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I. ORGANIZING YOUR JOB SEARCH

4 Steps to organizing a job search

1. Know yourself

- Identify clinical strengths and areas of growth
- Identify and define work values
- Identify setting, population, clinical issues interested in

2. Know the market

- Select a radius or geographical area to conduct your job search and identify all employers of interest in the area (i.e. hospital inpatient/outpatient departments, PT clinics, rehab clinics, acute rehab facilities, schools, home health, skilled nursing facilities, nursing homes, travel therapist agencies, fitness centers, etc...)
- Know the hiring practices for each type of employer

3. Be ready to employ several job search strategies

- Networking: the number one way people find out about job opportunities is through word of mouth. Identify who is in your network:
 1. Professors, clinical instructors, and fellow classmates
 2. Alumni or other professionals in your field of interest
 3. Colleagues at your internships
 4. Past employers in the healthcare field
 5. Family, friends, neighbors, etc...(you never know who might have a contact for you)
- Be open and flexible in terms of the setting/population, the geographical area you work in, the hours, schedule, etc...
- Join professional associations and go to local meetings
- Join the UCSF Alumni linked-in Group
- Take additional CE's that will prepare you for your role and keep you connected to the community
- Find support. It can be difficult to stay motivated during the job search – so reach out for help! Connect with fellow students to share information and advice and to support each other. Also, consider meeting with a career counselor from the Office of Career and Professional Development (OCPD) to discuss your particular situation, brainstorm strategies, have your resume reviewed, and/or practice interviewing.

4. Be prepared for the job search

- Do you know how to transform your current document into a Physical Therapist CV?
- Do you know how to write a cover letter which highlights your strengths and conveys your motivation for applying to position and/or commitment to the physical therapist role?
- Do you know how to interview successfully?
- Do you know what, if anything, might be negotiable in your first job? Do you know how to ask? (i.e. training, ramp-up time, supervision/consultation, etc...)
- Do you know how to accept or turn down a position professionally?

II. WRITING YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPY CV

4 Steps to writing your CV

1. Start with a message
2. Arrange Skeleton of your CV and choose descriptive headings that highlight your experience
3. Fill in content and describe each experience in a way that is relevant to employer
4. Format document to help content stand out

Step 1: Start with a message

Your message is the answer to the employer's question:

"If I hire you, do you have the training, skills and experience to be successful in this position?"

Based on the job description, the population and the setting, you decide what it is you want the employer to know about your academic background and all the relevant work, volunteer or school activities that demonstrate you have the skills and experience to be successful.

- **Academic training**
Include: where you went to school, degrees/specialties, date of graduation, thesis/comp if relevant, certifications/licenses, specialized trainings, honors and awards
- **Relevant Professional skills and Experience** - include relevant work, volunteer, school activities
Include: PT clinical affiliations, health-related experience, teaching/training experience, management/supervision, consulting, counseling and advocacy, community health experience, , population specific experience if relevant (e.g. women's health, pediatric, geriatric), experience dealing with a particular clinical issue (e.g. oncology related experience), clinical research, clinical projects, related presentations and publications

Once you decide what your message is as to why you're qualified, you communicate that message through choosing descriptive headings that highlight your experiences.

Step 2: Arranging the skeleton of your CV and choosing descriptive headings highlighting experience

How to Organize Document

1. Academic Training – specific training makes you qualified for physical therapy positions
2. Relevant Professional Skills and Experience – present experience using descriptive headings
3. Outcomes - Accomplishments/outcomes/ results/ from educational and professional experiences

Academic Training – Start with education – employer needs to know you are academically qualified for position

Example Headings:

Education
Certifications and Licensure

Relevant Professional Skills and Experience – Include relevant work, volunteer and school activities. Tailor your experience to the position by using very descriptive headings and organize the headings according to what is most relevant to employer/position.

