

Building Your Pharmacy's Top Talent Pool

Unemployment rates in the US are at their [lowest in decades](#). This is great news for the economy; however, it can result in complications when attempting to fill open positions in your pharmacy.

Make no mistake, traditional pharmacy hiring methods are still valuable starting points when attempting to build your pharmacy's talent pool. But, the dwindling level of qualified and talented job seekers in the open market, combined with evolving industry trends and motivators, require employers to acknowledge and target evolving, innovative, and energetic approaches if their goal is to staff their pharmacy with top talent.

And who doesn't want the best working for them?

Don't Wait For Talent To Come To You – Keep The Door, And Your Eyes, Open

Because the difficulty in securing top talent paces with dropping unemployment numbers, you shouldn't wait until you need to fill a position to start looking.



It's no secret that the health care landscape evolves at an incredibly rapid pace. New skills and capabilities score big in the evolving health care landscape and, in order to keep up with – or even ahead of – these changes and growing skill sets, your pharmacy is going to want to hire and retain employees with the expertise, motivation, ethics, and ideas that will carry your organization into the next evolution and beyond.

With the country's low unemployment comes increased competition for workers who have honed their skills and focused their vision on the future of pharmacy. Be sure to match your needs and vision with that of your prospective employee. Take into consideration changes in business models you might experience such as:

- Increased biotech treatment
- Ongoing research into new disease sets and treatments
- Population fluctuations (increase/decrease in life expectancies)
- Local community needs and trends, as well as
- Global economic and health shifts

Always be on the lookout. This can reduce the time and cost associated with filling positions when they do open. Try:

- Building a referral network to get the word out to qualified candidates when a position becomes available
- Be a mentor for a pharmacy school in order to get a first look at emerging talent. Bonus: you get to watch them as they work, observe skills, and build relationships not only with students, but faculty as well

A Job Is More Than Just A Job Description

To get the best, you must prove that your establishment is the best fit for your candidate. Aside from the normal job description outlining the technical and administrative tasks and qualifications, you want to show your prospective candidate that their quality of life will improve, measurably, by choosing your team.

One way you can achieve this is by highlighting what your company offers. Why do they want to work for you? What makes your pharmacy different from others? Is it more time to work one-on-one with customers? Customizable schedules to suit their needs? Perhaps it's an innovative benefit package?

Zero in on what you can offer, above and beyond the usual, and write a compelling job ad headline: "No Weekends, No Nights!" This just might grab the attention of a top-performing, undervalued pharmacist seeking a better schedule.

The Best Employees Might Already Be Employed Elsewhere

Building on the "top-performing, undervalued pharmacist" looking for a better schedule, it's safe to assume that the best employees might already be employed. So how can you leverage that to build your pharmacy's talent pool? Through targeting.

Target part of your talent search to the passive job candidates who aren't currently browsing for another job. If you present the right opportunity, throw open a door that an applicant might not have realized was closed, you can score a valuable asset for your pharmacy.

Ways to do this include:

- Posting openings on your Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn pages
- Encourage current, valued employees to reach out through their networks (offer incentives)
- Produce social media videos, blogs, and ads that position your pharmacy as a great place to work



Ask Better Questions – Save Time, Learn More

Once interest starts building in your pharmacy, prescreen potential employees to save time. Go through applications and resumes and set aside any that don't meet minimum qualifications. Further narrow that field by conducting brief phone interviews before scheduling in-person meetings. These are great opportunities to touch on items such as shift preference and salary expectations.

Once that's done, prepare a few interview questions that go beyond a yes or no answer.



“How did you hear about this pharmacy?” Their answer will help you understand if your outreach is working and will reveal the extent of initiative a prospective employee took to learn about your organization.

“At the end of a workday, what gives you the biggest sense of accomplishment?” Or *“What do you feel was your greatest accomplishment?”* Understanding what motivates a prospective employee can help you determine if your

organization can provide the experience necessary to keep that talent on staff, and whether that employee can help your organization grow in the direction you're looking to grow.

“Why do you want to work here?” Look for the candidate who is passionate about the work he or she will do in your business.

“If you could change one thing about a place you've worked, what would it be?” Get ready to learn what really frustrates a prospect and what actions they might have (or might not have) taken to address the issue.

Watch your prospect's attitude to determine whether their focus, work ethic, and demeanor are in line with what you're looking for in your employees.

Closing Thoughts

Attracting top talent and building effective teams takes time. It's an ongoing process that requires care, attention, and creative thinking. That said, building a qualified, top-notch staff that not only satisfies customers, but improves their outcomes and increases your pharmacy's bottom line is a task worth spending time on.

Keystone is dedicated to helping you understand these markets and keep pace with their brisk evolution, all while continuing to maintain the health of your patients and improve your pharmacy's bottom line. Just ask us and we can help.

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