



# USING CANDIDATE FEEDBACK TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE POLICE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS

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# AUDIENCE QUESTION

- Do you work for or with a public safety agency (i.e., Police, Highway Patrol, Sherriff, Border Patrol)?
- How have your recruitment efforts gone lately?

# POLICE HIRING CRISIS

- Nationwide crisis hiring for Police agencies (Stucker, 2019)
- Why?
  - Negative perceptions of policing
  - Perceived lack of support for law enforcement
  - Robust job market
  - Cannibalization across agencies
  - Lengthy and involved hiring process

# APPLICANT NUMBERS BY PERIOD

Year	Applicants	Test Takers
2013	19,000	15,000
2016	14,235	10,199
Spring 2017	16,534	8620
Winter 2017	14,012	7294
Spring 2018	8873	4273
Winter 2018	8875	4490
Spring 2019	1301	942
Summer 2019	1286	830
Winter 2019	1529	1043

# USE OF CANDIDATE FEEDBACK SURVEYS

- Applicant surveys have been used across several industries to make improvements to hiring processes
- Interacting with candidates can keep them engaged in the process
- Builds relationships when candidates need support in areas of mentoring, physical preparation, and questions about advanced career opportunities within the agency (Scheer, Rossler, & Papania, 2018).

# SURVEY GROUPS

- Applicants- individuals who successfully completed or did not complete an application, applicants rejected from process
- Written exam no shows- candidates who applied to a specific PO process but did not attend the written exam
- Test-takers – candidates who attended and participated in written exam
- POWER Test no shows- candidates who attended written exams, were invited to POWER test, but did not attend
- PHQ No shows - candidates who did not complete the Personal History Questionnaire

# SPRING 2017 WRITTEN EXAM NO SHOWS

- Invitation sent via SurveyMonkey to 7,913 no-show candidates following April 1-April 2, 2017 exam
- 2,400 (30.3%) completion rate
- Eight questions
  - For what reason or reasons did you decide not to take the 2017 Police Officer entry exam? Please check all that apply
  - Please provide any additional details about why you did not take the exam
  - Would you be willing to take a Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?
  - What would encourage you to take the Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?
  - What is your gender?
  - What is your age?
  - What is your race and ethnicity?
  - What is your military status?
- Data analysis: two members of the Department of Human Resources Testing Team reviewed and categorized all open-ended responses and conducted qualitative data analysis using response categories, and closed responses to the survey questions

# SPRING 2017 WRITTEN EXAM NO SHOWS

## Insights

- Top reasons for not attending were scheduling conflicts including major life events, lack of preparedness, and lack of qualifications
- Common day of test issued include not having I.D. not receiving the testing notice, and the exam starting too early
- Several candidates reported not being able to test because of life events or due to pregnancy
- Many no shows were still going through the 2016 process
- High level of interest in future testing

## Recommended Action Items

- Consider putting the test date(s) in the job announcement
- Consider allowing candidates to pick their date and time
- Consider how to make the experience more approachable for female candidates



# WINTER 2017 WRITTEN EXAM NO SHOWS

- Invitation sent via SurveyMomkey to 6,773 no-show candidates following December 2017 exam
- 1,593 (23.5%) completion rate
- Eight questions
  - For what reason or reasons did you decide not to take the 2017 Police Officer entry exam? Please check all that apply
  - Please provide any additional details about why you did not take the exam
  - Would you be willing to take a Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?
  - What would encourage you to take the Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?
  - What is your gender?
  - What is your age?
  - What is your race and ethnicity?
  - What is your military status?
- Data analysis: two members of the Department of Human Resources Testing Team reviewed and categorized all open-ended responses and conducted qualitative data analysis using response categories, and closed responses to the survey questions

# WINTER 2017 WRITTEN EXAM NO SHOWS

- Insights
  - Majority of respondents would be willing to take entry exam in the future and are motivated
  - Commonly reported scheduling conflicts - work, other obligations or life event
  - Exam held December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 with Notices to Report sent on October 27, 2017 (50 days)
  - Candidates request more flexible scheduling in dates, times and locations
    - Candidates offered an opportunity to reschedule session time or attend a Life-Event Make-Up Test
  - Candidates feel unprepared. Study guide emailed when Notices to Report are sent out
  - CPD provides free preparation sessions multiple times each week leading up to the exam, but not all candidates are aware of these study and preparation sessions
  - Respondents reported skipping the exam because they not meet the qualifications
  - roughly 50% did not have 60 college credits needed at the time of hire
- Recommended Action Items
  - Continue to publicize and grant Life-Event Make-Up requests
  - Allow candidates more time to plan, save-the-date notification at the time of posting and when candidates complete their applications, multiple reminders of the exam date
  - Send official communications and posting that the required college credits are needed at the time of hire and not at the time of the exam
  - Remind candidates to use the study guide in later communications leading up to the exam date
  - Include all candidates on hiring-related correspondences

# PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST SURVEY

- Surveys of (922) candidates who did not complete the physical ability exam
- Key Insights
  - Pre-existing scheduling conflict
    - Prior military obligations, work conflicts, and school conflicts that prevented them from attending the test
  - Some candidates need more time to prepare for the physical ability abilities test
  - Improved Communication
    - Emails being routed to junk folders, receiving email invitations close to test date
  - Testing logistics
    - Test locations, test sessions, and the availability of preparation sessions across the city
  - Interest in being able to choose their test date

# SUMMER 2019- UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS, WRITTEN EXAM TEST-TAKERS, NO SHOWS

- Invitation sent to 2,514 applicants following August 2019 exam administration
- Test-takers, no shows, unsuccessful applicants
- 768 (30.5%) completion rate
- Administered with SurveyMonkey
- Demographic data: gender, race and ethnicity, age, military status, ZIP code, college credits
- Data analysis: two members of the Department of Human Resources Testing Team reviewed and categorized all open-ended responses and conducted qualitative data analysis using response categories, and closed responses to the survey questions

# SUMMER 2019 SURVEY QUESTIONS (TEST-TAKERS)

- Rate your experience with the Chicago Police Officer 2019 testing process
- If you have taken a Chicago Police Officer exam at McCormick Place in the past, how did the overall Summer 2019 testing experience at Kennedy-King College compare with your experience or experiences taking the exam at McCormick Place
- If you took the Chicago Police Officer exam at Malcolm X College in Spring 2019, how did the overall Summer 2019 testing experience at Kennedy-King College compare with your experience taking the exam at Malcolm X College

# SUMMER 2019 SURVEY (NO SHOWS)

- For what reason or reasons did you decide not to take the Police Officer entry exam? Please check all that apply.
- Were you aware you would be able to choose your testing session from the available options.
- Would you be willing to take a Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?
- What would encourage/motivate you to take the Chicago Police Officer entry exam in the future?

# SUMMER 2019 SURVEY (ALL APPLICANTS)

- Which of these most accurately describes your status in the Summer 2019 job application process for the City of Chicago Police Officer position? Please note that the application period was between June 24th and July 8th, 2019
- For what reasons did you apply to become a Chicago Police Officer?
- Have you applied to the Chicago Police Officer position in the past?
- Have you taken and/or passed the Chicago Police Officer written exam in the past?
- What other positions and/or industries are you applying to?
- How did you learn about the application for the Chicago Police Officer position?
- Did you have any challenges/difficulties applying to become a Chicago Police Officer?
- Which challenges did you face applying to become a Chicago Police Officer?
- Would you be interested in Application Assistance to help complete the application process if it were offered by the Department of Human Resources and/or Chicago Police Department? If yes please explain what assistance you would be interested in.
- How likely would you be to take advantage of Application Assistance to help complete the application process if it were offered by the Department of Human Resources and/or the Chicago Police Department?
- Please select the day(s) and time(s) that, in general, would work best for you to take a Chicago Police Officer exam.

# 2019 SUMMER SURVEY INSIGHTS - UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

## Insights

- Higher proportion of difficulties completing the application, mostly related to education documents
- Most reported having required college credits
- Higher levels of interest in application assistance if it were made available
- Greater availability in schedules
- African Americans were over-represented in this group; 42.4% of Unsuccessful Applicants compared to 31.7% of the respondent pool

## Recommended Action Items

- Establish application assistance process to help qualified applicants complete their applications
- Focus application assistance on being available to answer applicant questions, allow candidates to submit physical education documents in addition to being able to upload them, allocate personnel to reviewing applications for completion
- Clarify minimum qualifications required for successful application



# 2019 SUMMER SURVEY INSIGHTS - NO SHOWS

## Insights

- Many schedule conflicts
- High level of interest in future testing
- High level of motivation for future testing
- Almost all were aware they could choose their testing date and time but still couldn't make a time work with their schedule

