



FROM PHYSICIAN RECRUITMENT TO RETENTION

A Roadmap for Building a Physician Workforce That Will Stay the Course

CONTENTS

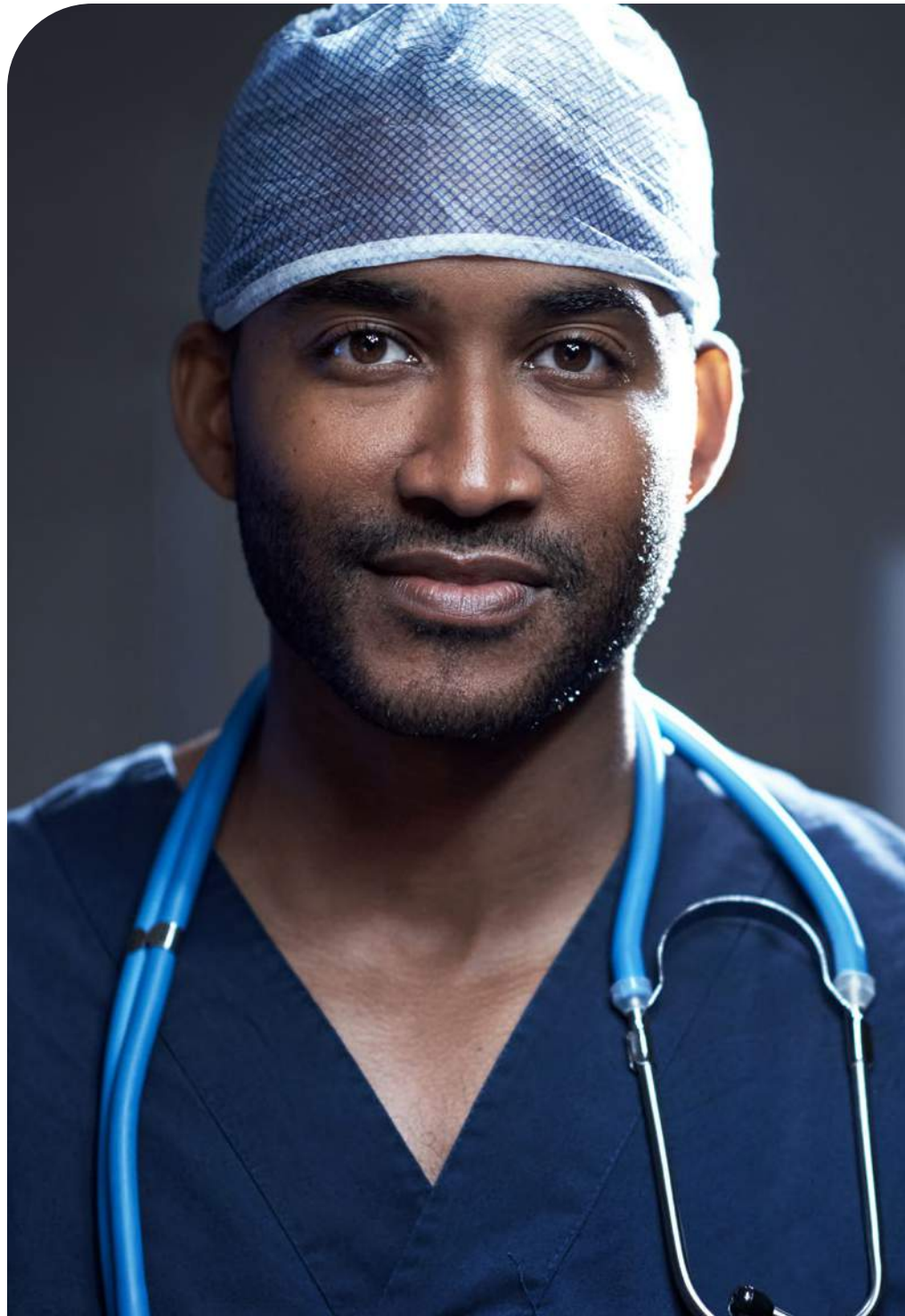
- Recruiting Digital Natives: Why Today's Physicians Respond to a Job Posting
- Navigating the Physician Interview Landscape: Unique Perspectives Early-Career Physicians Bring
- Bring Your Best Offer: How to Negotiate with Today's Physicians
- Level Up Your Physician Onboarding as a Path to Retention
- Physician Retention: What Makes Physicians Stay
- Growing Physician Executives: How to Develop a New Generation of Strong Leaders

INTRODUCTION

Chronic staffing shortages, increasing demand for care, and persistent burnout have become the norm in healthcare — these are circumstances that are unlikely to change any time soon. What is changing, however, is how physicians view opportunities and what they want from their careers.

While compensation is still king, physicians today are looking for something more. From more access to mentoring and growth opportunities to better work-life balance and a voice within their organizations, today's early and mid-career physicians are looking for cues that they can climb a career ladder that is characterized by not just compensation, but also communication, participation, and growth.

This six-part guide is authored by regional vice presidents of recruiting for Jackson Physician Search. They are on the front lines connecting physicians, physician executives, and advanced practice providers with the organizations that need them most. Here, you will find insights and emerging best practices that can elevate a job posting, inform a negotiation, and lay a foundation for not just recruiting, but retaining the right physicians for your organization.



