

Hiring: Avoiding Resume Red Flags

Written by Mara Shorr, BS, CAC II-XIV and Jay A. Shorr, BA, MBM-C, CAC I-XIV



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Let's be honest for a moment. We have sorted through more than a thousand resumes in the past month alone. What is out there? Well, it is not pretty, folks!

We have heard it all: "there's no good help in Miami," "it's different here in New York," "people don't stay in jobs here in Houston like they do in other cities."

Unfortunately, hiring great staff is something that medical spas, day spas, and cosmetic medical practices alike deal with across the country. But, when you start off with the wrong candidates, you end up with a bad employee. In order to jump start the human resource journey on the best foot possible, beware of the top resume red flags during the search.

If you see any of the following while reviewing a potential candidate, just say "no."

NO PREVIOUS INDUSTRY

If a candidate has not worked in our particular industry before, that might not necessarily be a reason to not call them back. Of course, industry experience is a plus, but as consultants, we

encourage clients to seek out receptionists who have worked in some form of engaging hospitality or medical assistants who have worked in other medical specialties. However, keep in mind that you do not want your spa to be the first time they have ever answered the phone professionally or set foot in a day spa or medical spa. If they have answered phones at an upscale hotel and had personal experience with facials or injectables, that may still be a combination that works for the business.

JOB HOPPING

We always advise clients to look at the length of time the candidate has spent at each previous position on his or her resume. If the candidate has spent less than a year with each individual employer, note that your business may be next on that list. If you are looking to keep an employee for more than a year, this is probably not the person for you.

SPELLING ERRORS AND TYPOS

This could be an indicator of lack of attention to detail. Think about how this could affect client communication or charting. For marketers and professionals, your spa will look sloppy in written communication and social media account postings.

REFERENCE CHECK ISSUES

Does the candidate only list friends as references? We do not doubt that they have a great group of friends. When asking the candidate to list references, be sure to stipulate you are looking for professional references: people they have worked with in the past. You are not interested in former classmates, book club members, childhood best friends, or happy hour buddies; they can't provide valid workplace experience or feedback on professionalism, sales skills, and so forth. Another warning sign: if the candidate doesn't have any references at all. Chances are, unless someone is applying for a job right out of (or during) high school or trade school, they should have at least a few strong professional references under their belt. If no one has positive things to say, that's a warning sign they may have a reputation for mistreating their clients, leaving before appointments, missing time with clients, or poor bedside manner. Finally, ask references about the potential employee's title, pay scale, and timeline of employment to confirm they match what's on the resume. Did someone say they planned events and did all of the marketing at their previous spa, but they really worked two days a week as a receptionist? Yes, we've seen all of the above.

OFF-PUTTING SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Is there blatant underage drinking in the posted photos or videos? Are there promiscuous photographs that make you uncomfortable? Do a quick check before calling the candidate for an interview to see how they represent themselves to the public. Ask yourself if this is how you would want a member of your team representing you and the business. If not, keep moving.

WON'T AGREE TO A BACKGROUND CHECK

This could mean they are hiding something. Your entire team has the ability to come into contact with retail, backbar products, money, and undressed clients (and their purses). In the case of a medical practice or surgical facility, your employees may come into contact with scheduled narcotic drugs. Honesty and a clean record is key for the spa and its staff members to avoid fraud, theft, and lawsuits.

EDUCATION THAT DOESN'T MATCH UP

This sounds incredibly obvious, but we have had clients previously see the repercussions after not checking these items ahead of an offer letter. It wasn't until the start date that the practice realized the employee didn't have the hospital privileges they claimed they did. Look into additional items, too. Did they let their electrology license expire? Were they 10 credits shy of graduating from their undergraduate degree in business and don't have the degree they claim to have? Did they fail to achieve everything needed to become an aesthetician? Make sure you know exactly who you are hiring.

DOESN'T PASS A TRIAL RUN

Have the candidate perform the service you are hiring them for before you actually make the hire. For example, do a series of phone call test runs for a receptionist candidate, seeing how they answer the phone, and if they can follow a script, answer the phone with a smile, and more. If you are hiring a provider, such as a massage therapist or an aesthetician, have them provide a treatment on one or two staff members to get honest feedback. How is their bedside manner and their touch? Do they forget to adjust the temperature in the treatment room or even ask if you are comfortable prior to performing the treatment? How are their sales skills? Cut them some slack, of course, since they do not know your particular policies, but a candidate will know their basics enough to wow you.

Finally, do not judge a book by its cover. Just because an applicant is incredibly attractive doesn't mean they are the perfect hire for you. On the other hand, just because someone does not match the aesthetics of the rest of your staff doesn't mean they aren't right either. Having someone with a different appearance than the rest of your team could be just what your business needs to shape up and grow and even bring in a new clientele. However, given the industry, be sure to explain to the candidate what dress code or appearance policies you currently have in place, how clothes should fit, whether tattoos can be visible or should be covered, which piercings are acceptable in the spa, and if hair should be pulled back when treating clients.

Mara Shorr, BS, CAC II-XIV serves as a partner, as well as the vice president of marketing and business development for Shorr Solutions, assisting medical practices with the operational, financial, and administrative health of their business. She is a Level II-XIV certified aesthetic



consultant and program advisor, utilizing knowledge and experience to help clients achieve their potential. A national speaker and writer, she can be contacted at marashorr@shorrsolutions.com (<mailto:marashorr@shorrsolutions.com>).



Jay A. Shorr BA, MBM-C, CAC I-XIV is the founder and managing partner of Shorr Solutions. He is also a professional motivational speaker, an advisor to the Certified Aesthetic Consultant program and a certified medical business manager from Florida Atlantic University. He can be reached at jayshorr@shorrsolutions.com (<mailto:jayshorr@shorrsolutions.com>) ([/jayshorr@shorrsolutions.com (<mailto:jayshorr@shorrsolutions.com>). More information on the awarding practice management consulting company Shorr Solutions can be found at www.ShorrSolutions.com.

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