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# Physician Job Search

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Five ways of ACTIVE job search that will land you a great job!

1. Network, using your personal contacts and beyond
2. Directly approach the hospitals in your desired area.
3. Direct Mail to all physicians in your desired area
4. Mass faxing
5. Follow up

## 1. Networking

Consider your job search a marketing project for yourself. Apply marketing principles, use marketing tools. And you will achieve great results

This is not the time to be shy, not the time to be disciplined and withdrawn, this is the time to make yourself heard, to be clear and loud, to be relentless, untiring, persistent, this is the time to be pushy! Squeaky wheel gets the oil! Talk to anyone who will listen more than 2 seconds and give them your "elevator pitch".

Write an "elevator speech", meaning a one-minute talk to introduce yourself, who you are, why you are good, and what you have to offer to an employer and what you are looking for. Practice the elevator speech and use it whenever you can, it will become easier and easier.

What is the elevator pitch?

Here is an example: "Experienced, Board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist with Yale training and multilingual skills – including fluent Spanish – seeking new practice opportunity in Boston to be closer to family. I have an active Massachusetts license and am available in 3 months."

The elevator pitch is a short introduction to what you have to offer, what you can do for others. You say who you are, what you do, what you excel in and how you are different and better than others. You can end with a call to action, such as "and I can start in one month"

There are several website and even books that spell out how to write the elevator pitch.

Print a business card (if you have Microsoft Publisher or something similar) or have someone print a business card with your phone number, fax number and your email address. Always carry it with you. Hand out this business card with your contact information as often as if possible. You could consider printing your elevator pitch on this card as well.

Start to network with your residency program director. It is part of his or her job to help you find a job. Then ask every single one of your attendings. Ask them if they know anybody who is looking or anybody with a practice you might like, or anybody where you would fit in based on your personality and preferences. Try to find out if there are any former alumni of your residency program in the area where you are searching. Having gone through the same residency makes you sympathetic to a doctor and gives you a psychological "foot in the door".

Ask your parents and grandparents and your in-laws to contact their primary care doctors, their cardiologists, their orthopedists etc. See if the doctors of your family know of a very busy attending that might need help, might need a new associate, that might have plans to expand his or her practice. Just following this recommendation I got two great referrals in no time exactly where I wanted it and with almost no effort. One of them of one of the best job offers I ever had.

Call your friends from medical school to see if they are in apposition to hire you or if their practices or departments are searching – you would have an automatic contact reference. Ask distant relatives you have not talked to for 6 years to inquire at their doctors offices - and even speak to your present acquaintances.

Tell them what you are looking for, where you want to be and what kind of practice you would like to join (you already have decided and formulated this after reading the first paragraph). Don't make it too exclusive, or you will be left without a job and don't be too flexible, because you will be abused by someone who just wants to earn money off your sweat.

You could also try to get contacts through social networking websites such as Friendster or other! There are no limits to how and where you market yourself. Think Guerrilla Marketing. If you do not know what guerrilla marketing is, read the classic book by Jay Levinson "Guerilla Marketing". He wrote and co-wrote a whole series of guerilla marketing books, including "Guerilla Marketiing for Job Seekers". The best book on job searching is still "What Color is Your Parachute?".

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Read that if you have time, if it interests you or if you foresee a long search. Reading one of the Guerilla Marketing books will spark numerous creative ideas, these books are very inspiring and you will have read a marketing classic. Marketing will come in very handy later on in your practice.

2. Actively contact the hospitals and their Ob/Gyn departments in your target area.

You can find all hospitals by going to MedLinePlus, then to Directories, then to American Hospital Association. There you can find hospitals by name, zip code and city. There are several other hospital directories you can search and you will find most of them in the following link This is Pam Pohly's list of hospitals and directories. Pam Pohly was a consultant before becoming a recruiter, which may explain why her website has so much useful information. The is a very inexpensive hospital directory for download for \$97 at Doctorlistpro.com. If you plan to search hospital data a lot, it may be worth buying it.

Once you have the hospital contact data, call the hospital and ask for the Physician Relations person, Physician Liaison or the Network Development person. Ask for the phone, fax and email.

