Panel Interview for Region 7 Information Technology Branch

Interviews conducted November 30, 2017

Office of Policy and Management

Supervisory Information Technology Specialist, GS-2210-14/15

Panel member: Dana Skelley	Date: 11/30/17
Applicant: James Donahue	Time 12:35

Opening Remarks

Good Morning/Good Afternoon. Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Supervisory Information Technology Specialist position.

Panel Member Introductions

At this time, I would ask each panel member to introduce themselves. I will then provide a brief background of the position.

Background

The incumbent for this position will serve as the supervisor for the Region 7 Information Technology Branch within the Office of Policy and Management. The incumbent will supervise a staff responsible for a range of Information Technology and Information Resources Services including operation of the Region 7 Data Center and management of the Local Area Network and LAN-based services such as electronic mail and access to the internet.

Responsibilities include (but not limited to) planning, organizing, and directing activities of the branch; implementing the Agency's Information Resources Management policy; and developing and implementing an information security program in the Region. Responsibilities also include advising staff regarding policies, procedures, and directives; establishing and maintaining relationships with regional and EPA Headquarters officials; and researching and recommending solutions to organizational issues.

Interview Structure

This interview will consist of 11 questions. 45 minutes is allotted for the interview. We will be rotating the questions amongst each panel member and will be taking notes. During the interview, panel members will be interested in hearing how past and/or current experiences have equipped you to perform successfully in this position. You will be given the opportunity to ask questions at the conclusion of the interview.

Introduced himself and why ideal candidate.
IT Fellows Program

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain to us why you want this job and tell us the top 3 attributes that you would bring to achieve success in this position.

Had various positions - likes ability to bring that all together. Wants to be back in a leadership role. Experience leading various teams + managing. Help other people through customer service. Strong background in IT and security.

2. Describe a time that an employee under your sphere of influence experienced significant growth in his or her professional development as a result of your inspiration.

Customer - General (1 person)
Navy chief, Albert, who would take over him's responsibilities. Over 6 mo - IT responsibilities, dealing with the people, the general, how to navigate.

3. In prioritized order, list your top 3 areas of technical expertise in the technology field, and provide one short highlight of professional success or accomplishment in each of those 3 areas.

1) Security - deployment of whole suite of tools at USDA - $18M of equipment at 13 locations. Increased visibility + response capability
2) Windows - Microsoft certified. In free time, helps people fix their computers. Keeps technical skills up.
3) Incidence response - led incidence response team for years. Developed system for managing tickets + tracking + trends.

4. Management has directed that your branch completes a highly visible and critical special project within a short time frame. Walk us through the process you would follow to meet their needs.

Solidify requirements with management. Check with finance on money available. Determine if expertise in house. Execute, and monitor and report to management on progress and needs.

5. Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged, and supported.

Establish relationships and communication lines so that when difficult situations arise can engage those folks on getting their opinions, helping them understand. At USDA, varying opinions on tool off the shelf vs. other options - sit down and discuss pros/cons, budget, and make best decision for USDA.

6. Describe your leadership style. Provide a particular strength of your style that has either elevated your confidence or yielded positive results. Also, tell us an aspect of your leadership that you would like to improve in the next two years.

Servant leadership. lift up and make other people successful. They are the ones giving the briefing, opportunity to succeed as well as fail. Develop people below you but know you are still ultimately responsible.

Work on - develop relationships with each indiv. person.

7. Have you ever lead a group where two or more group members did not work well together? What action did you take and what was the result?

Move people around. Provide people cross training to understand what others ~~[illegible]~~ do and get to know each other.

Sometimes just need to sit down and work thru the conflict - communication.

8. (Scenario) Your director tells to you to implement an approach which you and the majority of your staff disagree with. You have tried to make your case to implement a different approach to the director, but that effort was unsuccessful. How do you present this assignment to your staff given it is such an unpopular decision that you do not personally support?

Serve at the graces of the Constitution. Execute the mission of the leadership. Have to take in stride. No emotion around it, just need to carry out and do what they say.

9. Tell us about something new or different that you initiated that improved customer service, productivity, teamwork or performance.

(10 people)
Ticketing system for incidence management. Helped with understanding past/history, communication among the team, IG audits at end of year.

10. Customer Service is an essential part of this position. Give us your definition of quality customer service and how you ensure it is delivered. Provide a specific professional example to support your definition.

Customer service goal is to satisfy customer needs and they understand problem and fix. During deployments, have to build relationships quickly, make sure they understand quickly, and can satisfy.

11. In the past two years, what aspect do you love the most about your work? What do you like the least regarding your work?

Redefine what security is for large Agency and embrace and learn new technology.

Most difficult - complexity of USDA - diversity and number of agencies and budgets. Can be frustrating and political.

Closing Interview Comments

Are there any answers that you would like to clarify or is there anything else you would like to share with us? Hope illustrates his experience. Contract management. Unique - scientist at heart (Geologist). Under

Do you have any questions for us?

What is biggest issue faced at EPA?

Again, thank you for your interest in this position. We hope to complete the interview process this week. We anticipate a selection being made by December 15th. The selectee will be contacted by our Human Resources staff with a tentative offer until the background investigation process has been completed.