

QAT ENGAGEMENT PROFILE

TECHNOLOGY & WORKFORCE
ASSESSMENT SERVICES



Thinking globally to improve the efficiency of business operations.

Client Name: Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), Business Technology Support Division (BTSD)

Location: Lincoln, NE

Industry: State Government

Project Duration: 3 months

Client Overview/The Situation

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), Business Technology Support Division (BTSD) is the designated information technology applications and services development and support division for the state transportation agency for the State of Nebraska. BTSD employs approximately seventy-five full-time professional, supervisory, and support staff to accomplish its mission.

Through partnering with their customers, they develop and support information technology applications and services to help meet their business needs in order to achieve the mission of the department.

The Business Challenge

They are mandated with the following:

- Leverage Technology – Develop and implement appropriate technologies to support Department operations and ensure transportation efficiencies in Nebraska.
- Improve Department Business Practices – Improve our internal and external business relationships and processes through teamwork and partnering.
- Develop the Workforce – Provide a workplace that allows employees to grow in their careers, by providing appropriate training and mentoring. Recruit, hire, and retain the best talent available.

The Solution

Q.A. Technologies Inc. (QAT) was to evaluate Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) Business Technical Software Design (BTSD) application areas to assess the current status and future readiness of the resources and skills being utilized to maintain the applications. The assessment was focused on the goals of the organization to optimize the utilization of resources through iterative improvement of resource allocation, tools and methods. Although this assessment was not focused on the specific application issues, the assessment included notable observations regarding the application platform as well as management and development methodologies and tools being used to support the BTSD applications.

The assessment of the technical and staffing provided a snapshot of the current environment, revealed challenges, and provided a set of recommendations for future activities. This assessment provided both long and short term recommendations. These recommendations were developed based upon on-site interviews, written questionnaires, application profiles, competency ratings, and experience and skill set profiles of the managers, team members and contractors in the Operations, Engineering, Finance, GIS and Engineering units of the BTSD division of NDOR.

The assessment identified ten critical current issues.

- The common themes affecting all unit operations revolve around a workforce population that is becoming increasingly retirement eligible during a period when the work is becoming increasingly complex.

- Like many other employers, BTSD faces the issue of staff retention. The societal stigma associated with multiple career changes during the course of an individual's lifetime has diminished, resulting in a much more mobile workforce.

- The increasing complexity of tasks and volume of workloads impact the quality of customer service as well as employee morale.



- Many functional and technical channels.
- Custom applications and software packages need to be integrated/accessed.
- Response times for user requests need to be guaranteed.
- Transactional integrity in long-running workflow scenarios needs to be ensured.
- There are multiple technology stacks, stovepipe architectures, and convoluted interfaces.
- There is valuable data and business logic in systems that have been developed under tight budget and scheduling constraints that needs to be available to other systems/applications.

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- The technology is constantly changing; requirements, technology, environment dynamics.

The Business Impact/Result

In overview, there are six overarching recommendations to address the current issues and gaps identified by the assessment.

- There is a definite need to ensure that the accumulated knowledge and expertise of employees nearing retirement is not lost. Both formal and informal training of newer employees will be needed to close this gap and prepare for succession planning.
- Updated and creative method of recruitment should be implemented in order to attract a sufficient workforce.
- Advancement opportunities must be evaluated and developed in order to retain qualified employees.
- Stress reduction and workload management training opportunities should be made available and encouraged.
- Implementation of the Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA).
- Implementation of standards, procedures, and processes for all IT activity.

These recommendations need to be accomplished during a time of decreased resources and significant environmental

changes. A different perspective on recruitment and retention initiatives will be needed to reflect the anticipated demographic changes in the workforce population as employees retire. Relying on how things were done in the past will not be an option. Manager and department planners will need to work collaboratively to meet the challenges with new and fresh approaches. Continuous monitoring of the plan is essential and necessary to ensure the agency is prepared for the issues defined here.

The Environment

Multiple platforms and languages for applications, mainframe applications, mainframe COBOL, use of the IBM product Host Access Transformation Services – HATS – to create a web front end that calls the existing CICS screens with minimal changes to the current code, mainframe CICS applications, both DB2 and SQL Server are utilized across various applications.

Skillset

Workforce planning, technology assessments, GAP Analysis, Environmental Scans, Supply and Demand Analysis, GAP Analysis, Closing Strategies, Interview skills, data analysis, information technology strategy, SWOT Analysis, Core Competencies, staffing strategies.

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- ♦ QAT Publisher
- ♦ QAT ReFactor
- ♦ QAT Security
- ♦ QAT WebDaptive
- ♦ QAT Wizard

Technology & Workforce Assessment Services — Skills & Resources for Strategic Planning

We provide assessment services to evaluate current supported applications along with the skills and resources currently utilized to maintain those applications. From the people to the technology in place and needed, the focus of an assessment is to address the goals of the business today, tomorrow, and far into the future.

Keeping an eye on your strategic plan, we will consider how far into the future to project your Assessment is truly appropriate. This includes balancing the certainty of short-range planning against the need to plan for longer-range objectives.

An Assessment typically includes:

- Strategy Assessment
- Environmental Scan
- Gap Analysis
- Gap Closing Strategies
- Evaluation

We feel that it is very important to conduct a SWOT, Supply and Demand, and Gap Analyses before we recommend, and you implement, workforce and technology strategies.

Organizations often jump directly to implementing gap-closing strategies without understanding their underlying workforce and technology issues leading to ineffective strategies and wasted resources. Completing these three Analyses is a developmental process that puts the tools in place to do ongoing planning, and action to have a high quality organization.

Critical Success Factors

We provide assessment services to evaluate current supported applications along with the skills and resources currently utilized to maintain those applications. By keeping in mind the following factors, your chances of successfully implementing your assessment will be significantly improved.

- Top management/leadership support.
- Support from project managers and HR managers.

- Resource involvement.
- Timely, accurate, and open communication.
- Link to other strategic planning processes.
- Availability of accurate input data.
- Detailed implementation plans.
- Keep it simple. Identify those factors that your assessment must address.

Why QAT?

QAT has successfully developed and implemented large-scale solutions for customers around the globe, using the latest technologies. We bring to our customers our knowledge of the industry as well as practical knowledge on current IT trends and technologies. Our focus on Assessments is based on our strong experience in IT staffing and our intimate knowledge of IT services processes and practices.

Contact us today to learn more about how an assessment can benefit you.