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Title:

Nursing Employment Game Plan, How to Find the Best Job and Salary in Your New Career

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Summary:

Considering the current the shortage of nurses, it would seem that finding your dream nursing job would be relatively simple. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Because of the competitive atmosphere in the health care industry, it takes time, energy and planning to find your perfect job.

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Article Body:

Considering the current the shortage of nurses, it would seem that finding your dream nursing job would be relatively simple. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Because of the competitive atmosphere in the health care industry, it takes time, energy and planning to find your perfect job. Taking a proactive stance in your career development is the best way to find your ideal position. Whether you are a recent graduate from nursing school or an established nurse, there are a variety of steps that you can take to build your perfect career.<ul>

<li><b>Know exactly what you want.</b> Of course, there is no guarantee that you will get it, but knowing what your dream job is, including the specialty, the shift and the pay, makes it much easier to decide if a posted job opening is the right one for you. You cannot expect the perfect job to fall into your lap, and by knowing what your goals are, you can make an educated choice when applying for a position.

<li><b>Be ready to compromise.</b> It is rare that one job that has everything an individual prefers. Even people that love their job have days when they do not want to put on their scrubs or dread heading to work. Your goal is to minimize those days, while still having a job that pays well and allows you to have a life outside your work. To effectively compromise, you have to know what is most important to you, and realize that this can change several times over your career. When you are fresh out of school, single, and ready to repay your student loans, money may be the most important factor. If so, working less desirable shifts that offer a shift differential can be very attractive and a smart decision. Ten years later, married and with children to shuttle to soccer practice or piano lessons, you may prefer less money but straight days and no overtime, again, a smart decision at the time. You cannot make these decisions, though, without having a clear set of priorities and the ability to compromise.

<li><b>Develop a long term career path.</b> While your long term plans may change over time, it is important to consider what you want out of life, and where you want nursing to take you. For some people, nursing is a stepping stone to a hospital management or supervisory role. For others, the hands-on nursing work is where their passions lie. Some individuals want to leave nursing and enter the nurse educator field, which is a fine career goal as well. Regardless of what your choice is, it will not happen overnight. Planning ahead is the best way to achieve your goal.

<li><b>Continue your education.</b> If you received your RN through a community college, and have an associate degree, you may want to consider taking courses to receive your B.S.N., if you have your B.S.N., you may want to take graduate level courses. With so many courses available over the internet and with limited class time, as well as the fact that many hospitals provide tuition reimbursement, it makes sense to continue your education.

<li><b>Join local professional associations.</b> The best way to stay up to date with what is happening in your industry is thorough local professional groups. They provide insider knowledge about what is going on at each hospital, and you will often find out about job openings before they are advertised. The benefit of networking with other professionals is understood in many industries, although the nursing industry has been slower to catch on. Networking provides you with the opportunity to make connections with many people that can later provide you with references, job leads or even emotional support.

<li><b>Don't burn any bridges.</b> No matter how much you hate your job, your coworkers or your boss, make sure to act professionally at all times. It doesn't matter if you promise yourself that you will never work for them again or even if you are sure that you will never see them again, it is important not to burn any bridges. The health care industry is a small world. People move around, to different floors, different hospitals, and what feels like righteous indignation to you may sound like bad behavior to others.</li></ul>

A career in nursing can provide a lucrative and secure future. By taking the time to formulate a game plan, negotiate the things that are important to you, and continue your education, you will find that you are in a position to take advantage of your ideal career opportunity when it presents itself. If you do not know what you want, or think that you will recognize the perfect job when you find it, you will be disappointed. People that take this approach to their career often find themselves moving from job to job with no clear progression.