacancy.

Where do I get started?

>> Well , first of all , you have to figure out if you have funds to fill that vacancy or that position.

At that time you want to also look whether or not you want to fill that job part time or full time.

If you determine you have the funds, you'll start with the classification group, and you'll work with them on a job description or PD, position description, one that you might already have in existence, you might need to update or it might be a new vacancy you're filling and developing a brand-new position description.

>> Okay.

Once I have that position description in place, and that's ready to go, then where do I go?

>> Then you want to really start thinking about your recruitment strategy.

You know, how are you going to fill this position?

Can you reassign a current employee to that position?

Or can you hire a student under the student temporary employment program or SCEP program?

You may want to also look at what kind of grade you want that position to be?

If it's a GS13 and you're thinking about lowering the grade you can work with classification on that.

If you already have an applicant pool, you know, do you have enough qualified applicants within Fish & Wildlife to fill that vacancy or if you think you want to go at a broader spectrum and look at the whole Federal government.

Or if you want to cast a wide net, you might want to look outside of the service and inside of the service.

Those are all pieces you'll want to determine up front working with your classification specialists and your staffing specialists.

There's other opportunities as well looking at appointment authorities such as looking at the veterans recruitment authority, which would allow you to point somebody noncompetitively that's a veteran up to a GS11 position.

You might want to look at the student career internship program or hiring a compensable veteran.

So there's a number of different authorities you could look at to do this noncompetitively where you've developed your job and you might not have to go out and actually post a vacancy and might be able to do it noncompetitively.

You can work with your diversity group, equal opportunity group and your staffing group to look at some of those additional appointing authorities.

>> J. Quinn: So once I have that recruitment strategy in place, then -- and I've got that outline, then

where are we going from there?

>> So we're going to actually start with a job analysis tool at that point, and what that is is it's a tool that's identifying tasks and major duties that this person is going to be doing and what are the specific duties?

How much time are they going to spend doing those duties?

Then we'll look at what kind of knowledge, skill and abilities they have to have in order to perform those duties.

>> That job analysis tool, sounds like it could take quite a long time for me to come up with all of those pieces.

>> It certainly does.

It's a big landscape to cover, in looking at staffing, but that is your first tool to identify and assess the competencies you'll need to fill the vacancy.

So what does this applicant actually have to have in order to fill your job and do it successfully?

You'll want to look at those technical competencies in the job and they might have some soft skill sets like communication but you might have some biological skill sets that are technical competencies that they really need to have before they come in on the job or that they could ramp up and learn within the first 90 days.

So you'll want to work closely with your staffing specialist with that, but you're the subject matter expert on this as the manager.

So we'll work together on that as a team.

>> J. Quinn: Now that I have the job analysis tool outline laid out, put in all that work, what do I do

with it?

>> Now we're actually going to develop a questionnaire or something that's based on task-based questions.

It's actually known as a questionnaire or assessment tool.

It's a tool we're going to use to analyze the applicants' ability where you can think of it as your old crediting plan if you've been with the Service for a while, we used to use an old crediting plan.

This is now what we call the crediting plan, this assessment tool.

In this step we're going to develop these task-based questions in which the applicant will self-rate themselves.

They'll either -- through a number of letters.

So they might say that they're either an expert at something or don't have any experience.

So you'll ask a specific question and they'll rate themselves whether they have the level of competency that you're looking for.

Again, through a rating scale that's usually set up to be A to E on that.

Once you develop those questions, what's important is to use like action words in asking those like: assist or manage.

Have you formulated something?

Have you executed something?

Have you monitored?

Preparing, evaluating, initiating.

Those action words kind of lead people through those questions.

We actually have given you a sheet that is on the "Supervisory Update" web page so that your managers can go to that and look at that.

It helps prompt and get you into the mode of how do you ask the right question for that applicant to answer.

>> So how many questions am I looking to develop for this assessment tool?

>> KSAs, knowledge, skills and abilities are known what is factors in this assessment.

You can use anywhere between four and eight.

Most of the managers familiar with knowledge, skills and abilities and I think we've all applied we've answered these questions about that, so anywhere between four and eight, and think of it this way, that you'll do the knowledge, skill and ability or that factor and then you'll ask anywhere between four and six questions related to that skill or that competency.

So you'll want to choose those KSAs wisely, those factors wisely.

You don't want to overburden the applicant where they look at this job and there's too many questions, I am not going to bother applying.

You don't want to scare them away with it.

But you want to make sure you assess those technical competent tease and hitting on the right target so you can get the best applicant pool.

>> J. Quinn: So essentially you are developing what goes on U.S.A. jobs at this point, what that applicant is logging in and filling out --

>> And actually seeing.

That assessment tool is really your key.

If you develop a quality assessment, you'll get quality applicants.

So it's kind of garbage in, garbage out.

If you do a bad job up front, you're going to get bad stuff at the end with that.

>> J. Quinn: So I have this developed.

I guess what's next step to actually getting it up and running so people can apply?

>> Before you actually do that, so you've developed that assessment tool, you'll want to initiate an FPPS action, that's the Federal personnel processing system and you'll initiate what's called the request for eligibles.

This is the document that allows human resources the ability to actually recruit for you.

Along with that we talked about posting that vacancy, the office of personnel management has set an objective for an 80-day hiring initiative.

So what they're expecting is that we've classified a position, we've done job analysis, we've done an assessment, we've posted the vacancy, we've rated -- ranked those applicants, we've given the manager a referral list and hired somebody and brought them on board in 80 days.

So there's a lot of work and we were on a timetable with that, with the Office of Personnel Management.