Example Headings:

Physical Therapy Experience	Consulting Experience
Healthcare Experience	Public Health
Teaching Experience	Leadership and Service
Community Health	Health Promotion
Counseling and Advocacy	Health Education
Management and Administrative Experience	Clinical Research
Case Management	Program Development and Implementation
Oncology Related Experience (clinical issue)	Health Administration
Geriatric Experience (population specific)	Athletics
Health Related Experience	Coaching and Training

Outcomes –Accomplishments/ results/ outcomes from educational and professional experiences

Example Headings:

Selected Presentations	Publications
Specialized Training	Language Skills
Honors and Award	Clinical Projects
Continuing Education	

Step 3: Fill in the content and describe experience in a way that is relevant to job

- When describing clinical and non-clinical experience, your text should include your range of experience in 5 areas: **setting, population, clinical issues, clinical skills** and **team** you worked with.
- Use active verbs, key words and phrases that you see in actual job description. Look at a variety of job descriptions at similar settings (Find listings of jobs Indeed.com or Simpyhired.com)

Step 4: Formatting

- 1-2 page document
- Margins – Top/Bottom .5 and Right/left .75 inch
- Fonts: Times New Roman, Calibri, Cambria, Garamond, Helvetica, Arial Narrow, Optima, Palatino, etc..)
- Font Size: 10-12 font (With smaller fonts like Times New Roman don't go below 11)
- Headings: Bold and capitalize; heading font size can be same font size as document content
- Indent /bold/capitalize/bullet to highlight - Use bold and italics sparingly
- Put your name and page number on second page in lower right hand corner of document
- Do not include birth date, birth city, personal status, photos

III. PT COVER LETTER TIPS

Purpose of Cover Letter:

1. Introduce yourself and explain why you are writing
2. Highlight 2 or 3 of your main qualifications, skills and experiences to demonstrate you will be successful position if hired. Elaborate on how these skills or experiences are relevant to the position.
3. Clearly articulate your motivation for wanting the job. What is it about the role, population, clinic, or services that attracts you? The employer needs to understand your motivation to determine whether you would be a “good fit” with the organization and/or position.

Cover Letter Template

Opening paragraph

- **Introduce yourself:** This answers the basic question, “Who are you?” (e.g. *I am a UCSF trained Physical Therapist - or - I am a recent graduate of the Physical Therapy program at UCSF/SFSU*).
- **Explain why you are writing:** Tell the reader what position you are applying for and where you heard about the job opening. (e.g. *I am writing in response to the Inpatient Physical Therapist position at Kaiser Permanente, Walnut Creek, recently posted on your web site.*
- **Grab the reader’s attention:** Include at least one sentence in your opening paragraph previewing your strongest qualities, experience or skills, showing that you understand the role and are qualified. You will then expand on the your qualifications in the paragraphs that follow. (e.g. *The skills and experience I gained through my clinical internships at UCSF, as well as, my experience as a teacher and counselor, will enable me to provide both comprehensive and quality care to patients at your clinic.*)

Body 2 or 3 paragraphs

- **Expand on your CV.** A cover letter is meant to complement your CV, not to repeat it. Instead of re-typing your CV, focus on two or three, qualifications (i.e. *clinical skills, population specific experiences, and language skills – or – clinical skills and related healthcare experience, etc...*). Remember to use specific examples to support each statement you make about your qualifications and be sure to make the connection between your experience and the position. (*Refer to Cover letter examples in packet*)
- **Organize paragraphs by skills/themes/positions:** There are different ways to organize the information you present. For example, in the paragraph following your opening paragraph you may focus on all the relevant experience you gained during the program at UCSF/SFSU (i.e. *PT clinical skills, experience with relevant pop or experience in relevant setting, etc...*) in a different paragraph you may focus on all the relevant experience and skills you gained prior to entering the program. (i.e. *teaching experience, community or women’s health experience, counseling or advocacy experience, etc...*). You could also organize paragraphs by different skill sets. (e.g. *clinical skills in one paragraph and teaching and language skills in a different paragraph*). In each paragraph include specific examples demonstrating the skill. (*Refer to cover letter examples in packet*)
- **Motivation:** Let the employer know why you are drawn to the position, population and/or the clinic/practice/department/team. Your letter isn’t only about you – an employer wants to hear how you will fit in with them. With this in mind, you will want to tie everything you write back to the employer and actual position or job requirements. You may need to do additional research on the employer beyond the job description to gain a clear understanding of the position and organization. (*Every day, I saw the positive impact that the Kaiser model had on patients. I would welcome the chance to bring my clinical*

skills and commitment to teaching to a team committed to providing wrap around care and patient education).