RECRUITING DIGITAL NATIVES

Why Today's Physicians Respond to a Job Posting

by Helen Falkner, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

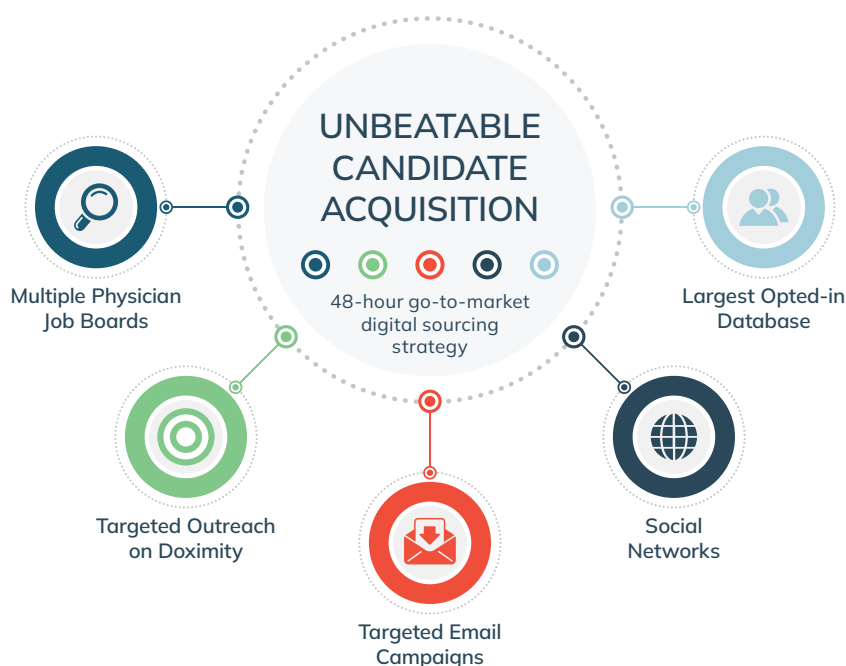
Today's early-career physicians are first-generation digital natives. They operate differently, and as a result, they have different expectations for how they will be recruited — including the all-important job posting.

Digitally native physicians — those who grew up with the internet at their fingertips — operate differently when it comes to recruiting. How can you capture their attention with a job posting and stand out in a sea of opportunities?

Today's youngest physicians are the last of the Millennials, and as such, they have grown up in a digital society. Their days — and their careers — are powered by technology. From ever-present mobile devices that keep their schedules on track to the electronic health records that put a patient's history at their fingertips, Millennial physicians are wired to be online. This is also where they seek or learn about employment opportunities, whether actively or passively looking for a new role.

Jackson Physician Search has long championed a [100% digital physician recruitment strategy](#). Just as we pioneered the shift from direct mail campaigns to multiple online [physician job boards](#), extensive email marketing, and texting campaigns, we also have been one of the first to adopt online professional networking to enhance and [accelerate physician recruitment](#). Today, our digital candidate acquisition process includes posting all jobs on 10+ major national job boards plus specialty-specific job boards, sending targeted email campaigns to the industry's largest opted-in database, providing every recruiter on our team with a license to recruit on Doximity, and maximizing visibility with an extensive social media strategy.

While digital recruiting isn't new, it is nuanced, depending on the complexity of the search. Perhaps the location is remote, or the patient population faces unique challenges; maybe the compensation is lower than the median, or supply and demand in the specialty is extremely unbalanced. The more complicated the search, the more important the right mix of digital tools will be.



JACKSON
Physician Search®

Start With the Right Physician Job Profile

The best physician job ads have four things in common:



THEY ARE CLEAR AND CONCISE

To the best of your ability, include the most attractive and important details in the job title or headline. This means in the span of 8-12 words, the headline should communicate the specialty, location, and one or two differentiators, such as flexibility, compensation, leadership opportunity, or governance.

Is it a flexible opportunity that includes telehealth, or is the opportunity with an FQHC and/or in a healthcare desert where the candidate will treat an underserved community? These are differentiators that will resonate with the right candidate, so lead with them.



THEY HIGHLIGHT UNIQUE JOB ATTRIBUTES



THEY IDENTIFY PHYSICIAN COMPENSATION EXPECTATIONS

Many healthcare organizations aren't comfortable disclosing salary information in a job post. But, it's important to remember that a job ad isn't a job offer. Those who do share compensation details may have a leg up in attracting viable candidates.

Candidates and their families not only want to know the facts (population, cost of living, taxes, etc.), they want to know what the town is close to (airports, major metros, beaches, mountains, universities), what activities are popular in the area (theaters, museums, hiking, fishing, skiing, surfing), and other details like the quality of schools, the prevalence of retail, restaurants, breweries, and more.



THEY PAINT A POSITIVE, RELATABLE PICTURE OF THE LOCATION

A thorough job profile that gives candidates what they are looking for will turn clicks into conversations.



Understand what the pool of candidates looks like before you start digital outreach. Are you recruiting for a highly specialized position with fewer opportunities like it out there, making your candidate pool small? Or is it one of

hundreds of openings for a primary care, mental health, or advanced practice provider requiring a stand-out job profile? Is it a rural location with a chance for a lower-stress lifestyle, or is there another element to the practice that will make it attractive to the right person? Knowing which specialties are in the highest demand means you can prepare to be more competitive in your recruitment strategy, be it a signing bonus, more flexibility, or broader search parameters.



Know what younger physicians want.

