74 Monitoring and Evaluation 8



## Staying on Top of the Recruitment Process

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DSWD - Competency Modelling
and Enhancing the Recruitment
System (CMERS)

I am a psychology graduate from De La Salle in Lipan, Barangays. My first job was with St. Luke's Hospital, and I worked in administration. I dealt with people in the medical and allied field—drafting schedules as well as coordinating and organising the radiology department.

After two years, I moved to SMART Telecommunications. I worked in procurement and was mostly with engineers for a year. My organisation skills went up a notch as I adapted to the methodical way engineers think. I was trained to tabulate bids, consolidate data, and make organised presentations.

Both St. Luke's Hospital and SMART Telecommunications are private companies.

I moved to the public sector in 2013 when I joined the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). They had already rolled out the Competency-Based Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (CBRSP) system that time and I had experienced how it was to be recruited, selected, and placed by the system. When I got on board, I soon learned the theory behind my experience as I worked for the Human Resource Planning and Performance Management Division.

The DSWD was still in the thick of its organising efforts when I joined my Division. I saw a bit of the previous problems when I arrived, like missing job applications and job-applicant mismatch. I even heard that one used to need 'backers' to apply for a position. There was no way to track applicants as they went through the application process! These were realities we were changing fast, as almost all of the staff in my division had already been trained in the new CBRSP system.

One of the first tasks I had to do was to evaluate stacks and stacks of application papers. For a newbie like me, it was overwhelming and it did take me quite a while to go through the pile, but it served as good training ground. Soon after that, things got more interesting as Ms. Ana and Ms. Joy of the Human Resource Development Bureau mentored us on the Competency-Based Interview (CBI). We had mock interviews and compared the traditional method and the CBI. Then, we were 'shadowed' as we conducted our own interviews and applied what we learned.

The CBI is an excellent tool. It personalises the interview for every applicant as we ask about relevant situations they have been in, the tasks they have done and the actions they took, the results of these actions, and the applicant's evaluation of the outcome. The questions were not just hypothetical. I learned to construct my questions better, converse more, and also read

between the lines by looking at the applicant's behaviour and gestures. They are very revealing! It takes a lot of practice to master how to effectively probe during interviews but the CBI discloses more about the applicant in the end.

It has been two years since I started working at the DSWD and I have more responsibilities now. The recruitment process starts with me—I post the call for applicants, evaluate applications, set examination schedules, and conduct the CBI. I have advocated going paperless by utilising social media for postings and accepting online applications, which can be more easily filtered simply by looking for keywords. I worked with an information technology expert to set up the database we needed and I am proud to say that it has contributed to the improvement of our recruitment process.

The process was put to the test just a few months ago. The *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program (4Ps) had 29 vacant positions from way back since 2013. The program's objective is to eradicate extreme poverty by investing in health and education, and it needs people to carry out its objectives by delivering social services to its 4.2 million beneficiaries. We worked 12-hour days and created two Personnel Selection Committees to speed up the process. We worked on this from October to December 2014 and by the end of the year, 27 of the 29 positions had been filled.

I like the working environment here. I feel like I am part of a big family where one's work is acknowledged. There is potential for growth as well, as I have been able to help refine the recruitment process by organising what I can within my scope of responsibilities. I also get to mentor representatives from regional and field offices on the CBI. I do not receive any long-term material benefits from this job, as I am not a regular employee and my contract with the DSWD is negotiated and renewed yearly, but I am buoyed by the fulfilment in knowing that my service to the DSWD contributes to society.

Kristin Gonzales is one of the three in her division who share the task of interviewing applicants at the central office of the DSWD. She says the CBI standard makes her job so much easier and helps her concentrate on judging competencies, especially when interviewing too talkative or too emotional applicants.