Concluding paragraph

- **Reiterate your interest:** Let the reader know once again your interest and/or summarize why your qualified for the position and that you would be interested in talking with them further about your skills and experience and how you could contribute to their clinic/practice/department/team
- **Thank you:** Your cover letter should end with a thank you. (*e.g. Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to hearing from you*).

Don't forget the details

- **Formatting** of your cover letter should be like a business letter, which includes your name and contact information, date, salutation (if you know the name of person – otherwise don't include salutation), opening paragraph, body and closing.
- **Length** should be no more than one page. A typical cover letter is three to five paragraphs.
- **E-mail:** When sending an application electronically, it is best to include a cover letter in the body of the e-mail with your resume as an attachment.

IV. INTERVIEWING

Format

- Interviews for physical therapists may involve up to two in-person meetings each lasting approximately an hour.
- Each interview may involve 1-4 interviewers. You will most likely meet with the director and fellow PT staff.
- For some facilities, the interview process starts with a phone interview. For tips on phone interviewing visit <http://www.best-job-interview.com/phone-interviews.html>
- During the interview process you may be given a tour of the department or introduced to other staff members.
- When the employer calls to arrange the interview ask them what the format of the interview will be and who you will be meeting with to help prepare you.
- During the interview, the employer will be assessing your experience, education, skills, as well as, your motivation, work habits, stability (*demonstrated by past job experience*), perseverance, judgment, adaptability, flexibility, openness to learning, responsibility, initiative, ability to work on a team and communication skills.

Preparing for the Interview - Two strategies:

1. Practice answering common interview questions
2. Create a "Tell/Know list" to map out your strategy during the interview

Practice answering typical questions - Online Resources:

- OCPD's web page on interviewing - <http://career.ucsf.edu/pt-students/job-search/interviewing-effectively>
- Best-Job-interview – (index to the left - Typical Questions, Difficult Questions, Questions to Ask) <http://www.best-job-interview.com/>
- 50 Common Interview Questions <http://bhuvans.wordpress.com/2006/08/19/50-common-interview-qa/>

- How to Answer 10 Tough Interview Questions <http://msn.careerbuilder.com/Article/MSN-1778-Interviewing-How-to-Answer-10-Tough-Interview-Questions/>
- Tips on Phone, Panel and Group Interviews <http://www.best-job-interview.com>

Make a list

Make a list of everything you want to **tell** the employer during the interview and everything you want to **know** about this employer

During the interview you want to make sure you communicate that you have the training, skills and experience to be successful in the position. You also want the employer to know your motivation for wanting the position. By the time you finish the interview you want to be able to assess if the position is a “good fit” for you. To do this you may need to gather additional information from the employer. The interview is a perfect time to ask clarifying questions. Below is a sample Tell/Know List that a UCSF FNP prepared for her interview:

Tell / Know List

What I Want to Tell The Employer by the End of the Interview	What I Want to Know From the Employer by the End of the Interview
<p>Academic Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCSF/SFSU DPT <p>Professional Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical training includes providing examination, evaluation, diagnosis and interventions for children, adults and geriatric patients with general, post-operative and sports-related orthopedic impairments, as well as, neurologic impairments and traumatic injuries. Also completed internship at Kaiser Oakland inpatient. • Experience in outpatient and acute care settings. • 3 years of teaching and counseling experience working with adolescent and adult populations (or with women or Spanish speaking population) • Experience using Spanish language skills with patients <p>Desire: This job is a top choice because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to work with underserved patients in an outpatient setting who are dealing with a variety of acute and chronic orthopedic issues. • Appreciate that teamwork is emphasized in the department and value the opportunity to collaborate with skilled practitioners in providing patient care. • Allows me to use my clinical training and my previous work experience as teacher and counselor to teach women what they need to know to care for themselves and during significant life stages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day to day responsibilities (i.e.caseload)? • Patient population & clinical issues? • Training/support in first year? • First/biggest challenges for person in the role over the next 6 months? • Growth opportunities?

