NEW REQUIREMENTS for TODAY’S RESIDENTS

Are Physician Recruitment Efforts Aligned?

By Todd Skertich - Director of Career and Life Planning for Physicians
Residents in Need

Residents who graduate from a U.S. residency trained program are trained *clinically* better than any other training programs located outside the United States, however, there is a major gap in the residency program’s attention to equip Residents with the tools needed to transition from their residency into their life and career.

Residents need help transitioning from ...

- A structured environment to one with multiple options
- Having *No* business to having to *Know* business
- Bread eater to Bread winner
- Life on hold to Life on the go
- Student to Physician/Teacher/Leader

Additionally, Residents desire assistance and guidance in the following areas:

**Physician Burnout**

Physicians have their entire training laid out for them from undergraduate through residency. Now they are expected to flip a switch and lay out a plan for their next phase of life without having a clear idea how to do so. It’s no wonder that a national survey published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in 2012 reported that “U.S. physicians suffer more burnout than other American workers. Some 45.8 percent of physicians were experiencing at least 1 symptom of burnout: loss of enthusiasm for work, feelings of cynicism, or a low sense of personal accomplishment.”

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Financial Planning

Resident’s needs, wants, and dreams can get tangled in the rush and frenzy when making their first real paycheck. They survived on crackers and water for a decade or so, and their spending appetite is great because Residents lived in delayed gratification mode for so long.

Several physicians make poor financial decisions as they transition from residency into having to pay back $155,000 on average in medical school loans. Medscape’s 2012 Physician Lifestyle Report indicates that “Over 38.8 percent of physicians in active practice had no or minimal savings for their age and stage.”

Work-Life Balance

New generations of physicians are searching for work-life balance; they are not willing to put their families and personal interests in the background. A 2012 study in the Archives of Internal Medicine found that physicians are nearly twice as likely to be dissatisfied with their work-life balance as workers in other occupations.

Also, Residents are turning away from primary care because “there is too little money for too much work” and instead opting for specialties they perceive as more lifestyle friendly. The Archives of Internal Medicine study found that among 7,288 physicians surveyed, those in so-called lifestyle-friendly specialties, such as dermatology and preventative medicine, reported the highest level of work-balance satisfaction.

A March 2013 issue of the Mayo Clinic Proceedings found that the strongest predictor of relationship satisfaction in close to 900 spouses and partners of physicians surveyed hinged on the amount of “awake time” they spent with their partners daily – not the physician’s specialty or number of hours worked.
Growing Demand on Physicians

Hospitals and their recruiters are doing their best to prepare their staff and future doctors for the physician storm that lies ahead.

There are 174,113 active physicians who are age 60 or older in the United States. Most medical staffs are made up of 39 percent baby boomers - they are soon to retire and be replaced with the next generation of physicians.

There are approximately 48 million uninsured people in the United States. When the mandatory insurance rules of Obamacare kick in next year, and a couple dozen states expand who is eligible for Medicaid, you can bet more people are going to want to use their health benefits - with that, the demand for quality physicians will increase.

“The rise of physician employment, integration of medical practices, and change in reimbursement structures will continue to pressure healthcare organizations to find the best talent who fit their organizations,” said Lori Schutte, President of Cejka Search.

“Physician recruiters must take strategic action – early – in order to recruit the top physicians emerging from training.”

In 2013, 61% of Residents and fellows began interviewing prior to January of the graduating year. By March, 52% signed contracts.*

*2013 Resident and Fellows Survey
Physician Recruiters in Need

In-house recruiters are seeking meaningful interactions to create a legacy of their own. Today’s physician recruiters are driven by purpose ...

- To make a difference in the lives of the physicians they recruit
- To make an impact on the communities in which they serve
- To engage in worthwhile work – important, rewarding, and valuable to justify the time and effort spent

Quint Studer states, “Employees want to believe their company has a meaningful purpose. They want to know that their own job is worthwhile. They want to make a difference.”

Physician recruiters require resources and content to be able to achieve their objectives while adapting to the demands and new requirements of today’s Residents.

To most effectively align with Residents’ growing concern and attention to physician burnout, financial planning, work-life balance, and the future demands of their profession, in-house recruiters need career and life tools and resources to help them build and establish Honesty, Trust, and Credibility (HTC).

The right tools and resources can facilitate an interactive and differentiating experience for both the recruiter seeking meaningful interaction and the physician candidates seeking assistance and guidance.

A recruiter, who can drive the candidate to the right (unbiased) resource, exercise, or worksheet at the appropriate time of need, will build HTC as the resources will equip the physician with the data to make the best decision for all parties involved.

Such tools and resources should also address recruiter challenges and Residents’ thirst for relevant information at several key stages in the recruiting, interviewing, and even onboarding processes.
Career Fairs

Attending career fairs are an effective strategy to get in front of Residents. Usually filled with representatives from multiple organizations, it can be highly competitive.

As one recruiter from Illinois states; “At one career fair, there were 50+ organizations exhibiting and only 75 Residents who attended. Competition is forcing us to think outside the box. I need to go beyond introducing myself and pointing to my tabletop display to present the top-five benefits that my organization is offering along with the branded pens or coffee cups.”

