

Hiring and Interviewing in a Dermatology Practice



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One of the most costly mistakes made in a dermatology practice is hiring too quickly for the sake of filling a void. Hiring the right candidate is vital for the overall efficiency of the practice. The costs associated with a rushed hiring decision, such as advertising expenses, training time, and even unemployment benefits paid to an ill-fitting candidate that was hired too hastily, can add up over time; therefore, it is best to take your time when hiring a new employee. Consider all of the responsibilities of the position and never hire a candidate just for the sake of hiring someone. This article will discuss establishing a system within your practice to ensure that you are prepared to hire the right candidate.

Review the Open Position

When an employee resigns or is terminated, take advantage of the opportunity to review the vacant position and possibly make some changes. To maintain efficiency in the workplace and ensure that payroll expenses are in line, several points need to be considered when a position opens within your practice. First, evaluate if the position needs to be filled or if the department should be restructured. It also might be beneficial to promote from within. Before choosing a replacement, however, consider how the position may have changed since it was last filled and make a list of skills that the ideal candidate should possess. Take the time to address these issues to ensure that the right candidate is hired for the position.

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Advertise the Open Position

Properly advertising a job opening ensures that management will only receive resumes from qualified candidates who are ideal for the position. Prior to posting a job opening, a manager should review the job description. Typically, a job description should include 9 key areas: job title, general responsibilities, reporting structure/protocol, supervisory or management responsibilities (if applicable), job duties, preferred education, preferred experience, essential skills required to perform the job, and physical requirements. Also provide a clear explanation of benefits that the position offers. Reviewing and adjusting these components as necessary prior to posting the job opening will ensure time is not wasted by filtering resumes or fielding calls from candidates who are not qualified for the position.

Create an Interview Committee

Creating an interview committee ensures that all applicants for an open position are treated equally and professionally and also provides a higher level of consistency in the interview process. The employees comprising the interview committee should be trained on how to conduct an interview and what to look for in selecting the best candidates. Ideally, the committee should include supervisors and key employees from various departments. Management must make sure that all employees on the interview committee are appropriately trained and know what questions they can and cannot ask. In today's world, employment laws have become more complex and are always changing. Keep employees up-to-date with all human resources-related changes so they know what they can legally ask when interviewing a candidate.

Evaluate a Candidate During an Interview

There are several parameters to evaluate when interviewing a candidate for a position in a medical practice.

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Because employees interact with other members of the staff as well as patients, it is important to consider the candidate's character, appearance, demeanor, communication skills, and ambition, as well as your intuition.

Character

When interviewing a potential candidate, always remember to assess his/her character and temperament to ensure that he/she is appropriately suited for your office environment and team, which is particularly important if your new employee will be working closely with other colleagues. Personality clashes can be a major problem in the workplace and ultimately can harm your business. Your evaluation should reflect the character traits/temperament needed for the position, not your personal preference for one personality type over another.

Appearance

A candidate's appearance represents how seriously he/she takes the opportunity to be part of your staff. Even if the job does not require a particularly professional appearance, a candidate who presents himself/herself well for an interview obviously takes the opportunity seriously, which is a quality that should be recognized. When conducting interviews, be sure to evaluate if the candidate possesses a professional appearance that is appropriate for the position and will be a positive reflection of your practice.

Demeanor

Take note of a candidate's demeanor as an indicator of whether he/she is truly invested in the employment opportunity. Does he/she seem comfortable talking with you? Does he/she listen well and respond to your questions with intelligent and appropriate answers? Candidates who are alert and engaged during an interview are likely to exhibit similar qualities in the workplace. However, remember that everyone tends to be nervous in an interview, especially during the first few minutes, which is normal; nervousness should not be held against an applicant who is otherwise qualified for the position.

Communication Skills

An interview also presents a good opportunity to evaluate a candidate's communication skills. A qualified and

competent candidate will have spent time preparing for questions that you are likely to ask and should be able to articulate his/her thoughts clearly and effectively. If the candidate responds confidently with thoughtful answers, he/she also will be able to communicate effectively with patients and colleagues in the workplace.

Ambition

Motivation and commitment are key qualities for every employee. A candidate who exhibits the drive and desire to advance will serve the common goals of your practice and make a positive impact on the rest of your staff. If you are looking for long-term commitment, do not hire a candidate who does not know where he/she wants to be in 3 to 5 years because chances are that person may not be with you. Instead, look for someone who has the potential to rise within your practice and displays a true passion for his/her work.

Intuition

Ultimately, your selection should be as objective as possible, but there is no denying that an element of intuition also is involved when hiring a new employee. Your intuition and personal experience play a part in all of your decisions, both professionally and personally; however, do not completely allow those feelings to make a hiring decision for you. Balance your intuition with an unbiased evaluation of the qualities described above to select a candidate who will best round out your practice.

Summary

Once determining the need and qualifications for a position to be filled in your practice, there are several factors to consider before hiring a candidate that are commonly evaluated during an interview. Alternatively, it also may be beneficial to have candidates shadow staff for a day. Assign a potential candidate to shadow a trustworthy team member whose judgment you value, preferably within the department to which the candidate is applying. Be sure to choose staff members who are involved in the hiring and interviewing process wisely. As a safety net, have the candidate work with multiple colleagues and allow all of your providers and staff members to meet the candidate. The more opinions you get, the more confident you will be that your decision is the right one. ■

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