

Recruitment in dental practices

An insight into the candidate screening

By Luke Arnold, UK

Have you ever applied for a job, but were not successful? Or perhaps you are just curious about what actually goes into candidate screening once you have handed in an application? Altogether, there are a great many factors that are taken

into consideration by an employer during the recruitment process, all of which help not only to ensure that the right candidate is given the job, but also to streamline the process for everyone involved.

To help with screening, employers often use an initial check-

list that can be used to quickly and efficiently establish whether an applicant is a suitable candidate. On that list will be a number of desired skills that the prospective employee must have in order to advance to the next round. These typically include the necessary qualifications, accreditations and

registrations. If a candidate does not have what the employer is looking for (what was specified in the job listing), he or she will be the first to be eliminated from the list of contenders.

The next consideration will be the applicant's most recent employment, job description, and roles and responsibilities on his or her curriculum vitae to establish whether he or she has the relevant experience for the advertised position. While it is not always essential to have done the job before, it certainly helps. If you meet the specifications, do not sell yourself short when detailing your employment and experiences.

Furthermore, employers look at the length of time a candidate has spent in his or her previous roles. The reason for this is that most practices prefer not to take on a job hopper, since they do not want to be advertising the role again a few months down the line.

Locality can be another important factor that affects a candidate's suitability, especially if the job is in a rural location or more difficult to reach. Besides it being useful to have staff who live relatively close by, practices have to consider what would happen in the event of adverse weather conditions preventing a staff member commuting to work. If a practice can avoid a situation in which it may lose revenue and custom, it would always consider that option.

Then there are personal qualities and the ability to work as a team player to give thought to. If two candidates are on an even playing field in terms of qualifications and experience, these attributes could be the deciding factor between who is selected to fulfil the position.

However, it is important to remember that no two prospective employers are the same, so there will always be variety in what practices are looking for during their candidate-screening process. Some companies, for instance, are very relaxed and will consider interviewing anyone who applies, while others are very

selective. Therefore, you can never assume that you know exactly what they are looking for. Time may also be a factor, so if a practice is up against the clock to fill a vacancy, they would have to be very choosy about whom they select to attend an interview.

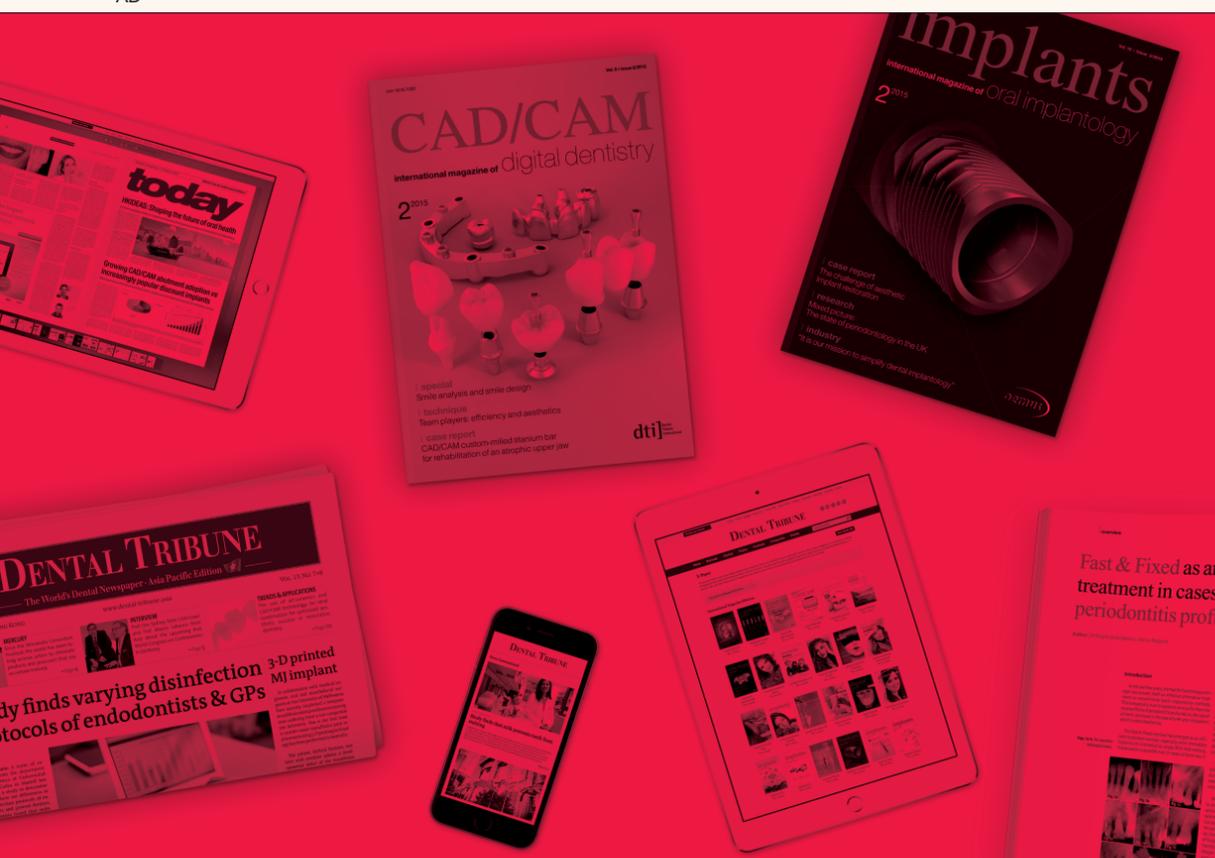
Depending on their personal preferences, some employers might choose to conduct phone interviews, as well as paper screening and interviewing, although this can vary depending on whether the vacancy is for a permanent or locum position. In most cases, practices are willing to start a locum contract based on just a phone interview, as long as the candidate has all the necessary skills, qualifications and registrations, and is compliant and ready to start. As such, locum screening and recruitment processes can be much easier than those for permanent roles.

Bearing all of this in mind, there are a number of preparations that you can make to boost your chances of success during the screening process. Having the right curriculum vitae is the greatest initial opportunity to sell yourself, so it is crucial that you spend adequate time ensuring that all of the necessary information is included in a clear and concise fashion. You must also be sure that you have researched the company and the role thoroughly. The more prepared you are, the higher up on the practice's list you will be. Draw on your peers' experiences for insight and top tips.

Do not underestimate the role of social media in candidate screening. Indeed, 80 per cent of employers will google an applicant's name then check him or her out on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. For this reason, make sure that whatever you put online is appropriate.

Follow up on your application to confirm that it was received; it will show that you are proactive and enthusiastic about the role. Post-interview, it can help to contact the company to thank them for their time and to send a further letter of interest to the practice.

Finally, employ the services of a specialist recruitment agency such as Dental Elite for expert advice and support and to act as an intermediary between you and the employer. To maximise your chances of success, make sure you prepare for the candidate-screening process. The rest is in the employer's hands.



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