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John Gwynne, Engineering Manager

From: Kayla Humphrey, Engineer

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RE: A Proposal to Hire an In-House Technical Writer at Aegis Security Systems

Introduction

I am writing to propose that our company hires an in-house technical writer for our company to support our engineering team. Presently, the engineering team spends up to three-quarters of their time doing paperwork for the jobs rather than the jobs themselves. The engineers can barely keep up with the current demand for their service. As a result, they are more pressured to meet project deadlines as they struggle to write and rewrite their works in formats they are not trained to do. The lack of in-house writing support is also causing the engineers to feel they are not being used to their full effectiveness. I believe that hiring a technical writer for the engineering team will be a time saver and free their time for more practical work.

Current Situation

Before we discuss the solution, I would like to provide a background on Aegis Security's current situation. In the last year, the national crime rate has been climbing. Subsequently, more people are looking for reliable security systems to protect their interests. Due to the consistent good quality of our work, the company's reputation grows as more businesses request our services. The increased demand for services leads to more paperwork and proposals for the team. Previously, the company could handle the demand without adding anyone to the payroll to assist the team. However, the increase in demand is slowly causing this to change, which can negatively affect how we handle jobs in the future.

Currently, the engineering team oversees all project paperwork and proposals for our clients. However, there is no in-house writing support for the engineering team. It is determined that the team spends up to three-quarters of their time doing paperwork. It leaves the team very little time dedicated to programming and installing security systems for our clients. Since the engineering team is not trained to write in the style often required for the company, many rewrites and rejections of our team's proposals from clients occur. Our present solution to handle this relies on an outside clerical pool's service for corrections to paperwork and proposals. However, only they provide basic proofreading and editing services. Since the clerical pool are also not trained to write in the polished style the company and our clients require, rewrites and rejections of the paperwork still occur often. The increased demand for

our services will only worsen if our workload outstrips the engineering team's capacity to handle it.

Consequently, the engineers are beginning to feel pressured to meet deadlines that they are already struggling to handle with the current workload. The team has already been forced to decline several potential high-value clients due to the increasing workload without the necessary support. It is slowly causing us to lose those clients to our competitors. The pressure to keep the clients we have is leading to increasing frustration among the team. If the company does not endeavor to improve how the work is handled, it will negatively affect the team's outlook. The team's morale will begin to decline and may question whether the company has its best interests at heart unless something is changed.

As it stands now, the company is not using the engineering team to its fullest potential. The company is paying them more to provide paperwork for projects rather than the final product. The lack of writing support for the team costs precious time that could be applied to new projects. In addition, the time lost affects profits due to the time it takes the team to complete each job. Since the clerical team is not based within the company, that is more time lost with correspondence needed for the corrections. The rewrites and rejections of project proposals are also starting to become costly. Even if newer clients showed patience in this process that our company continues to perpetuate without change, they might reconsider using our service due to a poorly written proposal.

Project Plan

Providing better support to the engineering team requires a plan that can complete the following objectives:

- Better utilization of the engineer's time between paperwork and projects
- Lower the rate of rewrites and rejections that often occur for new project proposals
- Reduce the amount of time it takes for the engineering team to reach the project phase.

Hiring an in-house technical writer is the best course of action to achieve these objectives. The initial effect will be seen as the time the engineering team is spending on paperwork is reduced by at least half. It will allow the team more time to focus on the practical side of their jobs concerning building, programming, and installing security systems. While the engineers are capable of writing, the technical writer is specifically trained to write and handle proposals and other documents. Even with a writer on the payroll, the engineers would still oversee writing the rough drafts for their work.

To begin the plan, the company should create a three-month timeline for the hiring process. The first two months can draw in potential applicants by creating a post on our company's standard job boards and collecting their applications. After the two months, we can use the final month to sort out the applications and set up a week of interviews to determine the best candidate for our company.

Following the hiring process, to ensure that the in-house technical writer has desired effect on the engineering team, the company should create a system of evaluation regarding contract completion with our clients. A possible method would be to conduct a quarterly review of the engineering team's progress concerning how they use their time inside the company between paperwork and the installation of new security systems. Ultimately, the goal would be to see if the completion rate for each job improves with the presence of a technical writer in the company.

Qualifications

I have been an active member of the engineering team at Aegis Security Systems for five years. I have experienced firsthand how well my team works together on projects, but I have also seen the struggles. We as engineers are very familiar with handling paperwork. However, we lack certain training to present the information we know about our security systems in a manner that would make sense to our clients. I have personally experienced the pressure of trying to draft a proper proposal for it to be later rejected despite being thoroughly proofread by the clerical pools. While we are doing our best to handle the workload, I fear we may falter as the demand for our services increases.

Cost and Benefits

The proposed solution of hiring a technical writer will include the cost of their yearly wage to our payroll. A technical writer will help the engineer's workload by reducing the time spent on paperwork by at least twenty-five percent. As a result, it will allow the engineers to split their time between paperwork and projects evenly. It will reflect company costs and how they spend their money on the engineering team.

Average Salary of a Technical Writer	\$75,000
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The following table shows how the engineers spending three-quarters of their time on paperwork is reflected in the salary they earn at the company. The table provides an average salary of a single engineer and the entire team. A single engineer's pay from paperwork is shown by multiplying a single wage by three-fourths to represent the time. In addition, it shows how little of their total salary is used to provide the service of installing new security systems by dividing a single salary by four and multiplying it for the entire team.

Average Engineer's Salary (1 person)	\$98,000
Engineer's salary earned from paperwork ($98000 \times 3/4$)	\$73,500
Average salary of the entire engineering team (98000×15)	\$1,470,000
Engineering Teams total salary for project installation ($(98000 \div 4) \times 15$)	\$367,500

The final table shows how hiring a technical writer reflects the company's cost on its engineers, with a least half their time free to begin the project phase. The salary is divided by half and then multiplied by fifteen to represent the salary now used for projects after hiring a technical writer.

Engineer's salary earned from paperwork after hiring a technical writer ($98000 \div 2$)	49,000
Engineering teams' total salary earned for paperwork after hiring a technical writer. (49000×15)	735,000

Undoubtedly, the technical writer can provide valuable assistance in providing clarity and focus to the engineering team's work beyond simple editing and proofreading. Instead of contracting the editing and proofreading to an outside clerical team, we will save time and money since a technical writer can perform the same tasks more effectively. Therefore, the team's allotted time spent on the practical side of their work will eventually increase the rate of jobs Aegis Security Systems is currently able to handle with the present structure.

Conclusion

In closing, hiring a technical writer to support the company's engineering team is a practical plan to help the engineering team tackle the growing demand of their service. The plan serves as an effective solution to reduce the time they are currently spending on paperwork rather than projects. A writer's addition to the company payroll will help the company adjust what they truly wish to pay the engineers to do. With the help of proper writing support, the paperwork produced will be more organized and contain a focused tone that our clients will appreciate. I am happy to discuss the proposal anytime. Thank you for your time and consideration