Different Types of interview questions and strategies for answering

All of the questions you are asked will most likely fit into 1 of 5 categories or types of questions

Type 1: Open Ended Questions – These types of questions assess if you have the training, skills and experience to be successful in the position. These questions may also assess motivation for wanting the job.

Example Questions:

- Tell me about your self?
- Can you walk me through your CV?
- Why should we hire you?
- What sets you apart from recent graduates?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- What do you know about the position and the organization?
- Where do you see yourself doing in 5 – 10 years?

Strategy: With broad open-ended questions, the employer wants to know if you have the skills, experience, training and/or motivation to do to do this job as well as the motivation. Keep in mind the selection criteria for the job and summarize your relevant, training, experience and skills in 2 minutes.

Question: Tell me about yourself?

Answer: I graduated in June from the UCSF/SFSU Physical Therapy Program and will be sitting for the national exam at the end of July. My training includes providing examination, evaluation, diagnosis and interventions for children, adult and geriatric patients with general, post-operative and sports-related orthopedic impairments, as well as, neurologic impairments and traumatic injuries. I've worked in both outpatient and inpatients units including completing an inpatient internship at Kaiser, Oakland. At Kaiser I had the opportunity to treat patients with stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, amputation, neuropathy, encephalopathy, and post-surgical orthopedic injuries. Prior to entering the Physical Therapy Program I worked with both adults and youth from diverse populations as a teacher and a counselor and learned to recognize and work effectively with different communication and learning styles. Lastly I'm fluent in Spanish and have used my language skills with patients during my affiliations. I was excited to learn about the job opening in the inpatient unit at Kaiser, as the requirements of the position closely match my skills and experience. Also, the values and mission of Kaiser are closely aligned with my values. So, thank you for the opportunity to interview.

Type 2: Behavioral-Based /Skills-Based Questions

These types of questions will ask you for an example of a particular situation you dealt with or skill you used. Behavioral-based questions are based on the premise that past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.

Example Questions

- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a colleague/physician on course of treatment. (communication/conflict/ability to manage stress)
- Tell me about a time you dealt with a difficult patient, coworker, colleague (communication/conflict/ability to manage stress)
- Tell me about a mistake you made (professional maturity/ability to take responsibility/self-awareness)
- Tell me about a professional disappointment and how you handled it. (resiliency)
- Tell me about a complex clinical problem you worked with (problem-solving)

- Tell me about a difficult situation you encountered during your clinical affiliations and how you handled it. (problem solving/conflict)
- Tell me about a difficult decision you had to make (decision-making skills)
- Tell me about an ethical dilemma you faced? (analytical skills, reasoning, maturity)
- Tell me about an accomplishment you are proud of. (self-awareness)
- Give me an example of your initiative in handling a challenging situation. (Initiative)
- Tell me about your experience working on a team (communication skills/fit with org or team)
- Tell me about a time when you had to handle a problem or situation but did not have all the information you needed (initiative/resourcefulness/innovation)
- Tell me about a time you took a leadership role in order to reach a goal (initiative/leadership)
- Tell me about a time you worked on a team to reach a goal (ability to work on team/communication)

Strategy: To answer these types of questions use the **S.T.A.R.** Method

S = Situation T = Task A = Action R = Result

Lay out Situation or Task to be completed. What Action did you take and why. What was the Result.

Question: Tell me about a difficult/challenging patient you worked with

Answer:

- **Situation:** During my outpatient orthopedic rotation a 40 year woman came into the clinic for a follow up appointment after she sustained an injury to her lower back resulting from repetitive lifting of heavy boxes while cleaning out a storage area.
- **Task:** The difficulty was that the patient was struggling with aspects of the examination, including being touched.
- **Action:** My response was to stop the examination and ask if she had any concerns. I explained that my main goal during the visit was to make sure that she was strengthening her core and doing well with her home exercises. The woman disclosed that she was the victim of a recent assault and being touched by a stranger was difficult for her. I acknowledged that I understood why she would be uncomfortable, and asked if there was any way I could make this process easier for her. She asked if I could explain what procedures were going to occur prior to proceeding. I agreed and let her know if she wanted to stop at anytime that was okay.
- **Result:** Ultimately I was able to complete the appointment. In the end the examination was challenging because she was tense throughout, but I realized how valuable it was to both inform her and give her some flexibility in how the examination proceeded. It is a lesson I have carried with me throughout my practice as a physical therapist.

