



INTERNET ARTICLE

Skype interviews saves department thousands

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Communicating with friends and family that are miles away has become easy these days. Applications such as whatsapp and facebook have included a video call option on their app which many of people use to stay in contact with their loved ones.

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has also kept up with the times and it now uses an application called Skype to do interviews with shortlisted candidates that are situated in other provinces.

Government departments would normally foot the bill for shortlisted candidates that are identified for a post in the department. "The bill for flights, accommodation and shuttles from and to the airport can easily amount up to fifteen thousand Rand per candidate (R15000)," said Tebogo Diradingwe, IT Manager at (DWS Free State offices).

All provincial offices of DWS had video conferencing facilities; but in 2016, the contract expired. "The equipment was still working, so we came up with a way of utilising the machinery and it actually saves the department a lot of money", said Diradingwe.

He says it takes approximately one gigabyte (1 GB) of data to carry out a full interview, which costs in the area of one hundred and fifty (R150). "Fifteen thousand versus one hundred and fifty is a massive saving, said Diradingwe.

Shortlisted candidates are notified through the HR office that their interviews will be done through Skype and that they do not need to travel all the way to the province they applied to. A dry run testing is done by IT at least two days prior to the interviews to check the stability and quality of the connection. An IT personnel on both sides is also always available so that they can handle any technical problems that should occur.

A Human Resource personnel is also available to handle the logistics of the meeting. "So far, it has been smooth sailing – with ten or more interviews being done without a hitch. That's a saving of hundred and fifty thousand (R150000).

The IT section always has backups in place to be able to switch networks if the need arises. The last resort is that the candidate does a telephonic interview, but all other means are explored before that step is taken. "So far, no candidate has had to do a telephonic interview because of the preparation we do before the interview", said Diradingwe.

According to Tebogo, a Skype interview is similar to same room interviews, as participants are still able to read each other's reactions and body language. "This is the future of interviews; who knows later in life we might not even have to leave the comfort of our homes or offices yet still get the full interview experience?", concluded Diradingwe.

Larry Crisp