

Streamlining your Hiring Process for Temporary Nurse Staffing

Preparing to send out a travel nurse requirement, Lompoc Valley Medical Center CNE Jayne Scalise expects to receive an avalanche of RN submittals to fill a single travel nurse opening and she is not alone. Many hospitals are experiencing the same phenomenon in many instances receiving over 100 RN submittals within just a few short hours only to respond with “no more submittals” closing the position to starve off even more submittals. The current economic conditions have forced more nurses into the full-time work force and many putting off retirement creating a temporary release from the nurse shortage for many hospitals.

So what’s the problem? Compared to last year at this time a nurse executive would have been thrilled with just a single RN submittal in the same day.

Unfortunately, the majority of the candidates sent to fill openings have not been properly qualified and in many cases the nurse is not even aware that they have been submitted to the hospital. The agencies fear of missing the submittal window of hours from days has changed the way in which candidates are now submitted. Long gone are the days when positions would remain open and unfilled for weeks (due to the nurse shortage) allowing the agency ample time to provide careful review of applicants and ensure proper matching to fill the opening.

What we see today is a dash to submit any candidate that fits the requirement regardless of whether the candidate is available or not. From the agency’s view: better to present a candidate and then call to determine if the nurse is available and interested than risk being closed out of the submission process altogether.

The flood of candidates being submitted and the lack of quality process have caused many hospitals to review their current hiring process. Lompoc Valley Medical Center aware of the problem was looking for a way to streamline their travel nurse recruiting and hiring process for Nursing disciplines. They realized that they were working with a large number of staffing companies and spending too much time screening resumes and interviewing multiple nurses to fill a position. They knew they needed to find a competitive sourcing edge for best candidates.

Jayne Scalise, CNE for Lompoc, had a notion that developing a strong partnership with a trusted vendor would increase the quality of candidates and greatly reduce the number of applicants they currently screened to fill their open travel positions.

Valley Medical Staffing (“VM Staffing”) was asked to evaluate Lompoc’s current hiring practice and a detailed assessment revealed that:

- Their vendor list had grown to over 30 vendors
- Candidate packets for submission were incomplete
- Candidates called were not aware that they had been submitted
- Candidates were not willing to work the stated shift on the requirement
- Nurse executives’ time spent interviewing nurses increased from one or two interviews to upwards of 10 to fill a single requirement

VM Staffing provided recommendations to implement a Preferred Vendor Program. After a careful review, VM Staffing was selected by Lompoc to be their Preferred Vendor Partner to staff their travel nurse openings. The strategy entailed using VM Staffing as the single vendor of choice and to post all travel nurse openings with their firm. VM Staffing built into the strategy a communication protocol that would acknowledge receipt of the position and provide immediate feedback to Lompoc as to the status of their search to fill the position or release to a list of secondary vendors.

Lompoc implemented the Preferred Vendor Program in February 2009, and since then Valley Medical Staffing has successfully staffed all travel nurse positions posted from the hospital. The change to a single vendor of choice resulted in the following:

- Candidates submissions average one applicant per opening
- Candidates completely qualified to meet requirement
- Candidates pre-closed to accept offer
- Candidates close rate 100%
- Single Interview required to fill position

“We could not be happier with the results of the Preferred Vendor Program. We have greatly reduced the time spent by our staff to screen, interview and hire,” said Jayne Scalise, CNE.

Implementing the Preferred Vendor Program has allowed Lompoc Valley Medical Center to achieve better candidate quality, and provides them with greater confidence that their staffing needs are given priority recruitment status. VM Staffing even produced a presentation on the hospital and surrounding community that brands the hospital and is presented to each candidate they are qualifying for a position. The presentation is one of the creative and innovative ways to convince candidates that Lompoc Valley Medical Center is a hospital of choice for travel nurses.

Hospital CEO Jim Raggio noted, “Valley Medical Staffing provided a team of staffing experts to evaluate our hiring process and make the proper recommendations that has greatly increased our efficiency and allowed our organization to align our hiring methods to the current market staffing conditions. We would highly recommend Valley Medical Staffing’s Preferred Vendor Program to any healthcare organization”.

For more information on Valley Medical Staffing and its programs, contact Ed Solomon, President, 888-267-4174, esolomon@vmstaffing.com, or visit www.vmstaffing.com.