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## MEDICAL OFFICE HIRING TRENDS

Headlines talk about a big need for employees in healthcare.

**Specifically, what skills are medical offices are looking for today?** Practices are looking for educated, technology-savvy, good communicators, with experience, reliable references, and no criminal backgrounds. The healthcare industry will continue to have three business areas: administration/ support, accounting/technology, and clinical patient care. When training, look for accredited schools with the following classes and high standards for:

**Front office:** typing (over 40wpm), medical computer software, Internet and e-mail, medical terminology, medical spelling, computerized scheduling, electronic and traditional medical records, data entry, and strong customer service skills. In the Denver area, medical Spanish fluency would be useful. Take current HIPAA classes.

**Medical assisting:** all of the above and clinical: vitals, histories, phlebotomy, injections, EKGs, laboratory, sterilization, tray prep, and procedural skills. We advise refresher courses for assistants out of the field for 3 years.

**Medical billing:** typing, 10 key and data entry proficiency, certificates in coding, billing, and customer service skills. Word, Excel, E-mail, Internet and at least one trusted medical billing program. Continue taking classes in coding updates and HIPAA, Medicare, and Medicaid workshops.

**Management:** Human resources, policies and procedures, billing, HIPAA, information management, financials, industry laws and regulations, training, and customer service skills.

**What is changing?** Private medical offices are competing with HMOs, merging specialty practices, suburban hospital urgent cares, private walk-in clinics, and advancing technology: telemedicine, mobile robots, and video phones for off-site patients. Doctors realize that, potentially, hands-on patient care will be supplemented more and more by technology tools. To keep up with the competition, physicians and their employees should train on new computer programs and attend workshops to learn how to use the latest equipment

**Where to look for jobs?** Surprise, there is a baby boom with parents in their 30's and 40's. Pediatrics and family practice will continue to need employees. With an aging population, any medical specialty which works with "prevention, correction, and repair" for adults will need skilled staff: arthritis/rheum, orthopedics, internal med, mental health, endocrinology, radiology, oncology, eyes-ears-nose-throat, etc. As money is freed up for research, watch for opportunities in biology, chemistry, nanotechnology, prosthetics, and public health protection.

## A REMINDER

**Take time to make a difference.** "I saw a new kid from my class walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a weekend? He must be a nerd." As I walked ahead, a bunch of kids ran toward him, knocked all his books in the air and tripped him. His glasses went flying and landed in the grass. I jogged over him and handed him his glasses. I said, "Those guys are jerks; they really should get lives." "Thanks," he said with a big, grateful smile on his face. I helped him pick up his books and found out he lived near me. We talked and walked; he turned out to be a pretty cool kid. So we hung out over the weekend and played a little football with my friends. Over the next four years we became best friends.

Kyle really found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I had, and was the top student. Although he was nervous about his valedictorian speech, he began, "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years: your parents, teachers, siblings, and mostly your friends. I am going to tell you a story about meeting my first friend at high school. You see, I had planned to kill myself over that weekend and had cleared out my locker so Mom wouldn't have to do it later. Without realizing it, my new friend changed my life ...."

**Never underestimate the power of your simple, positive actions.**

*Happy Thanksgiving!*