KEY FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF A COMPUTERIZED POSITION REQUISITION SYSTEM AS UTILIZED BY THE DIVISION OF NURSING

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The budgeting process of an organization establishes a standard for the number and type of positions available for hire. As applicants become employees the position becomes completely or partially filled. As employees transfer in and out, or terminate, the position in turn becomes unfilled or filled again.

One of the responsibilities of a manager is to keep payroll expenses within the parameters of the budget. Hiring more than the budgeted number of positions will exceed the parameter. Hiring less than the budgeted number of positions may compromise the level of care and may lead to increased stress and burnout of the staff.

A method utilized to provide the manager with timely information regarding the status of the budgeted positions for a specific department is a computerized position requisition system.

This presentation will:
- identify four key features of a currently operating computerized position requisition system
- discuss the benefits of the system
- discuss the utilization of the system by all management levels within the Division of Nursing

The first feature of a computerized position requisition system is to establish a standard by identifying the positions as determined by the budgeting process. Each position is assigned an unique number within a department. Each position is further identified by the position description, by job code, status as either full-time or part-time, quantity of part-time, shift and if position is an authorized budgeted position.

The second feature of a computerized position requisition system is to record the employees for each position. The employee's number, name, job code, type, status, quantity of part-time, and shift is entered initially into the computer at time of hire. Subsequent changes to the position file such as job code, status, department, etc. is done at the time the Personnel department enters the changes to the employee data base. This allows for entry of the change of employee status only once into the system and reduces duplication or omission.

The third feature is to compare the incumbent employee's data against the standard data. Every employee must have a position number. The job code, department, and shift are expected to match and the quantity of full-time and part-time is compared to the position standard.

The fourth feature is to report, to provide feedback on the comparison. The system provides a warning message on the CRT at time of entering the employee to the position if the position is already filled. The system does not prevent exceeding the budgeted quantity as there are situations where this is necessary. Reports include exception flags if job codes do not match, if the total employee calculated full-time equivalent (FTE) exceeds the position FTE, if the employee's department is not the same as the position department, and if there are employees in the position and the position is flagged as unauthorized. The variance amount in full-time equivalents is reported if it is more than or less than budgeted standard.

Benefits of the computerized position requisition system are:
1) facilitates maintaining the correct number of employees within the budgeted framework.
2) utilizes the computer to compare actual to standard and print a legible variance.
3) provides detail information at cost center level and composite information at department head level.
4) encourages at time of interviewing and hiring for a position to be available before commitment is made.
5) provides information on filled or unfilled positions to subsequent management reports that focus on actual payroll expenses compared to budgeted payroll dollars.

The Division of Nursing at Memorial Medical Center of Long Beach, California, a 948 bed, non-profit, tertiary care facility, has used a batch computerized position requisition system for more than ten years. Conversion to an on-line system using Tandem Computers is presently underway.