Job Proposal for IT Officer Position

Written by: David Liu

February 1st, 2014

Position Background:

The IT Officer is the person responsible for all IT related business within the Alma Mater Society. This includes hiring, training, and managing a team of staff members as the manager of the IT Office. It is the Officer's duty to guide and provide the necessary support to ensure the staff members are well equipped to face the problem's dealt with by the office. As well, he/she must collaborate with the other AMS offices to ensure the society runs smoothly. This means training staff members that will be on call to deal with any IT issues that arise within the AMS.

The IT Officer also acts as an effective link between IT services and the IT Office, as the latter often receives the support of the former in dealing with technical issues beyond the scope of the office. Having spoken with the current IT Officer and the assistant IT Office manager, it seems plans to hire a full time IT support person is underway for next year. As this would be a trained employee with years of experience in the IT field, the collaboration between the IT Officer and this support person would be highly beneficial to the AMS. Given that the assistant manager position will be abolished for next year, having an extra resource within the IT Office is even more important.

The IT Officer is also responsible for the assessment of the AMS computer hardware, providing upgrades where needed. This would be accomplished in conjunction with IT Services and the Campus Computer Store to provide the necessary upgrades and repairs, along with other contractors as needed. This would also require the coordination of the various AMS offices and commissions, with effective communication between all parties a crucial factor.

Why I'm the right person for the job:

I truly believe in every plan and goal I have for the position of IT Officer. Since my first year here at Queen's, I'm been an employee of the IT Office. I was named employee of the month in my first year after working at the office for just two months, one of only two first year students hired for this office that year. Since then, I managed to accomplish so many amazing things for the office and I've gained incredible skills along the way. As one of two rehires this year, I have been really striving to make an even bigger impact for the IT Office.

It was last November when my manager (IT Officer) Sean approached me regarding my interest in his position for next year. That's about the time when I seriously started to consider it and realized that this job is really an amazing chance for me to accomplish something big. I would have the ability to contribute to a society that has provided me with so many amazing benefits and employment opportunities. Being the IT Officer allows me to transition to a role

where I have the capability to implement the many ways I believe the office can be improved upon.

The IT Officer position would also give me the opportunity of organizing and training a team, acting effectively as a project manager. To have that kind of experience is highly sought after in the computing industry. It would also allow me to network with a group of amazing managers, commissioners, and AMS executives, all of which I firmly believe share my passion and dedication to make the AMS a great place for Queen's students.

Proposed Action Plan:

Efficiency of the office:

Increasing efficiency and productivity within the employees would be a big priority for me if hired. I would see to the continued implementation of the "Employee of the Month" award, as this is an excellent reward for employees who prove that they are willing to go above and beyond what's expected of them.

A new initiative I would look to implement is for the employees to be accountable for what they are able to accomplish for each shift they work. This would mean that staff would need to submit in writing what sort of tasks they've accomplished for the week. A side benefit of doing this is that as IT Officer, I could prioritize and itemize what kinds of tasks are repeated frequently. If a new task shows up in one week that staff aren't sure how to solve, I would take the time to solve it myself (or consult with others) so that in turn I could teach my staff how to deal with it the next time it shows up. This itemization of tasks also proves useful when the IT Officer is required to submit a transition manual to their successor, as these tasks could be recorded in the manual as they show up.

Employee Workflow:

As a current IT Office employee, I can attest to our duties mainly revolving around account management and troubleshooting support. These duties include resetting account passwords, unlocking user accounts, and providing personal technical support to AMS staff. I'd like to expand on those duties to include other responsibilities.

One of the initiatives I hope to introduce that is 100% implementable is for staff members to visit the offices and commissions in the AMS during their shifts. Currently, staff employees only assist an office if there's a problem. By providing a more active approach, this allows the IT Office to take on a more visible presence within the AMS. As well, it allows the

office to take on a "preventative approach" to its IT support, troubleshooting smaller problems before they become a bigger and more pressing issue.

Another initiative of mine is to encourage and support staff members to take on projects of their own that benefit the office, during times when the current office workload is at a minimal. I strongly feel the employees, having applied for the IT Office, are people who want to improve on their technical and IT skills. I would be glad to act as a mentor to assist them with that. With the various contacts established as the IT Officer, I would be able to act as a valuable resource which I feel in turn, would benefit the office with projects being developed and staff learning important skills.

Employee Training:

A top priority as the IT Officer would be to develop a comprehensive employee training program for newly hired employees. As the IT Office staff position advertises itself as "no experience necessary", it is even more pertinent that staff members are given the proper training to succeed in completing their daily tasks. The IT Office is in the unique position that their training should inherently be more comprehensive than other offices, by the very nature of the job. As such, the employees should be well trained in any number of the issues that the IT office takes on, from unlocking user accounts to fixing login issues.

Communication between offices/commissions:

A big part of the IT Office is to provide IT support to the other offices and commissions within the AMS. As the IT Officer, I would ensure full communication is facilitated, where other AMS staff can receive our support as soon as possible. If it's an issue that we aren't able to help with, I would arrange for the proper people to assist them as needed.

New projects:

There are a few exciting projects I hope to develop that I feel will positively benefit the AMS. The two that I'm most excited about are improving the transition manual and making the AMS technology more efficient.

A big part of the transition each year from IT Officer to their successor is the transition manual, which is basically a reference guide for the Officer to pass down their knowledge. It would be immensely more beneficial if the transitional manual was moved to a web based Wikipage, or as part of the existing AMS website (accessible by employees only). This would create a centralized location where the information can potentially be accessed anywhere. It would be modified by each successive IT Officer and maintained accordingly. This is an initiative that would be beneficial not only to the IT Office, as this idea can be used for the other offices

and commissions in the AMS. This project has the potential to revolutionize how the transitional manual is viewed, for the present and the future.

A project that failed to gain much traction this year was a server based system that would track energy usage of the various tech equipment in the AMS. After talking with the current IT Office assistant manager, it seems this idea was floated by the Sustainability Commissioner as a means of cutting down operating costs and to provide a more "green" AMS. I personally think it's a great idea and one that should really be developed further. If this project doesn't get developed much this year, I would love to continue this idea and research into its feasibility and benefits. It's certainly an ambitious idea, but given the right infrastructure, it definitely is a possibility.

Implementation of iTrack System:

One of the new initiatives brought into the office this year was the iTrack system. This is an excellent system where staff employees are able to submit tickets for any problems they receive via email or phone. Other staff can view these tickets and deal with them accordingly, meaning that inter-office communication is greatly improved. I would definitely build up this initiative, ensuring the continued full implementation of iTrack as well as developing ways to make the system more efficient.