



PURSUANCE HEALTHCARE

HEALTHCARE IT CONSULTANTS



IT'S TIME TO BRING SOMEONE ELSE ONBOARD

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO HIRING AN
EPIC/CLARITY REPORT WRITER



You Are Not Alone

Dear Reader,

I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to pick up this guide. You are not alone and I have been there. The decision process to hire the right resources is challenging. Rest assured, however, there is a way to find the right candidate to get the job done without breaking the bank.

As an independent IT consultant, I have over 15+ years of experience at various organizations doing the grunt work, leading a team and managing projects. I understand the stress involved, and this guide will help you along with this process.

I hope that you enjoy its contents, and may it help slingshot your project to the finish line!

Ron Cafferky

The Decision

Whether it's been a slow boil or a sudden surge in work, the growing need for an EPIC report writer in your group can put pressure on everyone. Your instinct may be to take immediate action to relieve that pressure, but a little prep work now can make the difference between a smooth and successful process or a drawn-out search full of bad hires and sleepless nights. The process usually starts with getting clear on what you need.

A Well-Defined Need

While you obviously need help with your reports – is that all you really need? Do you want someone to come in and code up a new way to view your data or do you want someone to sit down with your business unit leaders, analyze their needs and develop a plan to get them the answers they need?

Those are two very different skill sets. Rushing in to hire one when you need the other would lead to a lot of stress for everyone involved.

That's why I recommend you start the process by looking at all your current issues with a clear and open mind before you settle on a solution.





Step 1:

Review your current issues

Write down all the direct and indirect problems related to reporting from across the company. Review that list to look for obvious needs or patterns.

When I speak with my clients, these are some of the common concerns I hear about:

- Incorrect or missing reports that put client care at risk.
- Important strategic decisions can't be made due to a lack of necessary reports.
- Trouble transitioning from legacy tools and reports to the EPIC suite
- A genuine fear that they are just billed by their provider without their expected data analysis or reporting needs being met.
- A desire to fully outsource the IT for clinical Data Management

Step 2:

Pick a solution

After reviewing your list of problems, develop your solution. Ask yourself important questions like, "Is adding a new role the right solution?"

If the answer is yes, what role would do you need? Is it a technical role for a developer, a role for an analyst to work with other units and define their needs, or is it a combination of the two? Do you need basic skills or someone with a broad skill set and deep industry knowledge? Should this person be an employee or a contractor?

Step 3:

Document your plan

Unless you are a team of one, you need to document your plan so others can support you as you take the next steps.

I recommend using a one-page document that key people in your organization can have access to. This is a living document that will evolve as you make decisions throughout the process. IT should include important pieces of information like:

- The name of the role you intend to fill
- Whether the position will be an employee or contractor
- A brief job description for the role
- Your timeline to fill the role
- Key milestones or next steps

Employee or Contractor?

Should you hire someone for this role as an employee or a contractor? That can feel like a big decision, but the use-cases for employees and contractors are surprisingly well defined. Odds are your needs will fit into one or the other.

Hiring an Employee

Pros

Direct stake in business success can mean more pride in the work

Potentially lower hourly wage

Easier to “ramp-up” workload

Cons

Increased reporting requirements (Payroll, taxes, etc.)

Increased cost of benefits

Initial training and day-to-day management

You should hire a report writer as an employee when....

- You have a very clearly defined role, process, and support structure for this role
- You can onboard, train, and manage the day-to-day of this role
- You have a consistent workload for this role for the next 18+ months

Employees are the right choice when you have most things figured out and can safely make a long-term commitment to someone.

Hiring a Contractor

Pros

Flexibility – you can define the scope of work as needed without making long commitments

Contractors can bring the specific expertise and experience you need for your tasks

Maintaining budget control by hiring for tasks or projects

Get the work done without risk to political capital

Cons

Potentially separate tracking process than employees

Give up control of things like working hours, location

Your contractor doesn't have the same level of loyalty as a fulltime employee

You should hire a report writer as a contractor when....

- You need high level people who can come in to make an immediate impact without training or much management
- You are unsure about what the role will be long term
- Your work is limited or project-based

Contractors are the right choice when you have some uncertainty or smaller short-term work that needs to be done.

Still not sure? Send me a quick description of your scenario and I'll let you know what I think. My email address is ron@pursuancehealth.com

EMAIL RON HERE

Finding the Right Person

By now you know what role you're hiring for, but what will a good candidate look like? What should they bring to the table?

Adaptability

This is probably the most important trait for someone in a EPIC report writing role because everyone does things a little different. Your process won't be the same as a hospital in the next town and it will look very different than a major clinic on the other side of the country. A report writer needs to be quick enough to pick up the nuances of your system and flexible enough to adopt your methods without a fuss.