Time and time again, Millennials have told us that work-life balance, compensation, and location are the three most important factors in making a career move. On the other hand, [our latest research into early-career physicians](#) confirms that **while compensation**

(50%) is their most important need in a first position, the driving motivator to leave that first job was practice ownership/governance (35%), indicating a substantial shift in priorities. Understanding these motivators and featuring them prominently in our outreach tells the potential candidates that we understand what they're looking for — and that we can be a good partner in helping them meet their goals.

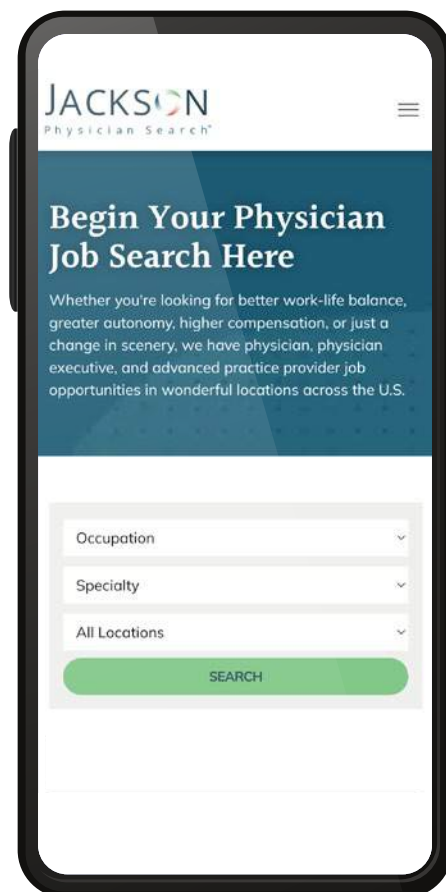
A strategic approach to marketing the job's positive differentiators — above-average compensation, high recruitment incentives, an attractive location, fast career growth, a flexible schedule, and/or other attributes that support a positive work-life balance can be key to attracting the ideal candidate.

Make your job profile mobile-friendly. Because physicians are more often working from a mobile device than a desktop, it's important that digital marketing tools take a mobile-first approach. Is the headline prominent? Is the opportunity clear? Optimizing for mobile is paramount in an age where people scan instead of read.

Create multiple touchpoints. Repetition has always been a key to effective marketing, and it's true for physician recruiting. Social channels like LinkedIn, digital job boards, and Doximity are all channels that physicians frequent.

Make it personal through email, phone calls, and text messaging.

Converting clicks to conversations is more likely when you have a compelling job profile that moves passive lookers to active seekers if the opportunity is right. Remember that active job seekers might get up to 15 messages a day, so the job profile must be enticing for your call, email, or text message to break through. Only if candidates engage are prospective employers/recruiters able to "sell" their opportunity.



JACKSON
Physician Search®

From Clicks to Conversations to Success

Once you have candidates in the pipeline, what is the best way to connect with them? Are younger physicians more interested in having online conversations vs. getting on the phone/Zoom? While we pride ourselves on being first-movers in digital recruiting, we know it works best when we don't rely ONLY on digital to carry our message. When the candidate pool begins to emerge, high-touch outreach is required. Our goal is always to get candidates on the phone to ensure they have answers to their questions and share details of the position that might match their interests and experience.



In addition to making ourselves available on nights and weekends when physicians are more available to talk, we lean into intel from our recent [Physician Recruitment Trends: Recruiting for the Future of Healthcare report](#), which tells us a few things about the market. For example:

We are placing more physicians year after year:

- Primary care placements rose 20% in 2023 compared to 2022, with family medicine and pediatrics seeing the most growth.
- Advanced practice provider placements increased 14% in 2023 compared to 2022, with nurse practitioners seeing the most growth.

The report also confirms several broader trends:

- Physician signing bonuses are more of the standard than an exception — present in 79% of our 2023 placements.
- Starting salaries are increasingly likely to be above the MGMA median. 43% of our physician placements had starting salaries greater than the MGMA median in 2023, as compared to 28% in 2022.

In an ever-tightening recruitment market, a clear understanding of the need, a well-considered and differentiated job profile, and a robust digital candidate sourcing strategy combined with high-touch personal outreach constitute the gold standard for recruiting, producing the most successful searches. As you recruit younger physicians, consider how their experience differs from those who are older, and don't wait to start thinking about the next step in your journey — building a great retention program.



Helen Falkner

Regional Vice President, Recruiting, Western Division



As the daughter of a physician and an Iowa native, Helen has witnessed firsthand the impact a great physician can have on a community. She joined Jackson Physician Search at the company's headquarters in Alpharetta, GA, as an entry-level Research Consultant in 2012 after graduating from the University of Iowa with a bachelor's degree in business and marketing. Through her consistent success as an individual contributor and manager, Falkner progressed quickly to Partner in 2018 and assumed her role as Regional Vice President of Recruiting for Jackson Physician Search's Western Division in October 2020. In January 2021, she relocated to the firm's Denver office, where she leads a team of successful physician recruiters while actively continuing to recruit for her clients.

