

Taming Turnover

Staffing challenges facing HR practitioners in health care will be the focus of a new conference in New York.

By Michael Felton-O'Brien

Combining a nationwide shortage of qualified nurses with a skyrocketing demand for localized health care services may sound like the perfect storm for any hiring manager. But fortunately for Dan Staifer, director of employment and employee relations at Shands Jacksonville Medical Center in Jacksonville, Fla., he had a plan.

Due to a recent expansion of several service lines and units at the Jacksonville facility, including a state-of-the-art cardiovascular center and a neonatal intensive care unit, Staifer enlisted the help of Adecco's recruitment process outsourcing program to undertake an ambitious project to hire 100 nurses in 100 days.

Candidate benchmark profiles were jointly developed, and a strategic plan of sourcing and screening processes helped generate qualified candidates. A branding campaign that focused on respect, commitment, compassion and loyalty was broadcast to the public using direct mail, billboards and radio spots.

As a result, Shands was able to exceed its hiring goal, with a total of 156 nurses successfully placed during that 100-day time frame.

Shands and Adecco will share their insights about managing this Herculean feat during the inaugural [HR in Healthcare Conference & Expo](#), April 16 through 17, 2008, at the Hilton New York in Manhattan. The conference and expo will focus on how to build capabilities and competencies within HR departments in order to improve an institution's organizational, financial and clinical performance.

Timothy McDonough, director of HR Conference Programs for LRP Publications, based in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., says the seminar tracks and keynote speeches for the spring 2008 conference will be focused on two key issues that keep senior HR leaders in health care up at night: how leading HR practitioners in health-care departments are staying in front of the pack; and what HR leaders can do to make their organizations more patient-centric.

"This conference will be the place to come to discuss the big issues that affect the senior HR in health-care staff," he says.

The HR in Healthcare™ Conference & Expo is one of three conferences running during the 6th annual NY HR Week™. The other two are HRO World™ and HR & EEO in the Federal Workplace™.

The HR in Healthcare™ Conference & Expo will feature ten, 75-minute sessions by senior HR practitioners from the sector's leading health-care institutions and consulting firms. The expo hall will offer an excellent opportunity to explore the latest products and services from leading HR vendors.

Using online assessment tools to find the right talent for the right positions will be the focus of a session presented by Veronica Zaman, executive director of workforce development and talent

management at San Diego-based Scripps Health Systems and Courtney McCashland, founder of **TalentMine**, a Lincoln, Neb.-based assessment-tool provider.

"Driving turnover down is our goal," says Zaman, whose organization employs 13,000 workers in a variety of health-care positions, including surgical, trauma and basic medical care. In order to keep the right employees in the right place, Zaman said, she realized she needed to quantitatively identify the behaviors the organization needed in the workplace as well as be able to measure them in a meaningful way.

With the help of **TalentMine**, Zaman was able to assess the organization's high performers, including clinical professionals and patient services positions, through a pilot program at the system's Green Hospital in La Jolla, Calif. The assessments now help Scripps' hiring managers determine which candidates will have the greatest chance of success in a given position.

"These assessments can become a very helpful management tool that you can apply to really leverage the strength of your people to get to your desired business outcome, almost like a lever," says McCashland. **TalentMine's** 'culture match' algorithm, which is based on an applicant's interest inventory of preferences and behaviors, also shows the degree of alignment between the candidate and the culture of an organization.

By tying behaviors to outcomes, "we're giving [HR departments] a guide to tactically engage that behavior in daily work to get a desired outcome," says McCashland.

Scripps' hiring managers now have a better feel for whether someone will fit in the organization's culture and their potential for success, says Zaman. "We want to ensure that we're not just hiring for the moment, but for the long-term."

In addition to the sessions, two keynote speakers will anchor the conference. Author Daniel Pink and EEOC Commissioner Christine M. Griffin will open and close the conference, respectively.

In his best-selling book, *A Whole New Mind*, Pink persuasively argues that the era of the knowledge worker, or left brainer, is ending and the era of the creative, big-picture thinker, or right brainer, is dawning. Pink's opening keynote address should be an entertaining and provocative presentation on the subject, which will explore how this important trend is manifesting itself in healthcare. Attendees will get hands-on tools and tips as well as real-life examples to help them navigate in this new world.

In the closing keynote speech, Griffin will share her passion for promoting the rights of Americans to participate fully and equally in the social and economic life of our country. She will also review recent EEOC initiatives on disability and the impact they may have on the health care workplace.

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