



INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Chair and Members of the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: March 19, 2012	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Word Recognition Software Recommendation from Audit Report 2010-08 - Human Resources - Recruitment and Selection (HUR12003) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business Items)	
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SIGNATURE:	

Committee Direction:

On March 2, 2011, in response to a review of the Management Action Plan related to the Audit Report 2010-08 – Human Resources Recruitment and Selection (AUD11011), Audit, Finance and Administration Committee directed staff to:

- (a) table the investigation of Word Recognition Software that is compatible with PeopleSoft to assist in the applicant screening process for a one year period in order for Human Resources staff to complete their assessment of the current PeopleSoft system, which has a module for an enhanced screening process, and
- (b) investigate the costs associated with an assessment of that software, and report to the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee within one year.

This report provides an update on the result of the staff assessment of the module for the enhanced screening process in the current PeopleSoft system which was undertaken at no additional cost to the organization.

Background:

One of the recommendations from the Audit Report 2010-08 Human Resources Recruitment and Selection was that ‘Employment Services investigate word recognition software that is compatible with PeopleSoft to assist in the screening process’. The

auditor had made this recommendation in support of the extensive time required of the Employment Services staff to manually screen a large volume of applications. Management had disagreed with the recommendation to devote staff time to the investigation of third party word recognition software as the City was in the process of undertaking a PeopleSoft system upgrade which would provide enhanced screening processes.

Summary:

The PeopleSoft system licensed and in use at the City of Hamilton was upgraded in 2011 with additional features and functionality that supports the City's recruitment staff to more effectively screen and review applications. Staff will realize the full benefits and functionality of the PeopleSoft upgrade by the fall of 2012.

Staff did a cost/benefit comparison of the functionality of the PeopleSoft system (at the time the Audit was completed) against the Upgraded PeopleSoft system and an external third party provider of Word Recognition software. The parameters used for comparison included: additional cost, ability to do 'key word search', and expanded capability to use a screening questionnaire, which is summarized in Appendix A to this report.

The intent of the audit recommendation was to improve the efficiency of the manual screening processes. In summary, the enhanced functionality of PeopleSoft Version 9.1 provides staff with the key word search capability and more importantly provides automated screening questionnaires that can be tailored to specific job postings and thus provide a more effective and efficient way to short list candidates. Investing in additional Word Recognition software would be a duplication of the current capabilities of PeopleSoft. Optimization of our PeopleSoft Version 9.1 will enable staff to realize additional process improvements in future years.

Attachment: Appendix A HUR12003 – Cost/Benefit Analysis

Cost/Benefit Analysis

Parameter Assessed	PeopleSoft at Time of Audit	PeopleSoft Upgrade Version 9.1	External Word Recognition Software – Third Party Provider
Cost		Full implementation by fall 2012; cost is within current capital budget approval for PeopleSoft Upgrade and Optimization projects	Cost of additional software purchase plus technical resources to implement and maintain
Key Word Search Capability	Capability was there but was not utilized as not all resumes were received on-line. In 2009 there were still a significant number of manual applications	<p>As of 2012, most applications are submitted on-line.</p> <p>Advantages - Key Word Search feature is useful for filtering through a large volume of applications. The more specialized the skills required, the more effectively this tool can be used. On a position by position basis, this tool can be used to search for a specific skill in our applicant database.</p> <p>Disadvantages – same as third party provider of specialized word recognition software</p>	<p>Advantages - same as PeopleSoft. Best of Breed technology is available which extends beyond key word search and has the capacity to interpret meaning from entire sentences.</p> <p>Disadvantages – difficult to ensure that a ‘key word’ search does not exclude applicants who may match our requirements but use different words e.g. applicants from new Canadians</p> <p>Requires development of multiple variations of a word e.g. P.Eng, Peng, Professional Engineer; Prof. Eng.</p> <p>Not effective for positions where multiple factors are considered e.g. combination of education and/or experience</p> <p>Candidates not selected through a key word search will not receive further review</p> <p>May be a perceived and real barrier to employment at the City for applicants less skilled in developing their application</p> <p>Designed to source candidates from external internet sources as a regular practice which is not compatible with City’s recruitment practices.</p>

Parameter Assessed	PeopleSoft at Time of Audit	PeopleSoft Upgrade Version 9.1	External Word Recognition Software – Third Party Provider
Screening Questionnaires	Very limited	<p>Advantages: Capability available at no additional cost</p> <p>Provides a more controlled and structured way to collect applicant information specific to a job posting that can assist with automated short-listing.</p> <p>Allows candidates to be ranked based on how closely they match the parameters of the position. These parameters can be more restrictive for large applicant pools or expanded for smaller candidate pools.</p> <p>All candidates are screened consistently based on pre-selected and job-related criteria which are not dependent on the resume. These are flexible and can be easily modified for each position resulting in a smaller pool of resumes to review and validate against position requirements.</p> <p>More effective than key word searches because of the different ways candidates can enter information on their resumes.</p> <p>Note: Requires some time to implement and create the most effective type of questionnaires.</p>	<p>Advantages: Same capability is available for purchase through the market e.g. Workopolis, Monster. This could be outsourced on a position by position basis to a third party.</p>