

# Quality, not just cost

Resourcing software can significantly improve the quality of new hires, says **Charles Hipps**.

Most HR professionals understand that resourcing software can reduce costs by 50% and time to hire by up to 75%, but many are still sceptical when told that it can considerably increase the quality of the people they hire. This improvement in talent arises partly because of the objectivity that software can bring and partly through its ability to measure the effectiveness of the process.

Software can be much more objective than managers during the early stages of screening applications and conducting first interviews with applicants. Some managers are not good at these and can have very personalised interview techniques. In contrast, software can provide online questionnaires and tests, which can provide a totally fair and objective initial screening process. This is counter-intuitive, but results show that automated

screening can result in one third more candidates on the shortlist meeting the required standards for employment.

The software records all details of the selection process, creating a valuable data store that forms the basis of detailed reporting to managers. For instance, all competency rating scores by each manager are recorded, together with the decisions they make on each candidate. This can then be linked with the organisation's performance management system to compare with their subsequent performance. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the selection process in spotting talent and improve quality of the workforce.

The software also increases the quality of the workforce by helping to get better access to talented minorities. The on-line screening process is much easier for disabled people than having

to travel to interviews. Screeners can be shown applicant details without name, nationality or religion to eliminate any prejudices.

Some organisations offer a guaranteed interview scheme to disabled people, but one organisation found that an unrealistic 25% of applicants claimed to be disabled. Its software was used to ask a series of supplemental questions about the nature of the disabilities, which reduced the number claiming guaranteed interviews to a more realistic 3%. The stored data can be used to compare decisions made with the organisation's various equal opportunities policies, to ensure that managers are making unbiased decisions.

The flexibility and agility of software is vital for making rapid changes to resourcing processes in response to a fast-moving market. It will also be important now that a new wave of in-house 'sourcers' is emerging. They are starting to build up a talent bank of candidates through direct advertising and networking sites, such as LinkedIn and other similar sites.



Software allows the organisation to build a cradle-to-grave picture of its hiring policies and processes and new hires' subsequent performance within the business. This means that it is not just making resourcing more efficient, it is providing the basis for a much more structured and information-driven approach to talent management.

People focus on cost savings because they have to justify investing in the software, but systems are really

about hiring better quality people. In the middle of a war for talent, HR will finally deliver on its promise to act strategically and deliver value to bottom line business performance.

Charles Hipps is managing director and founder of WCN plc, a talent management and resourcing software provider. He is author of 'E-Recruitment Projects in the Public Sector: A Government Guide to Best Practice' [www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk](http://www.careers.civil-service.gov.uk)