Behavioral questions can be difficult if you are not prepared. Think about the type of skills that are needed to do the work and typical situations you might find yourself in day to day on the job. Identify situations from the past that demonstrate a particular skill or an ability to deal with a particular situation.

Type 3: General /Traditional Questions

These types of questions are frequently asked in in most interviews regardless of the position or role.

Example Questions:

- Tell me about your strengths/weaknesses (self-awareness/fit with organization)
- How do you handle stress? What overwhelms you and why? (ability to manage stress/fit with org or team)
- How do you handle conflict? (conflict/stress management/fit with org or team)
- How do you handle criticism? (self-awareness/conflict/stress management/communication)
- What do you think will be most challenging for you in this position (self-awareness/fit with org or team)
- How would peers/supervisor describe you? (fit with org/team)
- Who do you respect the most and why? (fit with org/team)
- What values do you hold dear and why? (fit with org/team)
- How do you prioritize your day? (time management)
- What is your philosophy about patient care and the use of assistants and aides? (fit with org/team)
- What makes a good supervisor? (fit with org/team)
- How would you describe the most effective boss you ever had? (fit with org/team)
- What are your expectations of an employer? (fit with org/team)
- In what way could we help you develop yourself? (fit with org/team, self-awareness, open to learning)
- Why did you become a physical therapist? (fit with organization/team)

Strategy: When answering general questions, always give an example demonstrating your qualities or explain your approach to handling a situation.

Question: Tell me about a weakness.

Answer: After hearing the responsibilities of this position, I feel very comfortable with the clinical responsibilities around treating outpatient orthopedic and chronic pain patients. I also feel very comfortable working with bilingual and monolingual patients as I shared earlier I have experience working specifically with Spanish speaking patients. However, I note that you also serve a significant number of Cantonese speaking patients. At this point, my weakness is that I have limited experience providing culturally competent care to this population. What I would value, if I were the selected candidate, is both the opportunity to work with this population as well as feedback from staff around my own patient interactions. My goal would be to make sure that I am providing care in alignment with the standards or approach of this clinic.

Type 4: Hypothetical Questions

The employer may present a hypothetical situation or vignette that is common in their work place to assess how well you think on feet /solve problems.

Examples:

- A patient is frustrated because she has been kept waiting for an appointment. How would you handle the situation? (communication/patient management)
- A physician asks you to provide a treatment that you are not comfortable with. How would you handle the situation? (communication/conflict/problem-solving)
- You observe a co-worker using unsafe techniques? What would you do? (communication/conflict)
- If you had a list of patients to see and there was not enough time for all of them, how would you decide who to see?

Strategy: If you experienced the situation presented, then use a real example when answering. Tell the story using the **S.T.A.R.** method. If you have not experienced a similar situation and are answering the question hypothetically, you can still use the **S.T.A.R.** method. The employer has given you the **S**ituation. You will describe what action you would take and why and what would you hope the result would be.

Question: “A patient is frustrated because she has been kept waiting for an appointment. How would you handle this situation?”

Answer:

- **Situation:** During one of my affiliations in an orthopedic outpatient clinic, due to the high patient volume, all of the staff could run anywhere from 10-30 minutes late in seeing a patient.
- **Task:** On a particularly busy day, a patient who was being seen for a follow-up appointment after an ACL repair had waited a full 40 minutes. When I entered the exam room, she was obviously angry.
- **Action:** First, I took a moment to gather my thoughts, before I began with the patient. I began by apologizing for the delay. She seemed to appreciate my recognition of how this impacted her, though her responses remained curt. I reminded myself that it was important to not get defensive in response to her curt communications with me and focused on regaining her trust. In addition to the apology, I engaged in active listening with her throughout the appointment, reflecting back what she was saying, using her name, asking if she understood the answers to her questions and repeatedly sharing that I had time to answer any other questions. Because the patient responded well to the personalized attention, the appointment took less than 45 minutes.
- **Result:** As a result, I believe that she had an overall positive experience, which is my goal for all of my patients. As a clinician I realize there will be things outside my control, but it helps to focus on what is in my control and to do that to the best of my ability.

