Interviewing Tips

No matter where one is in the continuum of a professional nursing career, it is always important to be prepared for the next step. Student nurses applying for their first graduate nursing position, acute care nurses stepping into critical care positions, and expert nurses making a change to advanced practice nursing are all preparing for the very important interview. It is extremely important to be well prepared for the interview. There are three phases to the interviewing process: pre-interview, interview, and post-interview.

In the pre-interview phase, the candidate must research each position individually to have as much knowledge as possible before going into that very important interview. Knowing the patient population, unit strengths and weaknesses, and the required workload for the unit will enhance your ability to ask intelligent and pointed questions. The more you know about the unit, the more relaxed you can be during the interview. Another important aspect in preparing for the interview is your attire and how you carry yourself during the first meeting. First impressions do make a difference. Wear a dark suit with a light colored shirt or blouse, stockings or socks, dark low-heeled shoes, and have your hair out of your face or newly cut. In addition, it pays to bring your portfolio or resumes in a brief case or file folder. When walking in to meet the leadership team for the first time, be sure you are wearing comfortable walking shoes, as you might be taken on a tour. Always hold your head high and look at the members of leadership team when you are talking to them.

During the interview, it is permissible to take notes; however, it is always nice to ask the team first if they mind. The leadership team usually asks behavioral or situational based questions. Be honest when you answer, and if you have never encountered a situation, tell them how you would handle it if you were to encounter the situation. Take a deep breath before answering questions so you sound confident and calm. Give personal examples even if they are from another line of work. Most leadership teams contend that they can teach you anything you want to know about nursing, but they cannot teach you to be compassionate and they cannot teach you good customer service skills. You have to bring that to the table yourself. Bring your portfolio, which should include your resume, cover letter, and anything else relevant to the interview. Have extra copies of your resume to hand out in the event that the interview has more than one participant. And, no matter what, SMILE.

After the interview, it is good form to sent the manager or assistant an email thanking them for their time and reflecting on the interview. Get the manager’s card before you leave so you have the email handy. It is best to send your email within the first 24 hours after the interview. Make notes to yourself after each interview in the event that you are asked to attend a second interview or a peer interview.

Good luck as you interview for that perfect position!

By: Stacy J. Brzezinski, RN, MSN, CCRN, NE-BC

---

Get The Edge

Free Resume & Cover Letter Reviews

As a benefit of membership, Florida Nurses Association members can have their resume and cover letter reviewed by FNA Director of Professional Practice Advocacy and Labor Relations, Jeanie Domshar, Esq. A properly presented resume can make all the difference in your job search. Join today to get the edge!

---

Career Center

Florida Nurses Association

nurses.fl.associationcareernetwork.com

---

Welcome New Graduates to the Nursing Profession!

You have chosen a career that touches the lives of individuals in a way no other profession can. As a new nurse, I am sure that you are full of mixed feelings. I want to share with you some of the feelings that I recall:

- Nervous about being responsible for your own patients
- Excited about the future
- Wondering if you know enough
- Grateful to be graduated and licensed
- Ready to earn a paycheck
- Afraid you won't get the job you want
- Determined to be caring and competent
- Usually rested
- Awestruck that you have so many choices
- Thrilled to be out of nursing school
- Eager to get started

Congratulations new graduates and WELCOME to the profession. May you find fulfillment in your chosen career.

By: Patricia Posey-Goodwin Ed.D., MSN
Northwest Region Director
Member, New Graduate Special Interest Group
NEW GRAD SIG 2013 SPRING MUD RUN

Florida Nurses Association’s New Grad Special Interest Group and fellow nurses got together to have an action packed fun filled day at the FLROC N Festival on May 11, 2013. It was an awesome, challenging, and exhausting event that left us wanting to do it again! Please join the New Grad SIG for the next MUD RUN on October 26, 2013 in Bunnell, FL. Visit http://www.fl-roc.com/register.php for more information.

The New Grad SIG is also giving back to the community by volunteering at events and schools across Florida. Join us on our monthly conference calls as we continue to strengthen and grow this Special Interest Group. Conference calls are scheduled on the third Thursday of the month at 2pm EST/1pm CST.

The New Grad Special Interest Group is excited to foster relationships between student nurses and professional nurses. We want to invite students to volunteer with us in our local communities so that students feel connected with FNA members before graduation. Contact vsmagpang@floridanurse.org if you are interested in connecting with the New Grad SIG community activities.

The New Grad Special Interest Group (SIG) is a group that was created for the novice nurse. Members of the group are new graduates as well as seasoned members who have a passion for supporting and mentoring new nursing graduates. The SIG has been one of the most active SIGs, holding conference calls and participating in the annual FNA Membership Assembly. They are currently working on developing the New Grad section of the FNA website. Join the New Grad SIG as they prepare to organize the 2014 Clinical Excellence and Nurses Retreat on June 6-8, 2014 at Safety Harbor Resort and Spa in Safety Harbor, FL. The conference has received high marks on post conference evaluations and the seasoned nurses and new grads found great benefit in coming together to learn and to have an opportunity to share experiences.

One of the greatest challenges of this group is working with the schedules of the newly graduated nurses as well as getting feedback from them about their needs. We invite all new grads to join FNA and connect with this group. All you have to do is select New Grad SIG when you complete the membership application. Your leadership experience can begin with the New Grad SIG! Go to www.floridanurse.org to join!

Attend 2014 FNA Lobby Days

Attend committee meetings
Explore FNA legislative priorities
Learn the fundamentals of lobbying
Meet with legislators & agency secretaries
Network with nurses and FNA lobbyists