

May 2009

So You Want To Work In Colorado...

There's no doubt that emergency medicine is a buyer's market. Every year demand increases and residency programs fail to turn out enough physicians to pick up the slack. And yet there are still a few "hot spots" – places like Denver and San Diego – where landing a job is extremely competitive. Recruiting directors from two of the nation's largest contract management groups share some advice on how to nail those dream positions.

1 Move past the CV: Everyone has a great CV. They're all professionally done and look very impressive. That's great, but recognize that your employer is getting inundated with CVs that look every bit as fancy as your own.

2 Plan a trip: It may take your own funds, but if you're serious about a job in a competitive market, you've got to pony up and travel there in person.

3 Do your homework: Do what you have to do to find out who the decision-makers are. If you know someone who knows someone, great. That will help. If not, you'll have to do some legwork and ask around. I've helped multiple residents connect with medical directors, even at hospitals where our group doesn't hold the contract.

4 Go straight to the top: If you want to know if an emergency department really has openings, go to the director, the person who is in the trenches and knows the department's needs personally.

5 Call ahead: Do not walk into the ED unannounced. Find out when the director is working shifts, then call ahead and plan a meeting when it's convenient for the director. Tell them that you're in the area and would like five minutes of their time to drop off your CV in person.

6 Start at the bottom: You won't have long with the medical director so it's essential you impart just how serious you are about the position. Offer to work whatever shifts are available. Nights, weekends, they name it, you work it.

7 Be willing to get involved: In a highly competitive area, what sets a physician apart is whether they have been or are willing to be involved in various hospital committees. Emergency physicians can get very comfortable with just showing up for shifts and not engaging in hospital relations. It is reasonable to assume that a doctor who has been involved in developing protocols will be more apt to become a leader in the ED. An EP who has a track record of integrating with other branches of the medical staff will likely

8 Manners matter: In addition to exceptional clinical capabilities, hospitals are more impressed with a provider who is aware of the value of good customer service. A physician who sounds energetic, confident and friendly during the phone interview is most likely to exhibit these very same characteristics during a personal interview with a hospital.

The Experts

Larry Wills- Executive Director of Recruiting, TeamHealth

TeamHealth, the largest emergency medicine contract management group in the nation, currently manages 265 ED contracts in 30 states.

Cathy Thomas- Senior V.P. of Physician Services, Hospital Physician Partners (HPP)

Hospital Physician Partners (HPP) is a privately held medical management company that partners with more than 100 hospitals in over 20 states.