

A Valuable Tool for PSAP Recruitment

Communication Centers find top talent in the unlikeliest places...now that they know what to look for.

In 1979, a linebacker named Tom Cousineau was selected as the top pick in the NFL draft. It wasn't until 81 players later that a quarterback named Joe Montana was selected.

Both were extensively scouted, tested and interviewed, so logic would have told you that Cousineau would be the star - but 27 years later it is Joe Montana who has amassed three Super Bowl victories and a reputation as arguably one of the best quarterback's in history, while Cousineau is the answer to a trivia question.

In the public safety world, it is just as hard to predict whether one has hired the right person. This is especially true with 9-1-1 dispatchers, where the difference



Pleased to be here, this young dispatcher is ready to take calls. A new dispatcher assessment tool from Select Inc is aiding the selection process of prospective 9-1-1 dispatchers.

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between a good and poor dispatcher could mean the difference between life and death.

Most Communications Centers have a very thorough screening process in place, yet almost all Directors would admit there is still a wide range of performance amongst their current dispatchers. Obviously, something is not being measured in the hiring process...until now. A behaviorally based 9-1-1 dispatcher assessment, developed by Select, Inc, a consulting services company headquartered in Vancouver, WA, is based on validated job-related criteria. This assessment measures specific job behaviors rather than personality or personal constructs. It was developed with top dispatchers as models, and is based on the principle that the common denominator among top-performing dispatchers is not just skills or the ability to multitask, but more important-

ly their behavioral approach to the job. Why do so many new hires never make it through their initial training? Conservative estimates say it costs between \$10,000 and \$12,000 to hire the wrong person if they turnover in the first 4 months.

In a blind study completed with 18 different communication centers around the country, Directors were asked to select two or three of their best dispatchers and two or three of their average dispatchers then administer the assessment to both groups. The results have been over 90% accurate at predicting which group the employee was identified with. How valuable would that information have been prior to them making a hiring commitment?

The assessment only takes about one hour and 15 minutes to complete and is very simple to administer. Answer sheets are then faxed to Select for scoring with

results returned within one hour.

So for all of you wondering if you have found the next Tom Cousineau or Joe Montana, consider what your current hiring process might not be telling you and how important it is to have all the information before making a decision.

For more information on Select, Inc., please contact them at (800)377-0554 or www.selectinc.net.

