



Recruiting Advice for Providers and Practices

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The upcoming Great American Physician Survey reveals that 35 percent of physicians say they often wish they could switch workplaces. Whether it's because of an unhealthy workplace, more time for your personal life, the opportunity to make more money, or something else, many people come to a point where they are looking for a change in their career.

Naturally, this isn't as simple as switching toothpaste. For many doctors, finding the perfect fit can be a struggle. Conversely, for practices, it can be hard to find the right provider to bring aboard. Nicole Cox, chief recruitment officer at Decision Toolbox, a nationwide recruiting firm, says that healthcare is a different field to recruit for because providers' passion for patient care often trumps other aspirations they might have.

Physicians Practice spoke with Cox on how physicians can find the right fit when searching for a new job and how practices can ensure they find the right person to join their team. Below are excerpts from that interview.



Nicole Cox

What should providers know about writing a resume that will get them a job with the right practice?

It's important to be relevant. One resume doesn't fit all job searches. You have to look at the problem the organization is trying to solve and what you can do and what you have done in your career to help this organization ... address their problem. So many employers say they are looking for "X years of experience." X years of experience does not necessarily mean you are the best person for the position. Showcasing what you've done can help address company's needs.

Spotlight your achievements, where have you saved a company time and money. Where have you improved quality of care? Where have you brought innovation and improved processes? I think it's important to be accurate, especially with today's access to social media. We have clients who will look at a resume and they'll go see a candidate's profile on LinkedIn to see if matches up. You want your social presence to match the outline of your resume.

You want to address any gaps in the resume. Spelling and grammar. We've heard that since middle school and grammar school, but it's something you don't always get input on when you're putting your resume together. It's smart to have a handful of people skilled in spelling and grammar look over your resume because things are easily missed. As you write something, you can miss your own errors because you've been staring at that for so long. Also you should know the preferred format. Some positions will require a two-page short resume, which gets to the point. Others, particularly in healthcare, will want to see greater detail, including publications, speaking engagements, those sorts of things.

Say no to the following things: fancy formatting (if they are taking that resume and CV and putting it into an applicant tracking system, the formatting gets distorted), and [too much information] (marital status, child care, date of birth). We were trained not to do that, but it's surprising how often we see that, and avoid acronyms. We can't assume the reader knows what you are talking about.

Some of the nuts and bolts: Name and contact information at the top; experience, especially clinical work; education, including residencies and fellowship. And then there are things like honors, speaking engagements, publications. List those in an order that's most relevant for the job you are trying to get. Recruiters and companies lose interest in six seconds if the right keywords and things they're looking for in a resume can't be found.

Conversely, what should practices be looking for when finding the right staffer?

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Before they even open up a position, list out what's missing in their service delivery and what the right match might be. They're looking for that match. Of course, be open to other ideas, you may find someone who can bring something of a greater value. But knowing what you need is the biggest thing.

Is it harder for small practices to find the right people or for people to find the right small practice — what can be done about that?

It depends on who you are asking and what that practice is about. If you're working on something "hot and sexy" in the medical field, you may attract people. But it's how do you stand out across other needs in the marketplace? [It is] harder for the smaller practices than it is for the candidates.

There are always going to be other [organizations] that can offer something greater. The rule of thumb in recruiting is if you're talking to a candidate about their motivations, and if money is number one, find out why. It's not always about the money. Keep asking why and drilling down. Maybe it's more money so they can start a nonprofit or conduct research. What is that "why"? There is the true motivation. The money is just one way to get there.

[Practices] should be aware of what's available. They should be cognizant of what they are competing against and what they offer in comparison. It may not be as much money, but maybe they have more flexibility. Maybe there is growth potential because they are coming in on ground floor, and they can help develop that practice. Understand what carrots you are offering.

Any advice for those in the small practice world?

If you find the right candidate, don't wait for the next right candidate. You may lose your first one and there might not be a second one. If the first candidate looks right, that doesn't mean that was an easy candidate to find. It means you are lucky. So many [organizations], and it doesn't matter the field, they'll find a perfect candidate in the first two weeks and they think they'll find others. It means they were lucky. Don't shoot yourself in the foot waiting for that next top candidate.