

Evergreen Fire Rescue's New Chief Ready and Able for the Job

Objective

Evergreen Fire Rescue is like many rural agencies across the U.S. Initially created by residents tired of waiting for emergency response from a distant urban area, Evergreen now provides not only fire and medical services, but also community education, outreach, and safety information. With continued strong population growth in the foothills of Denver, the need for these services will increase. So, when the Board of Directors of the Evergreen Fire Protection District needed a new Fire Chief in 2007, they contracted with CPS Human Resource Services to conduct the recruitment and selection process.

Solution

Because CPS offers a full range of human resource services, from recruitment to retention, they were able to provide an integrated recruitment and selection process. This method ensured that the candidate ultimately selected would meet the unique needs of the District. The phases of the process were:

- Development of a candidate profile and recruitment strategy
- Implementation of recruitment efforts
- Design, administration, and facilitation of the selection process

During the initial phase, the CPS consultant met with key stakeholders and employee groups to ascertain the personal and professional qualities required of Evergreen's new chief, as well as the key issues and priorities that the new chief would face. Next, the executive search team began an aggressive and targeted recruitment campaign. This included a job analysis, creating position marketing materials, personal and direct mail contact with potential candidates, resume review, and telephone screening interviews. After CPS presented a final list of the most qualified candidates to the Board, the selection process began.

CPS facilitated the selection testing process, from preparing testing materials and interacting with candidates to compiling a final report for the Board. An assessment center testing methodology was a key component of the selection process. Specific performance dimensions and exercises were developed using the job analysis, the candidate profile, and the stakeholder discussions. Assessors were then selected and trained. The candidates also completed two tests in order to gather more detailed information about their management style. The last step was to compile all of the data about the candidates' performance into a final report for the Board to assist them in making their final decision.

Results

In August the Evergreen Fire Protection District and the Evergreen Volunteer Fire Department unanimously selected Garry DeJong to lead Evergreen Fire Rescue as Chief of Department. Chief DeJong assumed command on October 8th 2007.

By combining the recruitment and selection process efforts, CPS gave us a more complete list of qualified candidates. Following up with the assessment center process helped us immensely in our final decision.

Charles Dykeman,
President of the
Evergreen Fire
Protection District
Board

