

Coming Soon

Recruitment Standards

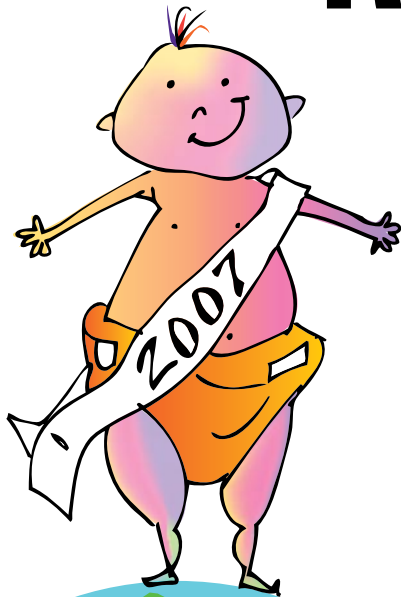
by Cathy Corbett, HR Manager, Justice CSU

HR Managers, at the request of and following consultation and partnership with the Executive HR Forum in June 2006, have adopted standards identified by the Merit Staffing Audit. We developed templates that will support a consistent approach to corporate recruitment and selection processes.

Draft templates were prepared at an HR Manager workshop held in September with amended drafts completed in October. These were further vetted through the Human Resource Consultant Forum. The HR Managers reconvened in late October to produce a final submission to Patti Pike, our PSC lead on this initiative.

The next step in the recruitment initiative is the development of a corporate training program for HR Practitioners and hiring managers. A team led by Anne Marie Fitzpatrick will incorporate the standards and templates into the recruitment workshop and then the HR Community will deliver one comprehensive program to managers.

The review and update of the tools, processes, and procedures for attracting talent to the public service is opportune and timely as it supports the overall corporate policy review pertaining to Fair Hiring and Affirmative Action practices within the provincial government. → 2



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HR Strategy Update

by Holly Bartlett, HR Strategy Advisor

With the New Year fast approaching the HR Strategy for the HR Community project team is gearing up for an active 2007.

Thanks to those of you who took time to support the competency validation process last spring and summer; the behavioral competency framework is now complete.

The project leads will present this framework to you at an HR Community luncheon planned for January 18. Here, you will meet the members of the HR Strategy Team and learn about the exciting HR Strategy activities planned for 2007.

Stay tuned for more details regarding the HR Community Luncheon and other HR Strategy activities. ■

← 1 We anticipate that the revised Fair Hiring and Affirmative Action policies will be reflected in the recruitment and selection process before the new program is implemented.

Stay tuned for more updates as the work on these important initiatives unfold. ■

Fair Hiring & Affirmative Action Policy Review Update

by Carrie Hotton,
Attraction and Retention Unit, PSC

On behalf of the policy review project teams, a big thank-you goes out to our HR Community for participating in our fall 2006 consultations.

We heard from over 270 employees, all senior management teams, the HR Community, the diversity roundtable, and external diversity community groups. Many were grateful for having had the opportunity to share input about how to improve the policies.

Healthy Resolutions On the Way Healthy Workplace Update

by Joan Parks-Hubley, Coordinator,
Healthy Workplace Programs, PSC

2007 will bring some healthy resolutions to Government of Nova Scotia workplaces. The corporate Healthy Workplace Policy has been approved.

Nova Scotia is only the second province (after Quebec) in Canada to approve such a policy! The policy comes into effect February 1, 2007, and planning is already underway to spread the word to all workplaces.

Nova Scotia's Corporate Human Resource Plan 2005-2010 and the Government Business Plan for 2006-07 identified providing a safe and supportive work environment for its employees as a priority. The Public Service Commission (PSC) has led moving this priority forward, along with the corporate Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee.

A corporate policy will formally establish government's long-term commitment to a healthy workplace and provide the

framework that will guide all healthy workplace-related activity and program development.

Having a corporate policy is also one of the seven criteria needed to achieve Level 1 certification in Healthy Workplace from the National Quality Institute. Nova Scotia is now positioned, by end of March 2007, to be the first provincial government in Canada to achieve this recognition. This is certainly something to celebrate!

Supports for Healthy Workplace committees and departments to communicate and implement the policy are in development now. A manager's support series, called "Be the Manager You'd Love to Have" is in the works. The series will include a Healthy Workplace calendar, piloting manager training, and a self-assessment checklist on how to manage a Healthy Workplace (many thanks to those managers from the Departments of Justice and Health who piloted the self assessment tool).

Look for much more to come on Healthy Workplace this month! ■

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

HR Links is published 10 times a year on the first business day of each month. The July/August and December/January issues are combined.

The editorial board welcomes and actively solicits articles and story suggestions from members of the HR Community and its partners. Please send your submissions to hrlinks@gov.ns.ca.

Members of the HR Links Editorial Board are:
Jane Allt, Vanessa Hammock,
Donna Hendy, Michelle Lucas,
Alexandra Smith

How's Work Going?

2006 Employee Survey Results

One way we can make the provincial public service one of the best places to work in Nova Scotia is through the employee survey where we ask employees how we can improve the workplace.