JACKSON
Physician Search®

NAVIGATING THE PHYSICIAN INTERVIEW LANDSCAPE

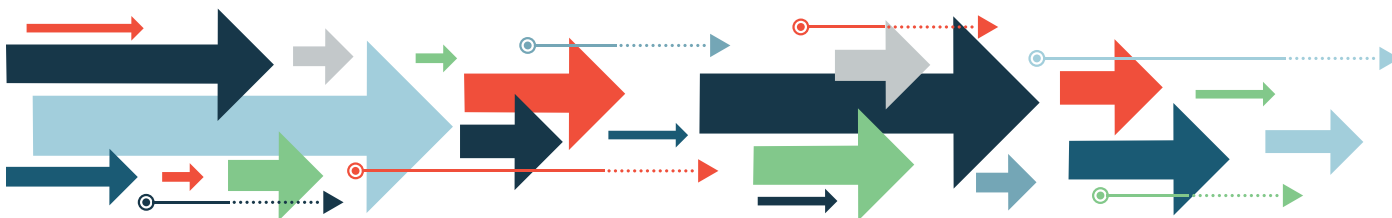
Unique Perspectives Early-Career Physicians Bring

by Helen Falkner, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

The how, what, and where that Millennials expect when it comes to the interview process.

In the world of physician recruitment, the spotlight often falls on experienced practitioners and their seasoned insights. However, as a new generation of healthcare professionals enters the profession, the landscape is shifting as they bring their fresh perspectives and expectations to healthcare positions, and in particular, to the interview process.

The market today consists primarily of Baby Boomer, Gen X, Millennial, and soon, Gen Z physicians. Each generation is nuanced in terms of what they are looking for, if for no other reason than the fact that a person's life changes so significantly throughout their career.



A Fresh Lens on Opportunity

Early-career physicians, typically in their first or second jobs, approach the interview experience with a unique set of expectations. Unlike their more seasoned counterparts, they may not yet have a clear blueprint of what they seek in a long-term position. This lack of entrenched preferences opens the door to a broader exploration of opportunities, making the interview process a crucial period of self-discovery. Understanding this can be an advantage to the recruiting organization.

The platform for exploration is different in that this demographic casts a wider net, exploring various positions and organizational cultures to better understand their professional and personal priorities. They are more likely than their older counterparts to expect work-life balance and are concerned about the potential for burnout, even at a relatively young age. The interview can become a space for dialogue, where these physicians seek not only a job but an environment that aligns with their evolving career aspirations.



For the hiring organization, it will be more important than ever to provide candidates with a sense of your organization's culture and any programs or services you offer that are designed to help younger clinicians create personally and professionally fulfilling careers.

JACKSON
Physician Search®



Open Communication Channels

The communication styles of early-career physicians differ from those of their more experienced counterparts. They are more likely to express their needs, preferences, and concerns openly. Thus, fostering an environment of open communication throughout the interview process is crucial for creating a positive candidate experience.

Flexibility and Agility

Given the fast-paced nature of the contemporary job market, early-career physicians are actively seeking positions where the recruitment process moves swiftly. Organizations that demonstrate flexibility and agility in scheduling virtual interviews, onsite visits, and decision-making stand a better chance of securing top-tier talent who are actively exploring new opportunities.

Onsite Visits Give Recruiters an Advantage

Onsite visits are not just important for candidates; they are vital for partners who are much better able to bring qualified and appropriate candidates to the table if they've had the chance to see and experience the facility and the organization themselves. Looking through the lens of who they know to be in the candidate pool, recruiters can use the onsite visit to gather additional insights about your organization and also to advise you on how best to structure a candidate site visit — including where candidates should stay, how the visit should unfold, who should be included in tours and social outings, and what about the local community will be of interest and appealing to a candidate and his or her family.

Online vs. Onsite Physician Interview

In today's world of recruiting, it's typical for candidates to participate in multiple virtual interviews as they progress through the process. The preference for virtual interviews vs. phone-based conversations is strong on behalf of both the candidates and the hiring organizations, as seeing one another allows for a more personal and dynamic connection. However, virtual doesn't replace in-person interviews; it's just a step in the progression.

By the time a candidate gets to the onsite physician interview, we expect to be past the vetting stage, but the candidate may still be actively interviewing with others and using the onsite visit to confirm his or her instincts. It's also the first chance a spouse may have to get a sense of the hiring facility's culture, so it continues to be a way that first impressions are confirmed.

Roll Out the Red Carpet

What does it mean to roll out the red carpet for candidates who opt for the in-person visit? Ideally, the hiring organization will:

- ✓ Create and share the itinerary ahead of time to allow candidates to plan accordingly.
- ✓ Structure a visit that is 60-70% social and 30-40% professional.
- ✓ Include a facility tour that touches the whole campus if applicable – hospital, clinics, a review of blueprints, or a hard hat tour of new facilities.
- ✓ Organize a lunch that encompasses every provider and administrator that person would work with 1:1.
- ✓ Always include the C-suite! Savvy young candidates will expect 15-20 minutes 1:1 with the chief medical officer or equivalent.
- ✓ Cover the travel costs for the spouse and children and include the family in a dinner that's appropriate for the group.
- ✓ Arrange a community tour with a local realtor who will provide a comprehensive overview of both the community and the housing market.

During the site visit, you should be able to feel the compatibility and connection, and both the candidate and the hiring organization should leave without any unanswered questions about the position, the organization, and the fit for the role.



Immediate Compensation vs. Long-Term Potential

No interview process is complete without a salary discussion. While the immediate compensation package holds significant weight for early-career physicians, we know that focus on short-term gains can be shortsighted, so it's up to hiring organizations and recruiters to guide these physicians to consider the long-term potential of a position. Suppose you are recruiting for a small practice or rural opportunity. How do you compete with the bigger healthcare systems and keep up with [rising physician compensation expectations](#)?