Obviously you can also check the hospital's website. The following link is a fairly complete and reliable list of hospital websites:

<http://neuro-www2.mgh.harvard.edu/hospitalwebusa.html>

The usual list providers, e.g. InfoUSA all have lists of hospitals with more or less detail. The advantage of InfoUSA is their reasonable prices. And the fact that you can buy exactly as many or as few addresses as you need. You essentially only need the address of the administrative offices, and then address your inquiry letter to "Physician Liaison / Network Development"

Sometimes recruiter ads mention things such as "affiliated with newly renovated 301 bed hospital in Southern Texas". Once you know where to find the detailed information about hospitals, you can locate this 301-bed hospital easily and contact them directly.

While contacting hospitals and their departments you will encounter two opposite biases:

First bias: The doctors in your specialty will tell you: "There is no need here, we are all set here, we have too many doctors already, 10 years ago we were 5, now we are 13, it may look like a nice place to live, but believe me, it is a problematic place to practice! Why do you not look 100 miles further north or south, east or west, it's much easier there, I happen to know someone there who is looking yadayadayada". They obviously do not want more competition and are more or less openly trying to discourage you from coming. If they really wanted more physicians, they would already be hiring themselves!

This is course does not mean that you do not have a chance. The local doctors maybe older, maybe all male, may not be that popular anymore, may have some political pressure against them and in reality you may have a pretty good chance of being successful in that particular community.

Second bias, quite opposite to the first bias: The hospital administration is always very enthusiastic and encouraging – they always need more people, there always seems to be room for one or even two or three more, "Yes, there clearly is a need, there is an opportunity, you will do well etc, etc, blah, blah. We can help you with this and that, with everything actually (except a salary of course, except with any money at all, the help usually stops at non-material things, and routinely the Stark rules are cited as a excuse). In fact they might be able to help you a lot with marketing, by providing information about the community, giving you lists of fellow doctors of other specialties, give you background info on the service area of the hospital etc. But the hospital does not care at all (!! how much money you make, or if you make any money at all. Deep down they do not care if you are successful or not. They have in mind that every new doc means another warm body attracting more business to the hospital. Every new doc means more admissions to the hospital floors... and therefore much needed cash in their coffers.

The medical director often stands somewhere in between these two opposites, and it is often someone specially hired for that position (retired, semi-retired handicapped, working part time etc) and therefore frequently the best source of information. Medical directors usually are more neutral. So talk to the medical director and try to get crucial information: how busy are the docs in your field, how is the population growing, which areas in town or in the county are growing and developing, which segment of the population is developing, are people moving in or out of the area, how is the industry doing? Are offices and factories closing or are companies flocking to town to open new ones? Real estate prices going up or down? That means people are coming into the area or are leaving the area...What does the future look like in the area? Then get the names and addresses of the practices affiliated with the hospital and the names and addresses of the practices that are looking or might be looking and contact them directly by sending them you cover letter and CV.

3. And, finally, here is the most successful and least published method. Loved by those who use it. This is the very best way of getting any job anywhere, even in the very best, most attractive, most competitive locations.

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## Direct Mailing and Broadcast Faxing of your cover letter and CV!

This is the most direct way of presenting your cover letter and CV to as many doctors as you want in exactly the area where you want to be.

You buy the names, addresses, phone and fax numbers of all the colleagues you might work for and send them a letter, send them a fax or give them a call. Calling takes a lot of time, I therefore recommend mailing or faxing. The big difference that makes all this easy and feasible is the Internet with unparalleled access to databases and Internet faxing. Something that was extremely time consuming 10 years ago, is now a snap. Applying to 400 physicians is now literally a project for one single weekend.

Buy the addresses, buy the contact data:

The sources for buying physician addresses and contact information, fax numbers, email addresses and numerous data about the practices are:

InfoUSA.com

USdata.com

WebMD, they now sell physician lists on a specialized website, and they seem to have very accurate information, but they have a minimum of over \$500 and I do not recommend them.

MMS, the marketing arm of the American Medical Association, the company that sells lists of their members for profit, so far this service has mainly be used by pharmaceutical companies. Very expensive! Not worth it for the purpose of this review.

Doctorlistpro.com, the most affordable list service, where you have to buy in bulk, such as all doctors in one specialty \$297, all doctors in one state \$297, all doctors in all of the US \$497, all hospitals in the US \$97. WOW! Can't beat those prices, thisn is a lot cheaper then MMSlists. Get these lists before they become illegal or go out of business!

