

How SLVECC Modernized Hiring with CommsCoach HIRE

Situation/Challenge

The SLVECC, Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center in Utah, continuously recruits for combined call taker/dispatcher roles handling both emergency and non-emergency calls across multiple agencies. Due to ongoing staffing needs, they regularly onboard small training classes of eight or fewer candidates every ten weeks. Each cohort completes six weeks of classroom training followed by eight weeks of on-the-job training before graduating to the floor.



However, their previous hiring process presented several challenges:

- **Time-intensive workflows:** Paper-based testing required printing and manually scoring assessments. Manually scoring significantly extended the time and effort required to qualify candidates.
- **Limited evaluation scope:** Existing tests focused primarily on typing and mapping, with no way to measure critical skills like stress tolerance or multi-tasking.
- **Subjective decision-making:** Hiring decisions often relied heavily on interview impressions rather than objective data.
- **Training attrition risk:** A recurring issue of candidates failing to complete training due to difficulty handling pressure and multi-tasking demands.

Solution

SLVECC implemented CommsCoach HIRE to modernize and standardize their pre-hire testing process.

The hiring funnel for SLVECC is demanding: it can take 20 or more candidates to build a class of up to 8 trainees. Under the old process, that created a major burden. Candidates came in for testing, but because scoring was manual, results were not immediately available. That resulted in candidates being sent home before next steps could be determined, forcing the hiring team into an additional cycle of follow-up, scheduling, and interviews.

Inside the ECC



250,000–300,000
9-1-1 calls yearly



Dispatch staff: 136



Training team: 5 full-time



Serving: Law Enforcement,
Fire, Medical, Animal Control

15% improvement
in retention

Retention rates jumped from 80% to 92% — a 15% improvement that demonstrates measurable, lasting impact.

With CommsCoach HIRE they introduced a more efficient workflow:

- 01 Candidates complete a phone screen before coming in for testing
- 02 Qualified candidates are brought onsite and tested in groups of four
- 03 Tests are conducted in 90 minutes
- 04 Tests are automatically scored
- 05 Hiring staff can work with candidates immediately after testing is completed and determine next steps without scheduling another meeting.

The new workflow has cut the selection process time per candidate in half. The hiring team is now doing less administrative work and more training and mentoring.

CommsCoach HIRE scores candidate performance based on benchmarks set by current dispatchers completing the assessment, establishing clear thresholds expected in your center for each skill area and immediate results on candidates. With HIRE, SLVECC can now assess a broader set of critical skills, including multitasking, stress response, and decision-making, in a standardized, simulation-based environment.

Results

Candidate evaluation time was cut in half. Testing, scoring, and follow-up now all fit within a 2-hour window — eliminating the tedious extra cycle of scheduling that scoring previously required. Hiring staff can watch the candidate's reactions as they take the exam and see in real-time how they react to the stress and multi-tasking portions of the exam.

Key Improvements:

- **More accurate candidate evaluation**
Hiring decisions are now supported by both data and observed behavior in simulated job conditions.
- **Better assessment of critical skills**
SLVECC can directly evaluate stress resilience, multitasking ability, and emotional control, skills that were previously unmeasured.
- **Reduced reliance on subjective judgment**
Interviews are now complemented by objective performance data.
- **Improved candidate readiness and expectations**
Candidates gain a clearer understanding of the job before entering training, leading to stronger alignment.
- **Higher training success rates**
Candidates who advance are better prepared and more likely to complete the program successfully.



We used to rely on interview impressions to judge resiliency. Now, we not only have data-backed scores, we can actually see how candidates respond in realistic conditions.

— Shondra Young, Chief of Professional Standards & Development

By implementing CommsCoach HIRE, SLVECC transformed its hiring process from manual, subjective, and time-consuming into a streamlined, data-driven system. **The result is faster hiring, better candidate fit, and improved training outcomes, ultimately strengthening their ability to serve their community.**



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