According to the most recent [Medscape Compensation Report](#), self-employed physicians earn approximately 9% more than those employed by a hospital or health system. If, for example, partnership is an eventual option for a new hire, this path should be clearly laid out. The same is true for productivity and/or quality bonuses. Physicians may need help understanding how the lower starting offer can eventually lead to more money, and it is up to you to shed light on this matter.

During the interview process, take advantage of the opportunity to [talk a candidate through compensation and career track](#) in such a way that you're painting a picture of the near and more distant future. Emphasizing the importance of assessing opportunities through a 3-5-10-year lens can help early-career physicians align their career choices with broader professional goals.

Creating a Lasting Impression

Understanding the unique perspectives of early-career physicians is not only about giving a nod to the increasing diversity within the medical field but also a strategic approach to attracting and retaining talent that will shape the future of healthcare. The interview, viewed through the lens of these emerging professionals, becomes a collaborative exploration, setting the stage for mutually beneficial partnerships.



BRING YOUR BEST OFFER

How to Negotiate With Today's Physicians

by Neal Waters, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

Once you've identified your ideal physician candidate, you'll need to bring your best offer, and be transparent with the candidate about what you can and can't do.

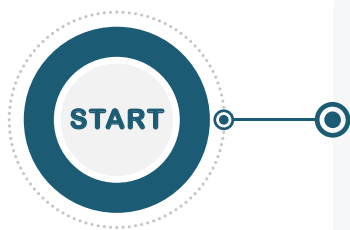
Congratulations! You have found a qualified physician who [aligns with your organization](#), and you are ready to make an offer. Ideally, by the time you begin actively negotiating with a physician interested in joining your team, you have already engaged him or her in a carefully considered recruiting process that has paved the way for a successful conclusion.

Recruiting physicians is typically a months-long endeavor that includes a carefully crafted [physician job posting](#), digital [recruitment ads](#) that land in the inboxes and on mobile devices of early-career and seasoned physicians, and phone or video conversations that result in onsite [interviews](#). All these components lead to the next step: negotiating a job offer with your potential new employee or partner.

Once a physician has been onsite to visit, you both know that an offer is likely imminent. At this point, the candidate is largely in the driver's seat. While it's true that your team will ultimately decide on whether to make an offer, it is the physician's choice to accept or decline. You hope the candidate has found what he or she is looking for within your organization or practice and in your community — particularly if it's a relocation.

JACKSON
Physician Search®

Here Are Five Ways to Lay the Groundwork For a Mutually Successful Negotiation and Hire



RECOGNIZE WHEN THE NEGOTIATION BEGINS

Surprisingly, negotiating with a physician candidate starts with the job description. This sets the stage for who will be attracted to the job and what he or she expects regarding compensation, responsibilities, culture, etc. The physician job description is the first and best opportunity for a winning impression that helps find candidates who are already aligned with your corporate mission and values. So, your tailored job description is actually your first step in negotiating the final physician contract.

BE CONSISTENT

Communicate clearly and consistently in every interaction throughout the candidate's experience. Straightforward communication about what you're offering upfront can help alleviate negotiation time on the back end. All the way through the process, your verbal and written communications should provide a cohesive message that says to the candidate: This is the position, this is what it involves, and this is the compensation.



KNOW WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T DO

Due to specific rules and policies, some healthcare organizations are unable to negotiate certain clauses within the agreement. Negotiable parts of the physician contract often include bonuses, on-call hours, benefits, paths to advance, and malpractice tail insurance. Make sure your negotiating team fully understands the restrictions on what you can deliver, while keeping in mind your team's ultimate need: someone to be your partner in delivering stellar patient care. It's likely that physician candidates are aware of the components of a physician contract and mistakes to avoid during negotiations and will be asking detailed questions.

Simple Things You Can Do Include:

- **Elaborate on the details.** Share and explain all contract details clearly, listen well, and answer all questions.
- **Be genuine and personable.** Treat physicians with the same courtesy you gave them throughout the recruitment process during negotiations. Show them what your culture is rather than telling them.
- **Be the chaser.** Remember that you are recruiting the highly sought-after physicians, not the other way around. During negotiations, physicians will want to know that your healthcare organization is highly interested in them — and they want to work where they are wanted.
- **Overall, make physicians feel valued beyond compensation.** If you've put together successful site visits, introduced them to the practice and the community, and answered questions about their career paths, earning potential, and leadership opportunities, they will be more likely to appreciate the big picture.

Work with Urgency

At Jackson Physician Search, we understand the sense of urgency at every step of the recruitment process and have our sights set on the bigger picture. We promptly reply to each candidate who shows interest because we know we're establishing a relationship with that individual. We suggest striking while the iron is hot, as it increases your chances of securing top candidates as soon as possible.

In today's competitive market, it often requires six to 12+ months and costs \$250,000 or more — including sourcing, relocation, and sign-on bonus — to finalize an agreement with a physician. Decreasing the time to see eye-to-eye on a contract is critical. In our [physician placement success stories](#), our recruiters frequently point to the client's responsiveness and willingness to act quickly as crucial elements in a successful search.



Partner with a Dedicated Physician Recruiter

Recruiters have the knowledge and experience to help you find the right candidates for your organization. They also have access to industry resources that can help to ensure your offer is competitive for the market and role. Having knowledge of the compensation range of three or four practices in your immediate vicinity or region will increase the likelihood that your offer will be sound. Also, continue highlighting what makes your organization stand out, and remind physicians of feedback they provided you on why they felt it would be a good fit.

