



IntraHealth International

Aligning workforce strategies to the business boosts the mission of nonprofit Global Health organization

Overview

The need

IntraHealth needed to overhaul its approach to recruiting to better address changes in the industry and to support organizational needs.

The solution

IntraHealth chose IBM to help develop a systematic, interactive and engaging talent management strategy that included a job-based competency library.

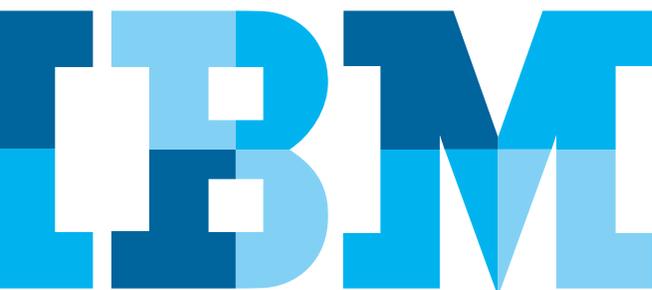
The benefits

- The solution has allowed IntraHealth to increase job clarity and expectations, leading to improved performance.
 - Slashing time-to-fill rates by more than 35 percent, saving the organization resources.
 - Compliance with the organization's goal-setting initiative has increased by 20 percentage points in the first year.
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For more than 35 years, IntraHealth International has empowered local health workers to better serve communities in need in more than 100 countries around the world. The North Carolina-based nonprofit fosters local solutions to health care challenges by improving health worker performance, strengthening health systems, harnessing technology and leveraging partnerships. IntraHealth has a staff of nearly 600 employees currently working in more than 20 countries in Africa, the Americas and Asia. Website: www.intreahealth.org

As a mission-driven organization, IntraHealth focuses its efforts on health workers because they play a critical role in delivering services to those in need. The World Health Organization estimates a worldwide shortage of 7.2 million health workers; this figure will grow to 12.9 million by 2035 if the global community does not increase investments in training and deploying more health workers. The world has new technologies, effective medicines and innovative treatments, but without access to health workers, too many people—an estimated 1 billion—lack access to health care.

Since 1979, IntraHealth has partnered with local country governments, training institutions, donor agencies, the private sector, communities and other stakeholders to increase the number of health workers, improve pre-service and in-service training, strengthen health workforce management and protect the rights and safety of health workers.



Solution component:

- IBM® Kenexa® Talent Frameworks
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The challenge: adding consistency to talent acquisition

Rapid changes in the global health environment have increased the need for technology-based solutions to drive business results. Global development assistance has shifted from long-term (5- to 10-year) grants, or cooperative agreements, to shorter contracts expected to produce results on strict deadlines. Competition for funding global health work, including support for the global health workforce, has increased over the past several decades as the number of nonprofits and other players has grown.

IntraHealth realized that it needed to overhaul its approach in the identification and recruitment of talent to better address changes in the industry and to support organizational needs. From the onset, most of the organization's human resources processes were dictated by demands of donors. As a result, recruiting was driven to meet the needs of donors and projects, and not necessarily the needs of the organization as a whole. As a result, each country office had its own hiring practices that it applied to meet specific donor-driven deadlines.

IntraHealth realized, in 2012, that it needed an overarching, organization-wide approach and process to integrate both donor and organizational priorities.

“Our field of work is increasingly competitive. We are interacting with more corporations and other partners in global health than ever before,” said Peter Kariuki, learning and organizational development consultant at IntraHealth International. “The governments we work with in low-income countries are embracing strategies and approaches from the corporate world; they view them as more effective than traditional donor-driven models. We felt, as an organization, that it was time for us to assess our human resources model. This meant that we needed to update our talent recruitment and management practices and ensure that we are best leveraging the strength of our own workforce.”

IntraHealth needed to ensure that each country office had the capacity and processes in place to recruit and hire high-quality candidates in alignment with the organization's overall talent management strategy. Once candidates were hired, IntraHealth sought a system through which employees could grow and expand their careers as employees of IntraHealth. The organization also needed a consistent performance management process to give IntraHealth a standardized performance management system.

