

Finding the Perfect Fit: Tech-savvy, Immersive Approach Helps Firm Find the Best Candidates for High-level Health Care Positions

By Dave Schafer

For nine months, Metroplex Behavioral Health Center in Killeen actively sought a qualified psychiatrist and a skilled nurse practitioner to add to its staff. The 60-bed center on the Metroplex Adventist Hospital campus serves about 230 patients per month through the emergency department, and the staffing shortage meant the center had difficulty clearing the ED cases, said Ross Gaetano, Metroplex's director of behavioral health services.

The area's only full-service behavioral health center, the facility serves pediatric patients with a partial and inpatient program that includes an accredited school so the youngsters can continue their education while receiving treatment. It also has an adult inpatient program and 24-hour evaluation and free referral services.

MBH tried to recruit the positions on its own and brought in recruiting agencies to help, but those efforts were unsuccessful.

Then, it turned to Jackson & Coker. Just over a month later, a new psychiatrist and a new nurse practitioner were signed, both qualified and fully vetted.

"At that point, I knew we had the right provider recruitment firm in place," Gaetano said. "Due to the success of the relationship with Jackson & Coker, MBH is actively engaged in recruitment of two additional psychiatrists and one nurse practitioner."

Stepping Into the Candidate's Shoes

Jackson & Coker specializes in recruiting physicians and advanced practitioners for permanent and *locum tenens* positions in more than 45 specialties and subspecialties. Gaetano selected the firm because of its innovative approach to permanent placement.

"They're very tech savvy," he said. "They know how to stay on top of the [online job] boards. They're not a mass-mailing outfit. They use more of what the rest of the world is using today to get the message out."

Soon after MBH contracted with Jackson & Coker, Jeannie McKinney, director of recruiting, permanent placement, visited the facility. She stayed in the same hotel interviewees would stay in, met with the center's key decision-makers, toured the city with the same real-estate agent that would be helping the new hires.

By experiencing what the candidates would experience, "we can really educate the candidate on the position and the community and make sure that it's a transparent process."

The visit also gave McKinney a solid feel for MBH's needs, the



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staff's wants, and what they were looking for at the facility and in the community. She used that knowledge to draft a recruitment campaign that included the job specifics and a list of community shops, services, schools and other community amenities. The campaign emphasized MBH's proximity to Dallas and Austin, the beauty of the Killeen area and the quality of life.

McKinney started advertising the positions online on general health care sites and on specialty-specific sites, initiating campaigns through precisely targeted email and social media posts.

By using social-digital marketing tools and eliminating outdated methods, Jackson & Coker was able to maximize its outreach to a wide network of both passive and active candidates, she said.

Finding the Right Fit

Finding candidates is only part of Jackson & Coker's mandate. "Our clients know we're going to represent them and we're going to vet out the candidate, source and qualify the candidates, and build a real trust relationship," McKinney said.

McKinney talked to each qualified candidate at length about the job, their experience, their life, interests, goals and more. The talks were about the job posting and much more—giving her a good feel for whether they'd fit in at MBH.

She created in-depth candidate profiles for six finalists that included their resume, personal information, what's important to them in a practice and what's important outside a practice.

"For the candidates selected, the hiring committee unanimously felt the providers would fit well within our faith-based hospital environment and our teams," Gaetano said.

An Immersive Process

Besides being efficient, tech-savvy and innovative in how it approaches the recruiting process, Jackson & Coker takes a low-pressure approach that's unique in recruiting, Gaetano said. The result has been two new hires who fit in well at MBH, Gaetano said.

After the successful placement of the first psychiatrist and nurse practitioner, MBH interviewed onsite the additional finalists to fill multiple needs.

"There has not been one candidate who has made it through their screening process who did not fit," he said. "I think that's one of the unique things about how much time they spend on the front end. They get to know the individuals. They immerse themselves in the culture of the (client) organization, so they can tailor to a good fit for the organization." ★



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