Bringing the recruitment process to a successful close requires transparency, flexibility, and respect. If expectations have been clearly communicated throughout the process, the negotiation should be relatively simple and the contract will be one all parties feel good about.



Neal Waters

Regional Vice President, Recruiting, Eastern Division

Neal Waters brings more than 18 years of experience in retained physician search to his role as Regional Vice President of Recruiting for Jackson Physician Search's Eastern Division. He completed his undergraduate studies and played football at Auburn University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in marketing. Neal loves physician recruitment and has an extreme passion for bringing healthcare to communities that need it while improving career opportunities and quality of life for physicians.

LEVEL UP YOUR PHYSICIAN ONBOARDING AS A PATH TO RETENTION

If Retention Is a Struggle for Your Healthcare Organization, Start Here

by Tara Osseck, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

Technology has created new opportunities, but can also limit the chance to build relationships and showcase your culture. Get new hires off on the right foot with a meaningful onboarding process that meets today's physicians where they are, and takes them where you need them to be.

If your healthcare organization views physician recruitment and physician retention as separate, individual activities, it's time to start thinking of them as two sides of the same coin. The best way to do that is to commit to a formal [physician onboarding](#) process that begins from the moment candidates accept your offer and extends through their first year of employment.

As an in-house recruiter for nearly eight years and as someone who works with high-performing healthcare organizations all over the country, I've seen firsthand that organizations with the lowest turnover rates and more long-tenured physicians have leaders who view onboarding as a critical step in retention. They realize that a comprehensive onboarding process sets the tone for the entire relationship and are willing to invest time and resources in a comprehensive physician onboarding process.

Whether your healthcare organization is small and rural, large and urban, or suburban, a formal onboarding process can be as straightforward as integrating three key tactics:



1. Make One Person a Touchpoint

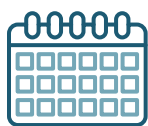
Whether it is a potential mentor or a peer with common interests, assigning one person in the practice/organization (not HR or the physician's supervisor) to be a touch point for the new hire is a great way to create a connection and make the physician feel welcome. Ideally, it's someone who can answer questions about the little and big things involved in starting a job with a new practice, particularly if the newcomer is moving, bringing a family along, or otherwise in the midst of a big transition.

Know that early-career physicians, and the younger generations in general, are the least likely to proactively seek out a mentor — even though they are the group most likely to need [physician mentorship](#).



By assigning a physician to be the new hire's point-person for onboarding, you are paving the way for a mentor relationship to develop naturally.

Physicians beginning to sunset their careers are great candidates for formal or informal mentorship, and many seek ways to support the next generation of physicians. Their institutional knowledge, networks in and outside the organization, and insights into the patient population are unmatched.



2. Design an Onboarding Process that Lasts One Year

It is common for healthcare leaders to think of [physician onboarding](#) as a two-week process that ends once new hires have their badges, computers, business cards, and white coats. However, an ideal onboarding process should span the entire first year of employment.



When you're committed to onboarding as a path to retention, you'll naturally create a process that extends past that initial two weeks and provides for check-ins over the course of the new hires' first year of employment.

Use those check-ins informally to inquire about how they are settling into the practice, facility, or community. Also, use them as formal check-ins to walk through any reports you are monitoring, such as financial performance data or productivity models that factor into salaries and bonuses. Not only does this cement the relationship, but it's also a high-touch practice that can help you identify issues before they become problems.



3. Set Expectations for Physician Participation

My team works with a specialty practice that has historically struggled to recruit and retain early-career physicians. Because they have a very focused scope of practice, they have resisted recruiting these candidates and, as a result, have limited the number of potential candidates in their pool. As almost a last-ditch effort, they agreed to reconsider their onboarding as a retention tool, which has transformed their practice.

Rather than limiting their onboarding to a short few weeks, we helped them create a 30-day, high-touch onboarding process, and we identified an up-and-coming practice leader to serve as a touchpoint throughout the new hires' first year of employment. As a result, two early-career physicians we recruited and placed with them in 2020 are thriving in the practice today, stepping into leadership roles and poised to be long-tenure partners who will grow with the practice. It has worked because they implemented a process and set an expectation that the new, early-career physicians would participate.

The difference between a formal and informal onboarding process often comes down to the expectations that you set. Your new physicians should understand that their participation in the process, the relationship building, and the regular check-ins are both wanted and expected. Invite them into the process by letting them know what to expect and encourage their participation by giving them the chance to ask questions.

From experience and our [research](#), we know that today's early-career physicians' first jobs post-training are likely to be shorter-term, often leaving after only two years. To avoid letting this contribute to your turnover rates, set your practice or facility up for success by acknowledging that you'll need to do more to bring these valuable recruits into your practice for the long term.

Tara Osseck

Regional Vice President, Recruiting, Midwestern Division



With more than 15 years of experience in the healthcare industry, Tara specializes in matching healthcare organizations with physicians who are a strong fit for the role and the culture. Her healthcare career began as a physician liaison. It quickly expanded to include physician recruitment, strategic planning, and business development, working for various hospitals throughout Memphis, Tennessee, and St. Louis, Missouri. Based in St. Louis, Tara leads the firm's Midwestern Division, placing providers across the Midwest and Upper Midwest. She earned a bachelor's degree from Truman State University and a master's in health care administration and management from The University of Memphis.

PHYSICIAN RETENTION

What Makes Physicians Stay

by Neal Waters, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

It seems like today's physicians are in a permanent state of mobility — what makes them stay, and what makes them want to leave? It's not just more money. Rather than assuming that work-life balance — a common complaint — means the same thing to everyone, here are tips to build a robust retention program.