Strong Communication Skills

While a large portion of the EPIC report writer's work is technical, there's also an important communication element. They'll coordinate with employees in different departments, data owners, report consumers, and provide context for reporting results. A report writer needs to hear not only what someone is saying but pick up on what they mean – because not every user has the technical vocabulary to describe what they're looking for.

Problem-Solving Skills

An EPIC report writer may be given a problem or a set of needs but no clear path to a solution. They'll need to rely on their wit and experience to find a way to get the end users what they need.

Technological Skills

Strong technological skills are critical for an EPIC report writer. They could work with multiple code bases, develop middleware, write custom reports, modify existing reports, or interact with existing IT staff.

Responsiveness

At its core, an EPIC report writer is there to serve your organization and give them the information they need to do their jobs better. To perform well at this role, a candidate will need to be responsive to requests that come in.

The Talent Pool

You're ready to begin your search for the right person – where do you look? You can post the job in the usual job sites, but for a specialized role like this, there are a few other places you should consider as well.

Engage Your Network

An EPIC report writer is a pretty niche position. Lucky for you, you already have a collection of people who know some experts in the health care data field – your professional network! Let people in your network know about your need and ask for recommendations or referrals. You'll be surprised at how many great candidates you'll discover.

Bring in a Partner

Recruiting technical talent, vetting them, and selecting the right candidate for your position isn't easy. If you don't have a great deal of experience, a good support system within your organization, or if you are already swamped with other work – it may be simpler to find a trusted partner to help find the right person for you (or at least narrow down the field).





Vetting Your Candidates

Once you have candidates, you'll need to sift through to find the right person for your role. Here are a few tips and tricks I share with my clients to find the perfect match.

The Interview

While the technical skills may seem like an obvious area to focus, I recommend probing “right brain” skills in interviews: communication, trustworthiness, humility, and the ability to be a self-starter. Technical skills can be taught or improved over time. These more intangible traits can't.

Their intangible nature makes these difficult to interview for! My clients are often successful when they give candidates a chance to share a personal story. The details they share (or don't share) can be quite revealing. Try a few of these in your next interview...

- Describe a time when you had to go the “extra mile” to gain and develop trust among colleagues, staff, or stakeholders. What did you learn from that experience?
- How would you coach someone else on building trust?
- Think about a time when you had to verbally communicate critical information to someone you worked with. What was the issue? How did you determine if the communication was successful?
- Tell me about a time when you didn't have enough information to make a decision. How did it impact the situation? What actions did you take to mitigate the possible damage?

Testing for technical skills is more straight forward. You can ask about real-world scenarios your organization faces or data models and the EPIC system. Walk the candidate through reporting scenarios and see how they respond.



Avoiding a Bad Hire

After investing all this time and money, no one wants to end up with the wrong person in such an important role. It makes life miserable for you and the entire time until the right person is found.

When it comes to EPIC report writers, I have a few tips you can use to avoid making a bad hire.

Tip 1 – Check those references

References can often be an overlooked but important indicator of future performance. Gathering multiple opinions about your candidate – how they perform the role, how they interact with the team, how they respond to coaching – are all important in building a complete picture.

Tip 2 – Beware of the ‘empty suit’

Just because someone interviews well doesn't mean they're a great fit for the role. You need to probe both the soft skills and the technical skills to be sure the candidate has both in equal measure.

Tip 3 – Spot the False Negative

For you, the interview may just be another appointment on your calendar. For the candidate, it could be a high stakes moment that could change the course of their career. Some people, understandably, become nervous.

When things start to go off the rails – especially in the technical portion of the interview – it's your job as the interviewer to determine if the candidate is just nervous or if they are in over their head.

While you should never reject a candidate based on one or two data points, these are a few signs that you should dig a little deeper.



Don't Stop Now!

You downloaded this guide for a reason. Maybe your report backlog is growing with no signs of letting up. Maybe the organization is struggling with the ripple effects of poorly designed reports. Maybe have been real world impacts on the quality of care. Whatever the reason, now is the time to do something about it.

Use the process I've laid out to begin your search for a new EPIC report writer starting with the Review / Solution / Document exercise.

To make it even easier, why don't we take the first step together?

Use this link to book a 30-minute call and we'll do the Review and Solution part of the exercise together.

BOOK ONLINE HERE

<https://www.pursuancehealth.com/book-online>

Ron Cafferky is a seasoned independent IT Consultant with a focus in the healthcare industry. He has a passion to improve patient outcomes with data and to make an impact in patients' lives. He has leadership experience in the Epic space that supported the overall success of reports and analytics.

General Contact Information



ron@pursuancehealth.com



(843) 754-5584



Connect on LinkedIn
(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ron-cafferky-232766182>)



<https://www.pursuancehealth.com/>

BOOK ONLINE HERE



1101 East Cumberland Ave.
Ste 201H #737
Tampa, FL 33602

