

PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL

HEALTH CARE

My View: Use these tips to help remedy the competitive search for health care talent

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During Covid, I couldn't get through the news without seeing a story about the heroic efforts of health care workers going above and beyond the call of duty to save lives.

Today, such work is largely in the rear-view mirror as we resume our daily lives.

But from where I sit, the crisis is far from over. Like the rest of the nation, Arizona is in dire need of health care workers – from the back office to the front lines and health plans to hospitals. There simply are not enough people to fill the open positions, particularly as our state continues to grow.

This demand is creating fierce competition among employers vying for talent who are using the same old method of posting job ads and praying in hopes that candidates will come their way.

It's time to throw out this tired playbook and think creatively about ways to build the health care workforce of the future.

Not surprisingly, compensation and benefits are the top reasons candidates leave the comfort of their current positions to assume new roles. But these are not the only considerations.

Sun Health, one of our clients, has figured this out and is using these insights to its advantage.

Most companies reimburse new hires who relocate from out of state. Sun Health, located in Surprise, has taken that concept a step further by covering expenses of new workers who relocate from other parts of the Valley. It seems like a small concession, but it can reap big rewards that result in great new hires.

Sun Health also has offered a candidate in one key position a chance to test-drive the organization. The three-month contract enabled the organization to crystallize the skills needed to be successful in the role while giving the candidate a glimpse of the area and job before moving from out of state.

The battle for health care talent

Knowing how to leverage the size and location of your organization in these and other ways can help win the battle for health care talent.

In another instance, we filled a key position with a leader who had worked in a similar-sized area in central Arizona for whom the job and community were a perfect fit. Joining a smaller organization offered another benefit – being a big fish in a small pond, where the new leader has access to the hospital's CEO and a clear path for growth and development.

For hard-to-fill positions, some health care businesses offer not only a sign-on bonus but also a retention bonus to reward workers for staying put for two years or more.



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As culture becomes a bigger draw, especially for younger members of the workforce, employers should also let candidates experience the magic of their workplace firsthand.

While there is a shortage of workers to fill critical roles at health care organizations, there are countless ways to bolster their recruitment efforts. It just requires a little ingenuity.

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