This same recruiter further cites one candidate as stating “I fear choosing the wrong job and not knowing it until months after I start; another candidate feared that he wouldn’t be able to find work-life balance; another candidate feared being deported back to his country. Whatever the concerns may be, I need to be prepared to address them and build trust and credibility.”

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*Illinois Recruiter at Career Fair*
Initial Interview, Site Visit, and Post Interview

These are critical stages, for both the Resident and the future employer, in the selection process. There are so many more questions than answers and to capitalize on the time and financial commitments by all participants involved requires a game plan.

Cynthia Forsyth, a physician recruiter from Mercy – Des Moines in Iowa, shares that “in my first interaction with a candidate, whether by phone or meeting in person, it is essential to engage in deep and meaningful conversation given that we are operating in a short period of time.”

Site visits is a critical stage, as both parties are committing the time and expense to determine a possible fit. And as the shortage of physicians worsens and the competition for talent heats up, recruiters and facilities are consistently looking for ways to stand out and separate themselves from the pack of prospective employers. Often, gifts and perks such as personalized notes from the CEO, gift baskets, and information about the local area, are bestowed on guest candidates. Choosing the first opportunity out of residency can be an overwhelming process and fruit in a basket may not necessarily be the incentive needed to aid in the process.

Anxiety heightens after the interview and site visit. A candidate may like the location better associated with one opportunity, the compensation package better with another, and the quality of life with a third. As the Resident attempts to make his first major decision since choosing a residency program, his mind might swirl with fear and confusion; “Am I asking the right questions?”, “Will my family be happy?”, “Will I make enough money?”, “Which offer should I accept?”, and “Am I making the right decision?”

Throughout the previous process, Resident candidates need a game plan to implement and resources to examine as they think about their options on a deeper level to arrive at the right decision to launch their medical careers.

Residents are attempting to make their first major decision since choosing a residency program.

Throughout this process, candidates need a game plan to implement and resources to examine as they think about their options on a deeper level.
Adventures In Medicine Delivers Resources for Residents and Physician Recruiters in Need

Residents are hungry for tools and resources to transition from residency into a career and life in medicine.

Resources are needed to assist and guide them through ...

- Physician burnout
- Financial planning
- Work-life balance
- Growing demand on physicians
- Having No business to having to Know business
- Bread eater to bread winner
- Making the right choices

In-house recruiters and prospective employers are hungry for career and life tools and resources to help them build and establish Honesty, Trust, and Credibility (HTC) with prospective Residents.

Resources that will facilitate ...

- Deep and meaningful interactions
- Alignment with Residents' concerns
- Differentiation at career fairs
- Guiding initial interviews
- Adding value to site visits
- Providing post interview game plans
“Instead of spending money on branded pens or coffee cups, I provide each person I meet with a copy of a physician Career and Life Planning Workbook to help them simplify their search with sound advice.

My conversations are much more meaningful and I feel that I’m providing great value. By not expecting anything in return, I begin building trust and credibility with the candidate.

When I follow up with each person I meet a week or two later, the transition is easy. I quickly work in and ask their progress with the Career and Life Planning Workbook I provided and asked them if they have any questions on their plan.”
Cynthia Forsyth, the physician recruiter from Mercy - Des Moines, Iowa, partnered with Adventures in Medicine to build a Career and Life Planning Portal for Physicians that includes 100+ Career and Life Resources. Cynthia states, “I introduce the portal in my first interaction with the candidate. Whether I’m on the phone or meeting the candidate in person, I walk the candidate through all of the online resources. As the candidate navigates through the process, I drive them back to the website to provide them the exact resource they need at the exact time they need it. It’s amazing how deep our conversations move to in a short period of time.”
Conclusion

The game is changing, dramatically and rapidly.

Residents, active and practicing physicians, and the general employee population of the future have a different set of priorities. No longer are they pursuing monetary rewards and professional prestige as their only decision criteria. Work-life balance, travel, flexibility, and access to resources and information have elevated in importance and shape the decisions of the future generation of talent.

In-house recruiters, HR departments, and prospective and present employers are scrambling to respond to these changes and to provide the work environment information and support that resonates with their candidates and active practicing physicians on staff. With so many demands on a physician’s schedule, it is far too challenging to become an expert on all topics of interest or to find information and resources on all topics in demand.

*Adventures in Medicine* has become the partner of choice for many of today’s leading hospital and innovative recruiters to deliver the career and life planning content that Residents and practicing physicians need to achieve their life’s purpose and recruiters and employers need to build, maintain, and retain trust and credibility. To learn more visit us at [www.adventuresinmedicine.net](http://www.adventuresinmedicine.net).

*Adventures In Medicine* delivers the highest quality of career and life planning content for physicians to pursue their life’s purpose, achieve and maintain their desired work-life balance, and leave a legacy that lives on through their patients, friends, and family.

*Adventures In Medicine* is committed to providing companies with a platform to shed a light on their organization and provide innovative solutions to engage, hire, and retain the right physicians.