As the challenges involved with physician recruitment become more apparent, healthcare leaders increasingly recognize the importance of retaining the physicians they already have. Conversations about retention naturally arise during the recruitment process, as we encourage clients to think about finding the right long-term fit from the beginning.

Some attrition is natural, with the average [annual turnover rate](#) among physicians hovering at 6-7%.

6-7%

AVERAGE ANNUAL
PHYSICIAN TURNOVER RATE

However, if leaders are attentive to the individual physician's needs during the recruitment process and have a physician retention plan that addresses those needs, they will see retention rates improve.

As a regional vice president of recruiting for Jackson Physician Search, I oversee the recruiting process in the Eastern region. I have also spoken to thousands of physicians in my career, providing experience that enables me to coach our healthcare clients about how to approach physicians. Time and again, I've found that the key to retention is to think about it prior to placement, not after the physician starts.

JACKSON
Physician Search®

Physician Retention Begins at Recruitment

Physician candidates notice every detail when considering whether or not to work for a healthcare organization. They pay attention to it all, from how the open position is presented in the job description to the quality of communications and sense of urgency from the recruiting organization to how they are treated leading up to an initial interview and during the onsite interview. Then, if all goes well, they may witness the expeditiousness of getting an offer, negotiating a contract, and answering all their questions.

By extending your [best white-glove service](#) while at the same time being authentic to your organization's culture throughout the recruitment process, you have already started retaining that candidate. If everything feels like the right match, the physician may think, "This is not only an organization I'm going to join, but also one I can see myself with long term."

3 Essential Steps for Physician Retention

Here are three ways to encourage your newly hired physicians to stay.



Utilize Mentorship Programs

Consider implementing and maintaining a program that assigns a newly hired physician to a mentor in your organization. The mentor's role is to be a guiding light and answer questions about career advancement opportunities rather than only day-to-day work-related topics. Ideally, the mentor will be within the physician's specialty and, possibly, an individual who is part of the organization's administration.



Mentorship opportunities not only [level up your onboarding process](#) throughout the first year the mentee is settling into a new position, but they also help [increase engagement](#) among those who take on the mentor role.



Be Transparent About Career Paths

Companies in all industries often have higher retention rates when employees are aware of potential career paths. In healthcare, however, some organizations pull back when it comes to sharing what job trajectories could look like for incoming physicians because administrators may think they're offering a guarantee about certain promotions or employment tracks. But what you're actually doing is providing information for them to use as they live and envision their lives, which is powerful. You don't want physicians to lack confidence about what their paths might hold or lack knowledge about how they can aspire to higher levels. Lay out what a future could look like for them, and talk about it earlier on and often.





Build a Safe Environment for Active Two-Way Communication

CEOs and C-suite administrators may say they're available for communication, but for various reasons, that doesn't always happen. In a Jackson Physician Search report titled [Getting Ahead of Physician Turnover](#), physicians said two-way communication with management and administrators was the most important factor in keeping them satisfied in their current positions. You can facilitate satisfaction by:

- Offering physicians regular check-ins with C-level administrators.
- Providing a safe environment for physicians to ask questions.
- Being proactive about issues that come up to avoid being reactive when a physician notifies you that he or she is leaving.

Creating a safe environment for physicians includes communication, follow-through, and cultural considerations. Having a conversation on the front end, such as, "We want you to be happy, so if there's ever anything going wrong, we want you to tell us." If physicians do raise concerns, it's important that they are heard, considered, and addressed. Physicians should not feel like their job, career, or status is threatened because they've voiced concerns about operational or other issues in the organization.

Actively working on your healthcare organization's retention practices should continue to be a significant, ongoing task. Documenting your commitments in a [formal physician retention plan](#) is important for making physicians aware of your intentions and holding leadership accountable for following through on intentions. Remember to provide the best experience possible to those you are recruiting from start to finish, as retention starts with the job description and continues throughout their careers.

GROWING PHYSICIAN EXECUTIVES

How to Develop a New Generation of Strong Leaders

by Tara Osseck, Regional Vice President, Recruiting

Physicians have ambitions, just like administrators — and early and mid-career physicians are especially interested in having a voice and a chance to lead. Developing a leadership pipeline is critically important as the wave of boomer retirements gains momentum.

It's no secret that baby boomer physicians are [retiring in large numbers](#), creating gaps in our healthcare system that will reverberate for years to come. While we typically think about the gaps in patient care, the growing wave of retirements creates another void in the C-suite of healthcare organizations, where [physician executives](#) add incredible value to the leadership team. Luckily, where there's a gap, there's also opportunity.

To [reduce the impact of physician executive retirements](#), healthcare organizations and physicians alike would do well to assess the leadership development tracks within their organizations. Intentional skill-building can lift early and mid-career physicians with leadership potential into executive roles that create organizational stability and promote retention.

A curated leadership development program creates a strong foundation for your leadership team. It communicates to early and mid-career physicians and candidates that your organization is interested in their growth and development, which powerfully influences recruitment and retention. Well-defined leadership and development programs have the added benefit of creating clarity around your organization's expectations when it comes to becoming a physician executive, which helps separate physicians with true potential from those who are ambitious but not yet ready or qualified for leadership.

Empowered Physicians Will Step Up



Physicians who have a healthy relationship with their executives or employers will feel empowered to share their leadership goals. Organizations that are committed to developing their teams may be able to support those goals financially and schedule-wise so that early and mid-career physicians can grow their capabilities.