This year was the second sample survey since the program was launched in 2004. This year's representative sample included 1,400 employees from across government and the results are based on a response rate of 43%.

Results of the 2006 Sample Survey

In three years, it's clear that we've made progress. Of the 68 questions, 40 questions had increases in favourable scores, in the range of 1% to as high as 20%.

Employees are committed and proud to be public servants. They feel safe in the workplace, people they work with make an effort to help each other out, and they have positive working relationships with their co-workers and with those they report to.

Some areas of improvements include: communication, diversity, safety, and some recruitment and recognition topics.

This is the result of a great deal of work: department action teams were established, a corporate diversity management office and diversity action plans were created, the healthy workplace initiative was launched, and recognition programs have been rolled-out across government.

The survey results also show areas of concern that we have seen in the past two surveys, including: career advancement, hiring, leadership, compensation, reporting ethical dilemmas, and some recruitment and retention issues.

The Deputy Ministers' Forum is committed to working together with our employees to improve these areas for employees. It's important to keep in mind that for some issues, change will take time. ■

To read the survey report, please visit www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey/

Disclosure of Wrongdoing Annual Report

The provincial government's second annual report on disclosure of wrongdoing was tabled in the legislature on November 23, 2006.

The report, which covers April 1, 2005, and March 31, 2006, was tabled by Human Resources Minister, Ernest Fage.

"The province has regulations and policy in place that enable employees to report wrongdoing without fear of reprisal," said Mr. Fage. "These mechanisms, and an annual report to the public, are important parts of accountable government and building confidence among Nova Scotians."

Nova Scotia implemented umbrella disclosure regulations and policy in September 2004. The regulations are not meant to supercede other protections for employees, such as the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

In the time frame covered by the report, there were no disclosures reported. The Public Service Commission met with government agencies to share information and created a website and resources for employees and managers. The Office of the Ombudsman developed an information package for government employees and established a wrongdoing inquiry line (1-877-670-1100). ■

A copy of the annual report can be accessed on the Public Service Commission's website at www.gov.ns.ca/psc.

The Diversity Talent Pool

How are we doing?



Awarded to
United Way Volunteers

During the Fall 2006, hundreds of employees from across government were actively involved in raising funds for the United Way annual campaign. These monies support community-based programs that help people and communities in need.

**Congratulations
to all those involved!**

If anyone sees an individual or group in our community that you feel is deserving of some special recognition please send your nomination to hrlinks@gov.ns.ca

"We used the Diversity Talent Pool to fill a project coordinator role, to work with the attraction & retention, healthy workplace, and diversity units until the end of March 2007. We interviewed three candidates and were very impressed with the quality and caliber of the candidates. If we had the opportunities available, we could have easily offered employment to all three! I highly recommend use of the talent pool, as there are many different skill sets available and enthusiastic candidates waiting for an opportunity to work with government." Carrie Hotton, HR Consultant, Attraction and Retention, Public Service Commission ■

by Lydia Adisenu-Doe, PSC

The Canadian population is becoming more diverse and Nova Scotia is no exception.

Serving diverse clientele requires having public servants that are diverse and culturally competent. Diversity (one of our core public service values) is an important piece to fostering an environment that supports our other core values: respect, integrity, accountability, and the public good. A diverse workforce enables us to strengthen these values. This means continually working to promote a workforce that understands our responsibilities and benefits as a public organization and committed to valuing diversity.

The Diversity Talent Pool is one means to doing this, helping departments access qualified applicants in the designated groups. We are happy to say the service is being used and people are being hired. Thank you all for your daily requests and support.

Let's hear what some HR consultants who have used the services have to say!

"The TPW/Finance HR CSU regularly accesses the Diversity Talent Pool promoted by the Diversity Management Unit. The Diversity team is readily available to research our needs and provide us with qualified candidates for consideration. We're pleased with the pleasant, personal service and positive casual placements that have occurred" Effie Anderson, HR Consultant and Margaret Melanson, HR Manager, TPW/Finance HR CSU

"I find the Diversity Talent pool very effective. Any time I called I always received great-qualified candidates, and some are now full-time employees. Thank you for your services and keep up the great work." LaRose Doucette, HR Consultant, Justice HR CSU

"I have utilized the Diversity Inventory for managers who have a casual need for various reasons. I have encouraged the use of the inventory and also ensured employees working within government positions are being paid appropriately for the level of the position being filled. To date this has been relatively successful. Recently, one employee hired for an eight-week clerical backfill was then successful for a casual planning and development officer position in another section of the department. It is an excellent opportunity for people to gain experience in government offices or to gain Canadian work experience if they are immigrants." Kim Scott, HR Consultant, HR Consultant, Education HR-CSU

"Two Managers from the OH&S division within the Department of Environment & Labour have used the diversity pool and have provided me with some wonderful feedback. They appreciated having a pool of diverse candidates that were pre-screened and qualified for the roles for which they were trying to backfill on a casual basis. The candidates that were referred to the managers were highly educated and good fits within the roles they were recruited to fill on a casual basis." Julie Nadeau, Human Resources Consultant, Resources CSU