Type 5: Clinical Questions

Employers may ask general or open-ended questions regarding your clinical skills, ask you to talk about a particular clinical experience on your CV or present a clinical vignette.

Example Questions:

- Tell me how would you evaluate a person with a right CVA?
- Can you talk about your range of clinical experience?
- Discuss a difficult patient case you encountered in your clinical affiliations, and how you handled it.
- What kind of patient load did you carry during your clinical affiliations?
- What kind of treatment protocols did you use in your clinical affiliations?

Strategy: By asking open-ended questions about your clinical affiliations, employers are trying to understand your range of experience. When employers present a clinical vignette, they are trying to assess your problem-solving skills. An employer will not present a clinical case that would be beyond your training/knowledge level. The employer wants to understand how you would approach the situation and assess the patient. Discuss what you are thinking, what questions you would ask, what research you would do and how would you proceed.

At the end of the interview make sure you understand the next steps in the process. “*Can you tell me when you hope to make a decision about the position?*” or “*Can you tell me the next steps in the process?*”

Thank You notes

Send a thank you note within 24-48 hours. Sample thank you notes can be found on the OCPD web site at <http://career.ucsf.edu/nurs/samples.html>

In addition to sending a thank you note after an in-person interview, consider the following:

Send a thank you note after a phone screening

I appreciate the time you took on the phone with me today. I was impressed by....or it was very interesting hearing about.... I enjoyed our discussion and look forward to learning more about the position and organization/clinic/department at an on-site interview. Thank you again for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Send a thank you note if you don't get the job

Despite a rejection, always end an interview on a positive note. Send a personal thank you note to acknowledge the interviewer's time. Convey your desire to be considered for future opportunities. Your gracious response in the face of rejection may impress an employer enough to keep you in mind should another opportunity arise.

V. EVALUATING YOUR JOB OFFER

Before you accept any position be sure that you understand the conditions of the job.

When you are offered the position:

1. Thank the employer for the offer and let them know you are very excited about the position/offer.
2. Ask for the time you need (i.e. 2 days, a week, etc..) to consider all aspects of the offer (especially any new information – i.e. salary/benefits) Most employers are not going to expect you to accept the offer on the spot.
3. In evaluating the offer, consider all the conditions of the position and identify what you may need to negotiate to be successful in the position (i.e. ramp-up time, support, training).

By the time you finish the interview and are given an offer you want to have a clear understanding of:

- Scope of the job
- Organization, management and team
- Salary and benefits
- Opportunities for professional growth
- How the job meets your long-term and short-term goals

Scope of Job

1. Do I understand the job responsibilities clearly? What is the scope of my responsibility?
2. What are the work hours? Is overtime required? If so, how often? Is there flexibility in terms of work hours?
3. Must I travel? If so, how much? How far? How often?
4. How many patients will I see a day? Will there be a ramp-up period? What are the expectations of the job the first 3 months, 6 months and 12 months?
5. What types of cases will I see initially? Will this change after a certain period of time?
6. Are there standardized procedures/protocols in place?
7. What clinical diagnoses and treatments would be important to review if I am the selected candidate?
8. What type of documentation is used? How long will I have to document patient cases?
9. What is a typical day like? What is a typical week like?
10. With whom will I primarily interact?
11. Will I receive mentoring as a new graduate?
12. How much autonomy will I have?
13. What is the ratio of experienced therapists to new grads?
14. What are the expectations for working weekends? Making hospital rounds?
15. What percentage of my time will be directed toward administrative duties and what will that entail?
16. What types of skills and experiences are key to succeeding in this position?
17. What are common qualities of individuals who are successful in this position?
18. What will be most challenging about working in this position? How will I address the challenge? Is there support available in this area?