You can also buy or borrow from someone the American Medical Association book or CD that contains all the addresses of doctors in the US. The CD costs about \$1100 and does not allow downloading and exporting of the data into a database. Who knows, maybe you know someone, who knows someone who has the disk and would be willing to loan it to you for a weekend? The AMA is very big on restricting the use of their databases. They want to be sure to squeeze the maximum profit out of your good name. In that context I should mention "Address Grabber" and "List Grabber", 2 most interesting programs described below. You should know what these two programs can do.

You can get these data from Web MD on CD for \$300+ for each metro area. A much more economical solution is to buy the booklets that WebMD sells for \$18 for each Metro area that contain ALL physician names, addresses and telephone numbers. You will have to buy a second booklet for the same area to obtain the fax numbers. The fax booklet will also cost you \$18. Over all a lot cheaper than buying the electronic lists, but you will have to type in th addresses if you ant to use them on a large scale. I have used the booklets from WebMD only to confirm my database that I purchased from InfoUSA. In late 2006 Web MD recently has started an online service to market their address lists - as mentioend above. The website looks very nice and professional. Take a look at it, I have not tried it, but the data are very reliable.

You should be familiar with a software program called "Address Grabber". This is a very nifty tool to collect addresses, names, phone numbers from any electronic sources and insert them into your lists! It sells on the net as a download for \$70. It allows you to "grab" and capture any address you see on your screen from any website, from any source with a single click. Very cool! If you can see it on your screen, you can transfer it to your database! Digest that fro a moment! You can produce your own lists!

You highlight the address you want to grab on the Internet or in Word or in other software...and then transfer all that information into a contact manager such as Outlook or ACT! With a just a single click. The info will appear like magic in the correct place, address in address field, name in name field, fax in fax field etc. Very handy. It is well worth the money if you search for a job in a difficult metro area and have to harvest addresses from the yellow pages, from WebMD etc. Obviously it is good for many other things, such as building address databases for referrals, fund raising, other mailings etc. There is a more advanced version of this technology called "ListGrabber" which imports not only a single address, but a whole page of addresses, a "list", hence the name Listgrabber, all at once, with just one click. It costs over \$250 and most likely it will not pay off if you are a single physician looking for a job. But it is good to know that it exists, you never know...If you are an employer with repeated need for recruitment data, this is the tool for you.

Here is how to go about in detail. Go to InfoUSA.com, which is the easiest to use. Once you are on the website, look in the center, go down and click on: "Doctors, Dentists and other medical lists". In the window that opens click on "Physicians and Surgeons Database" then check the specialties you are interested in, e.g "Obstetrics and Gynecology" and then, further down, check "office based". On the following page uncheck the specialties you are not interested in contacting, e.g. MFM, critical care obstetrics etc. On the next page, click on "select all members in office". Do not check the "fax number" box, since this will exclude doctors that have not listed a fax number. You want all the names and addresses and phone numbers! On the next page you can select the geographic area, which can be the whole country or just one zip code, or a radius of 500 miles around an address or just 10 miles. For example: you would like to join a practice within 15 miles of your parents home. Enter the address of your parents and select "20 miles". on the following page, leave everything unchecked, since it would only reduce your list. Then you get to review the list. Should the list be too large, then choose a smaller geographic selection, or select by age or gender etc. Of course, you can also increase your list this way

Once you are there, go to "physician lists", and then follow the simple steps to select the doctors you want to contact. The price is 50 cents per address. Beats having to type it yourself. Info USA is the database which the other addresses and list providers get their data from. So, go to the source. InfoUSA will email you a list in CSV format, which you can import into Microsoft Outlook, Win Fax, Act, Excel or any "Contact Manager". I would keep the original untouched in a safe place and import the data into your application of choice.

Then you write your cover letter in WinWord. Then go to the Mail Merge function. You find this under "Tools", then "Letters and Mailings", then Mail Merge. Follow the instructions WinWord gives you step by step. You write the master document, then insert the merge fields, then open the database and...merge. You can easily see and manage the merged letters with the "merge toolbar", which you have to open.

Then you print out all the 100 or 200 or 300 letters on white or off white or cream 24 lb paper. You get 100 or 200 or 300 copies of your CV done by you local Staples, Office Max etc.

Then you choose white or clear Avery labels at Staples or Office Max for the address and for the "sender" information (that is your address). WinWord knows how to precisely deal with the size of these labels. You enter the number of the Avery label and Winword knows the size and formats the address information exactly for the label. Magic! Then you print the labels using the Mail merge function again. You then fold and stuff the letters in envelopes, have the envelope weighed at the post office, buy the correct stamps and stick them on. You drop all 300, 500 or 1000 letters off at the post office and Voila! Mass mailing. You almost have the job. Just don't ruin the interview!