The solution: building a talent framework

To meet these challenges, and to help ensure the organization was in a better position to meet its global commitments, IntraHealth decided to develop an aggressive, comprehensive talent strategy aligned with its overall strategic plan.

The organization has embarked on an integrated talent management platform with a tiered competency framework as a basis of its talent management functions. The goal is to create a global competency framework to support its commitment to developing a strong, integrated global talent management platform, and to ensure outcomes align with and support the overall mission and strategy. IntraHealth senior management sought to ensure that each employee understands the value of their position within the overall organization, with a consistent recruitment strategy, performance management process in every country office, with the goal of an organization-wide competency-driven strategy.

“Many companies have competencies solutions, but we needed a framework that could help define our needs at the organizational, functional and job-specific levels,” Kariuki said. “We needed a solution that could give us the flexibility at all three levels.”

IntraHealth chose IBM to help develop a systematic, interactive and engaging talent management strategy. IBM Kenexa Talent Frameworks is a job-based competency library that provides ready-to-use job descriptions, competencies, proficiency-based behavioral statements, development goals, coaching tips and interview questions. Talent Frameworks also includes a tiered competency platform in a common language that was vital for integrating IntraHealth’s global talent management strategy.

A steering committee that included members of IntraHealth’s executive team convened to review and endorse established core competencies. As a result, IntraHealth now has a talent framework consisting of core organizational, functional, and role-specific competencies that will help enable IntraHealth to hire, develop, and retain the best talent possible.

“Our new hires are highly competent. This process clearly has brought more objectivity and, as a result, is helping us get the right people for the right positions.”

– Peter Kariuki, learning and organizational development consultant at IntraHealth International

“IBM has given us the specificity and objectivity that we needed,” Kariuki said. “IBM Kenexa Talent Frameworks has helped us to be objective in our recruiting; this has been a game-changer for us. This solution has empowered our recruitment processes and supervisors, enabling us to create career tracks and more specific job levels and to refresh our job profiles. It has given us the tools we needed to empower our employees to obtain more clarity around their own jobs and career paths and to chart their growth and development. It’s also added more objectivity to our performance management process. That’s what IBM has been able to give us.”

The results: seeing immediate results

Through IBM Kenexa Talent Frameworks, IntraHealth has dramatically improved its talent acquisition strategy. The organization has streamlined the number of job titles from 245 to 48 and developed consistent job profiles with associated competencies. This process has allowed IntraHealth to increase job clarity and expectations, leading to improved performance.

Hiring managers now have access to competency-based interview questions, helping to streamline the selection process. Since instituting behavior-based questions and the level of engagement among hiring managers, IntraHealth has successfully reduced time-to-fill rates from 95 days to 60 days on average. Hiring managers have shared that, thanks to Kenexa Talent Frameworks, they can more effectively evaluate candidates and make better, more informed hiring decisions.

“We are not only speeding up our hiring timeline, but also ensuring that our hiring managers are getting good, quality candidates,” Kariuki said. “Our new hires are highly competent. This process clearly has brought more objectivity and, as a result, is helping us get the right people for the right positions.”

IntraHealth also now has clear alignment of employee performance expectations and IntraHealth’s overall strategy. Supervisors now have a set of tools that help them clarify expectations from employees. Compliance with the organization’s goal-setting initiative has increased by 20 percentage points in the first year of implementation, with goals being more clearly aligned with competencies and organizational strategy.

IntraHealth is embarking on fully integrating its competency framework globally in its talent management processes—from workforce planning to succession planning.

“We have made great strides as an organization to respond to the challenges associated with working in a very complex, changing, and competitive world,” Kariuki said. “The populations of these countries depend on organizations like ours to help them access high-quality health care, which contributes immensely to their social and economic well-being. We realize that we cannot overcome these health challenges without thinking, restructuring and working as a strategic business entity across the organization. A key component of fulfilling our mission is aligning our workforce to our business strategy.”

For more information

To learn how to build a smarter workforce, visit:

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