Organization, Management and Team

1. What is the culture of the organization? Is this typical of the type of setting or unique to the employer?
2. What is the organization's philosophy in terms of practice/patient care
3. Is the environment supportive? What type of support is available?
4. Is there an opportunity to co-treat with other disciplines? How often are cases discussed in an interdisciplinary setting?
5. What is the organization's future? Is it restructuring? Downsizing? Expanding?
6. What is the employee turn-over in the department/clinic? On average how long do people stay?
7. Has the employer previously worked with a new practitioner?
8. What is the practice mix? Physicians, other providers, support staff? How many practitioners are scheduled during a shift?
9. How, by whom, and how often will I be evaluated?
10. Do I know my manager's style and work expectations?
11. What does the rest of the team look like? Do I feel that I will fit? Can I become a member of the team quickly and succeed immediately?

Salary and Benefits

1. What are the benefits offered? Are there full details, preferably in printed form, on the benefits and how they work?
2. What will I be paid in this position? How was salary determined? Is there a bonus, and if so, what is the criteria for a bonus? Is there overtime?

- How are salary increases determined? (Performance, length of employment, practice profits, etc...)

Professional Development

- How are new employees oriented?
- What type of training does the organization provide for new grads?
- How does the organization support professional development (i.e. pay for training or paid time off)?
- Will there be opportunities for me to learn from colleagues?
- Is there opportunity for growth (i.e. skill level, level of responsibility) with this employer?

Career Goals

- Does the position match my short term (i.e. skill development, needed support and training, experience with particular patient population...) and long-term career goals?
- Will I have the opportunity to develop the skills I want/need to develop?
- Is this position in line with my values?
- Will my interests be satisfied (i.e. population, clinical issues addressed, etc..)?
- Will the position use my existing skills and educational preparation well?

VI. NEGOTIATING

What you decide to negotiate is going to depend on what is most important to you at this time in terms of your first job (support, training, ramp up time, etc...)

Suggestions on determining what to negotiate:

- Self assess – determine what an optimal offer would be in terms of support, training, ramp-up time, work environment, salary, benefits, etc...Consider what is most important to you.
- Ask your supervisor at your current clinical site for feedback on where you are in terms of skills and knowledge and what you need to focus on during the next year.
- Talk to recent alumni, faculty and other professionals about what they negotiated for or wish they negotiated for or what they think is important to ask for in that first job

Examples of what new practitioners have negotiated

Clinical Development	Work Values (environment, relationship, content)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ramp up period /Number of patients see initially Training / Orientation Support / Consultation Complexity of clinical issues initially seen Reimbursement/Paid time off for CEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule / hours (flexibility) Compensation package (benefits/security) Start date (time freedom) Reimbursement for professional dues (learning) Increasing responsibility over time (autonomy)

Process of Negotiating

1. Process of negotiating begins in the interview. In the interview you are gathering information. You are not negotiating or asking for anything at that time
2. Once receive offer, thank employer, express interest/enthusiasm for the offer/position and ask for time to consider all aspects of the job offer.
3. Determine your priorities and the top aspects of the offer you wish to negotiate
4. When following up with employer at agreed upon time, again thank the employer for the offer and express your enthusiasm. Let them know you have 1 or 2 questions concerning the offer and ask if you could discuss those now (*pause and wait for response*)
5. Let the employer know up front what you want to discuss. Name the 2 aspects of the offer you wish to negotiate. (*pause and let it sink in before proceeding.*)
6. Take the first aspect of the offer you wish to negotiate (start with the most important one first). State your understanding of the current offer and then ask for what you want. At that time provide a brief rationale for the request (not an excuse or apology)

Example:

This is a very attractive and fair offer. I only have questions in one area. I am wondering if there is any flexibility in terms of the number of patients I see initially. I understand that the expectation at this point is that I would see # (8-12) patients a day during clinic hours. In my current outpatient internship, I see # (7-8) patients. As a new practitioner, in a new setting, would it be possible to have a ramp-up period for the first few months. (*pause and let sink in*). If possible, I would like to ramp-up from # (7 – 8) patients a day during the first 3 months. From 3 – 6 months I'd like to see # (8-10) patients a day . After 6 months I would like to move toward seeing # (10-12) patients. Would a schedule such as this be possible? I am wondering what has previously been the norm for new practitioners working in your clinic?