It's important that physicians are empowered to articulate their ambitions regarding leadership and seek out opportunities where they can find them. The growing wave of physician retirements is creating a new and different circumstance within your organization, so illuminating the path to leadership is the best way to identify those with the potential to step up. Creating opportunities for physician representation on the administrative side of the organization, involving them in quality improvement efforts, inviting them to interview medical students, teach as part of a residency program, or represent your organization in community outreach are all great ways to give a potential leader a chance to shine.

Preparing the Next Generation for Leadership

The ideal time to develop physician leaders is before they need to step into the role. While many physicians are natural leaders with a strong clinical foundation, the move into organizational leadership requires more than expertise.



Exposing early and mid-career physicians to the financial and operational aspects that lead to good patient outcomes and satisfaction can accelerate their ability to step into leadership.

There are several paths to physician leadership that accomplish this:

ACADEMIC PATH



MBA and MHA programs are academic paths that can boost working physicians' administrative skills. Many are structured to accommodate the demanding schedules that are typical of many physicians. Self-paced degree programs are a great entryway into the C-suite because they give a window into the administrative side of the healthcare business.

Certificate programs offered by associations such as the AAPL and ACHE and universities like Carnegie Mellon can also help one's career growth. These certificate programs often provide exposure to administrative and policy decisions that the C-suite must navigate.

MENTORSHIP



Mentorship can add another layer to the career development journey. Encouraging physicians to seek out other physicians who are a few steps ahead of them as leaders can bring your organization's career ladder into focus in ways that a degree or certificate program cannot. If you're an administrator, mapping out a formal physician mentorship program that identifies physicians with leadership potential reinforces your commitment to a physician. It serves as a retention strategy and a way to grow your executive team's capabilities.

LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT



Leadership and development programs – either formal or informal – can serve to give physicians the chance to develop skills that they can't necessarily learn through a degree or certificate program. Physician executives will need skills in finance, such as creating and balancing a budget, forecasting and allocating FTEs, and HR, where they'll need to know how to navigate sensitive personnel situations and grow their understanding of HR law and policy. Creating a program with rotations through these roles or giving mid-career physicians budget oversight can prepare them for future leadership roles.

EXECUTIVE COACHING



It's one thing to hone your communication skills in patient care, but it's another to stand up in front of a medical staff of 1,000 and move the audience to action. A public speaking coach or other executive coaching can boost a potential leader's capacity for becoming a charismatic leader who can take your organization to the next level.

Where Ambitious Physicians Look for Leadership Opportunities

Young physicians are often the most openly ambitious. However, they might not know how to articulate what they want and what they bring to the table yet. That doesn't mean they aren't ready for the leadership track; it simply means they need coaching and advice. Many times, that's where a recruiter can come in and help them position themselves for the roles they want. With a little bit of coaching, physicians who are one to two years out of training can be guided to step back and think broadly about what they want to accomplish in their first five years and then consider what a fast track to leadership might look like.

Critical access and rural settings can often create a fast track to leadership to strengthen their recruitment strategies. Private practices may be able to offer an accelerated path to partnership or access to a strong and involved team of mentors who will appeal to younger candidates. Ambitious physicians will seek out these opportunities for leadership and development, so a clear track could tip the scales in your favor when deciding where they want to work.

In addition to enhancing recruitment efforts, offering physicians a clear path to leadership may also positively influence retention. Investing in their development shows physicians they are valued and have a future within the organization. Most importantly, developing physician leaders today is the best way to ensure your organization will have strong leaders who will serve the community's healthcare needs now and into the future.



CONCLUSION

Physician Recruiting for the Future of Healthcare

A new generation of physicians brings a fresh perspective to the industry's ongoing challenges and offers hope for a future with fewer healthcare disparities, better patient outcomes, and more affordable, accessible care. How will they successfully affect positive change? That remains to be seen, but one thing is certain — these early and mid-career physicians have different wants, needs, and motivations than their predecessors. Compensation still matters, of course, but they also expect flexibility, autonomy, and transparency.

Through the course of more than 10,000 physician placements and countless conversations with physicians, the Jackson Physician Search team has witnessed this shift firsthand and is actively helping healthcare organizations adapt their recruitment strategies to better meet the needs of these young physicians. From what makes a job initially attractive to what motivates them to stay long-term, the organizations that understand these nuances will be best positioned to recruit and retain them.

About Jackson Physician Search

Jackson Physician Search is an established industry leader in physician recruitment and pioneered the recruitment methodologies standard in the industry today. The firm specializes in the permanent recruitment of physicians, physician executives, and advanced practice providers for hospitals, health systems, academic medical centers and medical groups across the United States. Headquartered in Alpharetta, Ga., the company is recognized for its track record of results built on client trust and transparency of processes and fees.

Part of the Jackson Healthcare® Family of Companies

Jackson Healthcare's mission is to improve the delivery of patient care and the lives of everyone we touch. This includes the patients, clinicians and healthcare executives we work with through our companies every day, as well as our communities, the nonprofit organizations we support and each associate who is part of our family.

- One of the largest U.S. healthcare staffing companies
- 18 healthcare staffing, search and technology companies
- Powered by 2,600+ associates and 20,000+ clinician providers covering all 50 U.S. states
- Helping thousands of healthcare facilities serve over 10 million patients annually

Jackson Physician Search
2655 Northwinds Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30009
866.284.3328