It's an aggressive goal that we are all trying to achieve to meet that.

The Department of the Interior actually tracks that information based on that FPPS action or what I call

that request for eligibles action.

So they look at that.

They look at when that initial action was generated and when the actual person gets appointed and put onboard.

That's actually the time frame they're looking at to evaluate the Service on this 80-day hiring initiative.

So you've done a lot of good framework, built this great framework, but now you have to get this announcement on the streets.

So you'll work with your staffing specialist at that point and determine how long you want to advertise that job, whether it be one week, two weeks, three weeks.

Again, you've worked up front but will reevaluate and talk see again how broad of a net do we want to cast for this particular vacancy.

Again, do we want to go out to the whole public or narrow that down just to Fish and Wildlife Service or look at current government employees?

That vacancy does go on U.S.A. jobs.

The actual tool that we use is called USA Staffing, and that is actually where the applicant will go into an application manager and fill out that questionnaire we just talked about, that assessment, answer those questions, and that's the system we use to collect the resumes, collect the SF50s, collect the supporting documentation, transcripts they upload electronically.

The applicant can apply through a paper process as well.

So we don't preclude anybody that doesn't have a computer to apply.

They can still apply.

>> J. Quinn: Going back real quick to how long the vacancy is out, taking off my supervisor hat now, is there any truth to the fact that when I see vacancy announcements come out and they're only open for a really short amount of time, I kind of come to the assumption that that's maybe intended for someone and so I'm less likely to apply.

Can you share any information about how long they're actually put out there for and what's the strategy and maybe why some of them go from five days to three weeks, why is there that long range?

>> Sure.

Assumptions can be dangerous for sure with that.

No, I don't believe there is truth to that.

A lot of times what the manager -- they've already done pre-recruitment, and they've done extensive networking before they've even announced that position.

So they don't necessarily have to make it out for three or four weeks.

So they've already done that networking opportunity.

The automated system now allows applicants to get to jobs quicker before they weren't able to do that or applied they would have to submit paper products.

So we keep that open for a long time.

Applicants now have like ticklers in U.S.A. jobs that say I want to look for a biologist's position, and when those positions come up or I want to look at U.S. Fish & Wildlife, they get a notification when those positions come up as well.

Then there's also looking at the pool of applicants

for the government is getting bigger and bigger, so we have a large applicant pool now, whereas before we might have had a smaller one.

I can personally speak to some of the positions I've advertised for, particularly secretarial positions, and I've opened them only for five days, opened on it a Monday, closed on it a Friday and I had 266 applicants.

So I know I could fill that job.

Hopefully that helps kind of clear some of those myths about that there's somebody in mind for somebody.

There's a lot of work that goes up front to get that out.

>> J. Quinn: That's good to know.

So I guess we're at the point where the vacancy is now closed --

>> Vacancy is closed.

Maybe you've opened up for two weeks, or three weeks, or one week.

The staffing specialist will now take the time to review and rate and rank those applicants and evaluate what they've done on their assessment, make sure that they've answered truthfully, they have all their supporting documents, and then we issue a certificate to the manager.

Sometimes those certificates will look different.

You might have some that will be for merit promotion, again, those for that are inside the government.

You'll have another one that's for what they call the delegated examining unit, or applicants from the outside.

That particular certification you might see veterans on the top of that list.

You can work with your staffing specialist to understand how and what that all means.

That usually takes about five to 10 days to get that to the manager.

Then the manager is going to set up their interviews and determine who the best qualified applicant is that they would like to fill that position with.

>> J. Quinn: So once I've picked, what all is involved in the background process?

>> Absolutely.

Once the selection is made, the selecting official will sign the certification list, send that back to human resources, human resources will actually reach out to that applicant and make that job offer, and if they accept, then we identify that to the manager and then we start that background investigation on that applicant.

So an invitation is sent to them through a system called EQUIP and that allows them to go online to fill out data requested depending on the level of background that's being completed.

The applicant will do fingerprints, all that information comes back into human resources and then we sent out to the Office of Personnel Management's investigative office to do.

That I'm sure the next question is how long before they come onboard?

It could be a couple weeks before fingerprints will clear, sometimes sooner, sometimes later.

It's a little bit of a moving target.

We don't necessarily have control over that.

At this point it's in another organization to evaluate.

>> J. Quinn: All righty.

That's a lot.

>> It's a lot to do.

The effort that you put in up front will hopefully yield you fantastic -- a good applicant pool.

I think what's key in this is that we partner together as supervisors and HR specialists and classification specialists to make sure we're going through this process correctly and think of HR as your guide to taking through this process and hopefully at the end we'll get a good qualified applicant, we can fill your job and they'll stay with the Service for a long time.

>> J. Quinn: It really sounds like that that relationship is probably the most important throughout this whole process.

>> Yeah, it's key.

It's key.

If we don't do the good upfront work, we could go down -- again, we've talked about appointing authorities.

If we can fill that position noncompetitively where we don't have to advertise, wouldn't that great?

Look at some of those veteran opportunities or look at Federal pure internship program, things like that, or the student temporary employment program, if you can fill those at that level.

>> A lot of options throughout for us.

Awesome.

Thank you so much for sitting down with me and sharing with our supervisors this process, giving a nice overview of how it works and again encouraging them to get involved with their human resource specialists and their staffing specialists and kind of get the process started.

So thank you.

>> Absolutely.

Thanks for having me.

I appreciate coming and talking about human resources and the staffing process.

>> J. Quinn: In our next couple segments we're actually going to be looking at some of those different appointing authorities that you guys have as supervisors.