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Streamlining E-Recruitment at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center: A Case Study

By France Lampron, Nuvosoft, Inc.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC), a major teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School, is renowned for excellence in patient care, biomedical research, teaching and community service. Located in the heart of Boston's medical community, it hosts nearly three quarters of a million patient visits annually in and around Boston.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center utilizes the PeopleSoft application for its human resources needs and implemented the e-benefits and e-recruit modules a few years ago. Like many organizations, BIDMC is evaluating its vendor's system's components to gain more efficiency for employees and to derive greater value from its system. To reach this goal, Lynda Farago, the new director of HRS, started reviewing BIDMC's current HR processes and systems, looking to get more out of these applications. She recently consulted with Nuvosoft, Inc. of Waltham, Massachusetts to streamline the e-recruitment process.

IDENTIFY EACH HR PROCESS ISSUE(S)

"A benefit to implementing this particular system is that it offers the opportunity to review and update your HR processes," said Ms. Farago.

For example, when she joined the medical center, the staffing partners could search for résumés posted on the internal BIDMC Web site only by using a requisition number. This number didn't correspond to a job posting or to an applicant's name. The only way a staffing partner could search for a résumé submitted online was to remember its requisition number. Staffing partners were spending too much time searching for résumés. It was actually becoming easier to use external Web sites than to use BIDMC's own site.

This issue also delayed the reporting necessary for compliance with governmental regulations. Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center regularly submits U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reports to show non-discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. This requires capturing objective decision-making information for each résumé reviewed. For reporting, one needs to capture all the résumés that were considered for a position and what disposition code they were given. The codes correspond to skills. For example, candidates may be unqualified for a position, or they may have been interviewed, but they lacked sufficient experience, etc. This process is designed to show objective hiring and promotion procedures that demonstrate lack of prejudice during the consideration process.

USE A METHODOLOGY THAT CAN TRACK USERS' NEEDS AND CREATE A BLUEPRINT FOR A COMPLEMENTARY APPLICATION.

"We had a confusing process. It didn't support what we needed to do; in fact, it seemed to be working against us. We needed technology that would give us quick access to the résumé, plus a history of its disposition," Ms. Farago added.

IMPLEMENT A METHODOLOGY THAT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSES USERS' REQUIREMENTS.

For organizations seeking to modify existing IT practices, having an objective methodology that captures all of the functional and technical details prior to writing code is essential. The implementation process should include the following steps:

- Investigate and learn what specific information technology issues are facing the staff.
- Develop an application prototype and demonstrate this prototype to all potential users.
- Gather customer feedback from all of the application's potential customers.
- Develop product specification.
- Build and deliver the product.
- Train the staff to use the application.
- Provide technical support and answer any questions once the application is implemented.

"We found that this methodology involved all the relevant staff in the process before the application was delivered. Capturing input from all those audiences was critical to help ensure that expectations would be met," said Ms. Farago.

TEST THE APPLICATION IN A REAL-WORLD SETTING TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH USER NEEDS.

The vendor built an application for BIDMC called Résumé Key Word Search. It works much like an Internet search engine. It allows the staffing partners to quickly and easily search through all résumés submitted online for specific jobs. It accepts search parameters such as names, partial names, job descriptions and other relevant details. Streamlining this process has helped the medical center to quickly provide reports to the federal government to ensure EEOC compliance.

Working with both functional and technical teams at BIDMC was very important in smoothly implementing the application. "It's important to know how to bridge the gap between HR business process and technical possibility," said Ms. Farago. "The HR staff is always more business focused, and it is often true that HR and the technical teams are speaking different languages. It is important to make sure that the HR department receives detailed instructions and specifications for using the application. Here, again, it is important that the consulting organization is able to speak both functional and technical languages."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

France Lampron is the president and founder of Nuvosoft Inc., an HR software company providing information in real-time products, consulting and support to its enterprise customers. Ms. Lampron has more than 17 years experience designing and implementing HR Web solutions. Her current leadership and technical experience in HR applications have made her a sought after speaker and consultant. She holds a master's degree in computer science from the University of Massachusetts and a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from McGill University. Ms. Lampron is the chief architect of Nuvosoft's Rcomp, a complete secure solution for online compensation planning, and Rwiz, a GUI-based report generator for the fast and simple creation of complex queries. She leads the company and its engineering team to deliver state-of-the-art, business driven systems for Fortune 500 companies and their subsidiaries.