

On Track: Software Systems Maximize Recruitment Process

By Allison McCarthy

Whether you manage your own in-house recruiting effort, or rely on outside agencies for all or part of this key organizational endeavor, you need a sound tracking system to keep the recruitment process organized, focused and successful. A physician recruitment tracking system is not only a cost-effective and efficient way to juggle reams of information, but also an indispensable tool for creating your own internal database should your recruitment initiatives continue from year to year. Customized or off-the-shelf, contact management software organizes your individual practice opportunities, flags key pieces of information, creates tickler systems to remember key prospect touch points and helps manage the overall recruitment process.

Features and Benefits

It's not uncommon these days for in-house recruiters to have 20 to 30 recruitment assignments annually, of varying specialties, and all in process at the same time. Clearly, the volume of information generated would quickly overwhelm even the best paper tracking system, or swamp the average person who tries to balance candidate status and feedback in his or her head. The magnitude of the task at hand, and its importance to the overall success of your organization, demands an easy-to-access, information-management system. As conscientious stewards of your organization's resources, can you afford to consider anything less?

A physician recruitment tracking system puts critical information a keystroke away. Features and benefits include:

- Tracking candidate information and progress
- Tracking opportunity status and sharing it with your internal constituents
- Creating your own database of providers for multiple searches, or searches that are repeated from year to year
- Monitoring budgets and the costs associated with recruitment assignments
- Communicating with template-built letters/direct mail, fax or e-mail
- Generating and managing direct mail and advertising
- Managing multiple external recruiters, if you are using external agencies, for example, to help with politically charged searches or searches of unusual complexity
- Maintaining electronic copies of all information to decrease paper files

Which System and How Many Bells?

What system and software is right for you and your organization? Networked or stand-alone, customized or packaged, the type of system you choose depends, in part, on the number of features and benefits you need and how ambitious your recruitment goals are. If financial resources are tight, you might consider an "off-the-shelf" contact management program that you customize to meet your specific needs. If you have an extended staff, with employees who work out of the office, you'll want a networked system that they can easily access from the field.

A networked system would also enable staff in physician relations, for example, to view candidate recruitment information that could help in managing retention. Support is another consideration and whether you have an internal information systems department to troubleshoot and maintain the software. Without IS assistance, you may want to purchase a system where ongoing support is part of the package. Finally, the software you purchase or create should integrate seamlessly with organizational management systems such as Outlook.

Regardless of your organization's size and recruitment goals, a tracking system is essential to understanding how successful and cost-effective your program is, and for building a long-term database of potential leads that can sustain future recruiting efforts.

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