There is a company that does all the hard work of the mass mailing for you: 'TheDoctorJob.com'. Go to their website and read and browse. Here are some quotes: "We help more physicians find jobs than any recruiter or job board in the country, and the reason is simple: we work for you, not for the employer. Unlike a recruiter, we won't try to force you to work in a rural area. Most of our clients find jobs in their first geographic choice, and we can help you find a great job in any metropolitan area in the country. 99% of our clients find jobs, and we guarantee that you'll find a job or get your money back. Visit our website at <http://www.thedoctorjob.com>" or call us to talk about our services and get a price quote. You will find a job with The Doctor Job. We guarantee it."

They charge about \$1, 50 to \$2, 00 for each letter sent, but this is not too much. For that amount they review your letter and CV, maybe improve it, they get the names, addresses etc, they merge the letters, print them and send them to you. You have to sign them, to stuff them into the envelopes and to put stamps on them, which costs money at 39 -63 cents a stamp. The service provided by "The Doctor Job" is very reasonably priced at \$ 2000 – \$3500. If that is too expensive for you, do it yourself. I did the mass mailing and faxing myself, and it cost about \$1000, but it was a lot of work. I did never regret it though.

There is another company that provides this service since late 2006: Doccafe.com, a website founded and run by a former in-house physician recruiter and a lawyer. Not bad overall, but they still live off recruiter ads...

#### 4. Mass Faxing:

Legal notice: Do Mass Faxing at your own risk and only after closely looking at the rules and regulations in the state you fax to! I am not responsible for anything that happens to you as a result of mass faxing. You have been warned!

You buy the addresses from e.g Info USA have your CV and cover letter (re)written by Quintessential, add a signature image at the bottom of the fax and then fax it to 10, 50, 100 or 1000 colleagues using Jblast.

Step by step: You get the fax numbers from the same list sources. You use the same cover letter and CV. You can either sit at home or at the office fax machine and manually fax the hundred or two hundred cover letters and CV copies.

You can also mass fax using an Internet service provider called [www.j2.com](http://www.j2.com), who offers a fax broadcast service called Jblast. Jblast is great, since it is easy to operate and offers a Mail Merge function that works just like Mail Merge in MS

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Word. And is very reasonably priced. You can use your Word document and your CSV address and fax number list or your Excel address/fax number list.

I recommend using an Internet faxing service anyway, since you can get a personal fax number with an area code of your choice - yes an area code anywhere in the USA - and you can switch it at any time. Now you have a fax number that you can print on your CV. The advantage is that this fax number will follow you after you move and after you leave residency. This fax number is as portable as your yahoo, hotmail or Gmail email address. This is an advantage because employer can send you faxes even after you have moved away and still find you. Maybe this is the way you will hear about your dream job!

Important! Add a signature at the bottom of your fax. It makes it look a lot better, more realistic, more credible. I wrote my signature on a tablet computer, saved it as a file, emailed myself the file and pasted it into my word document between the "Sincerely" and my name at the bottom - voila!

#### 5. Follow up!

Believe it or not, your application is not that special! Yes, it may get lost, neglected, forgotten in the daily rush, put at the bottom of a pile, or it may just get thrown away since the owner had a bad, fight with the spouse etc. It therefore is a good idea to fax the same letter and CV or a slightly different, maybe shorter version - about 2 weeks later. Keep your cover letter and CV in front of your potential employers!

And of course, you could call the most interesting practices and ask to speak to the doctors. Always leave message that you called with your call back number. This is not the time to be shy! Squeaky wheel gets the oil.

Should you not get the right practice during the first mailing campaign, then try to mail to a larger group, let's say a wider area. Include one or two or three more counties, or a few more zip codes. Are you sure that your CV is optimized? Is it really written by a professional? Have you made sure that Your letter arrives on Tuesday or Wednesday, when it has the highest chances of getting read?

Or just try the same list again, who knows. Maybe this time they will actually open the envelope, maybe the practice situation has changed. Sometimes partners or associates or their husband or wives leave, sometimes people die or suddenly have to retire. So, just try again, I would recommend to repeat this every 4 months. It will work!

Your Matthias Muenzer, MD

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