

## Grow, Baby, Grow: Adding Another Provider To Your Team

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**By Mara Shorr and Jay A. Shorr, The Best Medical Business Solutions**

When it comes to growing your team or providers, we always advise practices to proceed thoughtfully and strategically. If you make a sudden decision because you're feeling the heat, you can get burned with a new hire.

Following is an outline of steps and objectives to consider when expanding your aesthetics team. The first step is to determine your staffing needs.

**Do you need a physician or mid-level**

**provider?** Determine which services you would like the new provider to perform. This includes considering whether the new provider will offer similar procedures to your existing providers or whether you are looking to hire someone who can provide new treatments that will complement and expand your existing menu.

If you are looking for a surgeon, will he primarily offer facial or body procedures or both? If you are looking for someone to perform injectables or laser treatments, does your state allow mid-level providers to perform these treatments or must it be a physician? A mid-level or ancillary provider may be more cost effective for your

practice. However, you must follow state laws, regarding who can perform which treatment(s) in your area. In addition, you must consider your ability to train and delegate as well as your patients' comfort level with different types of providers.

**Do you want to hire an employee or work with a contractor?** Think about the salary and benefits you can provide as well as the potential increase in revenue to determine if a new provider makes sense for your practice. If you do not need a full-time employee or don't feel well versed in the new treatments, you may consider renting space to a provider who will work as an independent contractor within your facility. There are benefits to each of these arrangements, and the options should be weighed carefully based on your particular practice's needs.

**Are you looking for someone who is winding down in their career, winding up in their career or in full swing?** Determine if you're looking for someone who's excited to help your practice grow and can bring strong opinions about future opportunities to the table. Also consider whether you're willing to offer a partnership in the future. It might be that you're simply looking for someone who is well established in their career, but doesn't want the hassle of running their own practice. If your needs are part time, a provider who is winding down and looking to cut back on working hours may be a good option.

**How often do you expect the provider to be at your office?** Determine ahead of time the hours you will need your new provider to work. Will this be full-time, Monday-Friday? Part-time? Are any weekend or evening hours required? There's no cookie cutter answer for every practice, so determine what your particular needs are based on the analysis of your own practice.

Once you've answered each of these questions, put the information down on paper in the form of a job description. Decide where you would like to post your job listing (medical associations and publications are a good start) and, if you feel comfortable, ask colleagues for referrals. Vendor reps and industry consultants may also be able to provide referrals.

Once you've narrowed down your list of potential candidates, make sure you've found the right addition to your practice by:

- **Checking their references.** This seems obvious, but you'd be surprised at how many practices skip this step. Did the candidate actually attend and graduate from the medical school listed on their resume, and with the grade they professed? Did they work with the practices they listed and why did they leave? Check to make sure they have the proper credentials to work in your state and are affiliated with any hospitals they claim. If they say they've submitted necessary paperwork to work with these hospitals and surgery centers we strongly recommend following up with the respective institutions to confirm this. We've run into unfortunate situations where hiring physicians were lied to and wasted months of their time pursuing candidates who were credentialed or qualified.
- **Interviewing them in several different fashions.** Invest the time to interview prospective candidates on the phone or via Facetime or Skype if they're out of town, and then in person. Several times. Interview them solo, your practice administrator and then with other members of your staff. Your team members may see red flags you don't.
- **Holding a working interview.** Ask your final candidates to come in and work with your team at the practice for a few days up to a week. You will have to pay the physician for their services, but it's well worth it to see what comes up that didn't come during the verbal interviews, like communication in an operating room, treatment techniques, attention to details when charting, and patient and staff communication.

If you get to this point and your candidates don't seem to be a good fit, don't make the mistake of hiring them "for now" or with the hopes that you can change and "fix" them. It never, ever works out well. It's much better in the long term to keep looking.

If you get to this point and you are ready to make an offer, be prepared for some negotiations regarding pay, future ownership of the practice, benefits, splitting costs and more. If the new hire will be a contractor, work with an attorney to create a contractor agreement. We always recommend working with professionals to develop employee protocols, employee manuals, HR concerns, and partnership and contractor agreements to make the transition to a multi-provider practice as smooth and positive for all parties as possible.

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