

[PICTURE: © ASLYSUN]

Gain power at your laser clinics!

Author_Dr Anna Maria Yiannikos, Germany & Cyprus

_In order to gain power at your laser clinics, a coherent marketing strategy is of need. In the previous issues of laser, we already discussed components of the "Seven P Formula" which are product, price, promotion, place, packaging, positioning and people. The next P in my list is "people". This is the most important element that will ensure our clinic's success or failure! Therefore let's stick to two maxims:

1. Hire for the attitude, knowing that we can train to develop the technical skills. Before we start the whole process of selecting our candidates, we should make a list of the attributes of the 'best' employee. This list will assist us in having a clear picture of what we are looking for.
2. After the job posting, the resume screening process starts in which we can select our star.

Let's think of the whole process as a movie in four scenes.

_How to find your perfect candidate

Scene 1

We get the resume, we screen them and in the meanwhile we send thank-you letters to all interested candidates.

Scene 2

We continue with the second screening which is calling the candidates and asking each the same questions to avoid biases. We can check their responses and behaviour by means of their way of answering.

Scene 3

The selected candidates arrive on the day of the first interview. Here are some useful screening tips:

- We could give them an application form and ask them to fill in the required information. Some of the candidates cannot comply with this request or might even miss out some paragraphs or questions asked. With this, we can check how well they act, write and spell on spot.
- Do not permit any interruptions; show your respect and importance to the process.
- Mind the 30–70% rule, which means letting the interviewee do 70% of the talking and you as the interviewer do the remaining 30%. We need to learn as much as possible about every individual.
- Ask 'open questions' to allow the candidate to share his thoughts and ideas. Additionally, we can use situational interviews. Studies show that these are 50% more effective than the common ones and can be more predictive of the candidate's success to the post-

ing. We can ask them, for example, to describe how they would handle an angry patient when he shouts at the reception area due to our 20 minute delay. Instead of asking whether they are good in customer service, let's prefer the following question: "Give me an example of a situation you remember that you gave a 'wow service experience' to a client or the time that you received one." These are the so-called behavioural questions and we can use them for a more effective interview.

- What is the optimal duration of an interview? It should last until we are satisfied with the whole procedure, until we do not have any doubts about our decision.
- We must be the master of the interview. This means, we must be well prepared and be the one who is ruling the process.

Scene 4

After choosing the best candidates, we ask them for a testing period, which is paid. More specific, if there are about three candidates, we can ask them for a work trial of 3–5 days each. This gives us the opportunity to see how they act in our environment. By this, we can also find out more about their skills, or if their personalities do not match with ours.

"Find the best employee not the best candidate"— What is the difference? There are some candidates that are more experienced in an interview or better prepared and trained in answering interview questions than others. But this does not mean that they are also the best employees. We are not going to hire the best candidate that applied for the job but we are going to select the best – period! Remember to send thank-you letters to those candidates that have not been selected.

Scene 5

After the testing period, we continue with the second interview. Here, we can explore fields that we hadn't discussed before and can thus gain a complete picture of our candidate. In order to get a reliable picture, just mind the following rules:

Remember to avoid mistakes! Therefore, mind the "14 seconds"-mistake: A study which was carried out at the University of Chicago revealed that most interviewers decide on a candidate within the first 14 seconds. After that, interviewers try to support this impression even subconsciously. This means, in case of a candidate the interviewer dislikes, he asks difficult questions, while in the other case (interviewer likes candidate) he helps their candidate with the posed questions. Be prepared— ask clever questions to get clever answers! Know what you want from the start – for this, we have already prepared a short description for the best person for this job. Avoid copy/paste questions or you will get copy/paste answers! Instead of following the same old questions, be creative, be spontaneous. Listen to the candidate and ask him questions that really reveal his character and personality. After all, at the end of the day we tend to spend more time with our colleagues and associates than with our own family and friends. Surprisingly, as a result of this habit (copy/paste interviews) we tend to hire people for their skills and fire them for their character. Therefore, hire a candidate for his personality and not for his skills!

Always check references! The only way to avoid negligent hiring processes and bad hiring decisions is to verify the information the applicant gives you against every reference. We can request a copy of the performance appraisal or we can ask a co-worker or a friend of the applicant to rank our candidate. An application form gives a clearer picture of a candidate than a CV. As a study found out, 40 % of the information given in a resume might be misleading (example one of my candidates has send two different CVs). Thus, mind the sentence: "Application blanks tell you what you want to know— CV's tell you what the applicant wants you to know".

Finally, ask your candidates to tell their story from the beginning – by starting with their first job instead of the current one. This teaches us about their development and their way of thinking. The goal is to hire the best employees, but often we end up with hiring the "best applicants".

_If we still have hired the wrong person...

If you feel like having hired the wrong person, then fire him as soon as possible before he disturbs your or your team's or the patient's peace. I remember once I hired a receptionist who in two days earned two big complaints from two very good patients of our clinic – because towards them she behaved in a childish and annoying way! Thus, I propose the idea of using the word "trial" in the beginning: This makes us feel better if we want to fire our newly hired employee since we prepare him for the "unexpected" without a big fuss. But what is next? We could call our best alternative or we could go for a new hiring process, which is of course time and money consuming. Thus, it is always better to focus on an efficient hiring process in the first run._

_contact laser



Dr Anna Maria Yiannikos
Adjunct Faculty Member of AALZ at RWTH Aachen University Campus, Germany
DDS, LSO, MSc, MBA

dba@yianniksodental.com
www.dba-aalz.com