7. Respond professionally regardless of the outcome:
 - a) If the employer cannot be flexible on a particular aspect of the offer, then let them know you understand. Thank the employer for being willing to discuss the matter.
 - b) If an employer cannot make a decision at that time (needs to consult with others or they need time to reflect on the request), then let them know you understand, express appreciation for the fact they are willing to consider the request and make sure you understand the next step.
 - c) Finally, if the employer is able to be flexible with a particular matter, then thank the employer and express appreciation for his/her flexibility

Salary and Compensation

When thinking about the salary you are being offered, and before you negotiate, you want to consider benefits. Benefits are considered part of the total compensation; they can add a value of up to 30%–40% to your salary

List of Benefits

1. Health coverage – you, family, partners, choice of health plans
2. Dental coverage – you, family, partners, choice of dental plans, orthodontic care
3. Vision coverage – you, family, partners
4. Malpractice insurance – claims made, occurrence (tail coverage), amount of coverage
5. Vacation Days

6. Paid holidays
7. Unpaid leave
8. Sick days – accumulated, lost, taken as vacation
9. Family leave – sick child, parents
10. Retirement plan – company support, safety of investments, investment period, 403b plan
11. Life insurance
12. Long term disability
13. Child care
14. Parking
15. Office space and equipment - computer, beeper, cell phone, email, internet
16. Administrative support
17. Leave for CEU – paid time, conference fees, travel
18. Professional dues
19. Subscriptions
20. Annual uniform allowance

How to discuss salary

1. Ask the employer how the salary was determined – try to understand their pay structure (i.e. fixed salary, pay range, open offer) Most employers have fixed values for new grads. The exception might be an outpatient practice.
2. Ask if there is any flexibility in terms of salary
3. Let the employer know what you are asking for (within market value for particular employer)
4. Focus on the experience, skills and/or knowledge that you are bringing to the organization that may exceed the expectations of the role and/or will immediately benefit or add value to the setting.

When do you talk about salary?

When an employer offers you a job they will usually tell you more about the pay, benefits. If possible, avoid salary discussions before an offer is made.

Reasons:

1. Challenging to give a salary range without understanding or knowing the full scope of the position.
2. You are jumping ahead in talking about salary before you or the employer knows whether you are the best candidate for the position.

If an employer wants to discuss salary before an official job offer, consider one of the following responses:

1. I'm very excited about the position and I am confident that we can find a salary that works for both of us. Right now, if it's agreeable to you, I would like to focus on making sure I am the best fit for the position before we actually discuss salary.
2. My salary requirements will of course depend upon the actual job requirements and benefits, but my research shows the salary range for a NP with my experience in (type of setting) is between \$XX,XXX and \$XX,XXX.

Decide not to take offer

If you decide that this is not the job for you, notify the employer by telephone first, if possible. Politely decline the offer. You do not need to explain why you are turning down the offer. Then decline the offer in the same way by letter.

Example letter declining offer:

Dear (Name)

Thank you very much for offering me the nurse practitioner position at St. Luke's Health Care Center. After careful consideration, I regret that I must decline your offer. I enjoyed meeting you and your team and was impressed by your clinic's goals, mission and commitment to quality and service. I wish you and your colleagues much continued success.

Decide to take offer

It's best to have a job offer in writing, summarizing the conditions of the offer, stating the position title, starting date, salary, and other pertinent information. Some employers send employment agreement letters automatically for others you might have to request. You can also write an acceptance letter showing mutual agreement on the conditions of the offer.

Example requesting employment agreement letter:

I am very excited about the position. It would be very helpful if I could see everything that you've just described in writing. Would it be possible for you to send me the basics of the offer in an email?

Remember to thank those in your network

After accepting the position, email or telephone everyone who agreed to serve as a reference for you, as well as, everyone who assisted you with your job search. Notify each of them of your new job and thank each for helping you. People you thank will be more likely to help you again in the future.