## Recommended Action Items

- Post testing dates as early as possible in as many ways as possible (e.g., social media, news outlets, CPD and City websites, job posting)
- Emphasize ability to select testing session in as many ways as possible (e.g., applicant correspondence, job posting)
- Provide additional testing dates/times (e.g., week days and nights)
- Continue utilizing frequent text- and email-based communications to remind candidates of their scheduled test times

# SUMMER 2019 SURVEY INSIGHTS - TEST-TAKERS

## Insights

- Very satisfied with all aspects of the small-scale testing process
- Much preferred Kennedy-King College to McCormick Place, but felt about the same as Malcolm X College testing process
- Very few difficulties in completing the application
- High proportion of repeat test takers

## Recommended Action Items

- Continue surveying test taking experience
- Continue implementing small-scale testing process
- Explore other City Colleges or similar venues for future testing
- Talk to staff about noise level in or around testing areas to minimize distractions for test takers
- Allow candidates to bring phones and other personal items to testing site and provide secure storage for candidate belongings
- Ensure vendors are properly training and assessing instruction readers so all candidates receive clear test instructions

# SUMMER 2019 INSIGHTS- ALL APPLICANTS

## Insights

- Mostly from Chicago or other Illinois cities
- Highly motivated by community service and passion for law enforcement
- Mostly pursuing CPD or other law enforcement positions
- Mostly hearing about the applications from the CPD website or from CPD members
- Facebook is the most far reaching form of social media advertising
- Some candidates experience other difficulties in previous hiring processes
- Many repeat appliers
- All applicants groups likely or very likely to take advantage of application assistance if made available.
- Weekend morning/afternoon testing times fit applicant schedules best
- Weekday morning, afternoon, and nights, and weekend nights are about equal in terms of schedule fit

# SUMMER 2019 RECOMMENDATIONS - ALL APPLICANTS

## Recommended action items

- Continue posting application notice to multiple locations
- Explore options for remote testing to increase interest from outside Illinois
- Develop and implement survey questions specific to difficulties in previous hiring processes
- Improve communications to candidates prior to the exam
- Improve communications to candidates currently in the hiring process
- Explore additional recruitment strategies to reach new applicants
- Establish times for candidates to meet with investigators so they can be more aware of their standing in the hiring process

# BACKGROUND SURVEY NO SHOWS

- 149 candidates who applied, sat for written exam, completed PAT, but did not complete the required Personal History Questionnaire between 2017-2019
- Key Insights
  - Candidates want reminders to complete PHQ
  - They needed more time to complete the document
  - Most candidates felt that there were no questions that prevented them from completing
  - Need for better communication, clearer expectations, and better customer service

# BACKGROUND SURVEY NO SHOWS

- Key Recommendations
  - Allow a longer time period to complete
  - Follow-up with candidates via phone, text, and/or email
  - Ensure CPD personnel can describe the PHQ process and provide a clear explanation of expectations for completion
  - Revise the current PHQ instructions to include an explanation of the types of questions on the PHQ so candidates can get a head start on preparing to answer the questions
  - Consider offering a way for candidates to apply their responses from previous hiring rounds to complete the PHQ for their current application period
  - Allow alternative methods for candidates to complete their PHQs (e.g., via smart phone)
  - More flexibility for candidates with obligations that interfere with completing the PHQ during the scheduled time

# PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS

## Changes in Practice

1. Expand make-ups to include life events (2017-2018)
2. Redesigned CPD website (2017-2018)
3. Frequent email and text reminders leading up to the date of the exam (2018)
4. Email reminders the day of the exam (2018)
5. Rebranding from Notice to Report to Official Invitation letter (2018)
6. Phoneathon – called each candidate the 1-3 days before the exam (2018)
7. Credit Repair Workshops (2018)
8. Allow candidates to self-schedule their date and time (2019)
9. More testing sessions offered – including evening sessions (2019)
10. Testing Offered at different locations across the City -Malcolm X College, Kennedy-King College (2019)
11. Testing offered in small, classroom setting (15 people in the room rather than 3,000) – 2019
12. Computer-based testing – remote proctored or at testing centers (2021)
13. Testing on military bases (2022)

# OUTCOMES

- In conjunction with other interventions...
- Higher show rates to entrance exam
- High candidate satisfaction with location and scheduling opportunities
- Reduction in time to hire



# POTENTIAL SURVEYS

- Candidates Hired- in the academy
- New Recruits (less than 5 years) – leave CPD
- Retention
- Those retiring soon

QUESTIONS?