

Tips for success

Dara Ann O'Malley provides some helpful hints for applying for nursing and midwifery jobs in today's tough market



WHETHER it's vying for a job at home or abroad, candidates will have a better chance at success with these useful tips for applications and interviews.

Curriculum vitae

Always attach a cover letter to your CV. This helps to set you apart from other candidates and shows that you have invested time and thought into your application. The letter should outline why you want the role and the characteristics, qualities and experience that would make you the ideal candidate for the position.

Your CV should always start with your contact information and include your email address. It should be easy to read so that potential employers can quickly locate the information they are seeking.

Don't overload it with too much text, select an easy-to-read font such as Calibri, and use a font size between 12 and 14 points for general text. Highlight important information, such as your name and qualifications, with larger font or bold text.

Ideally, your CV should be two pages. If it is any longer, employers may not take the time to read it properly. If called for an interview, you can expand on any area of your CV. You do not need to include a section on hobbies and interests unless you have a particular interest that relates to nursing or midwifery, or an unusual hobby that could be used as a talking point during an interview.

If there is a gap in your employment history because you went travelling or pursued other interests, include details of what you did during that time in your CV.

Get permission from your referees' before including them on your CV. Your referees should be aware that you are applying for a job or attending an interview, and they should be prepared to receive an enquiry about you.

Dress code

Business dress is essential for interviews.

For example, do not wear jeans. Although nurses and midwives do not require business attire on the wards, wearing smart business dress for an interview is essential in creating a good impression.

It's a good idea to wear smart shoes that you can walk in comfortably. Try to keep jewellery and make-up to a minimum and tie long hair back as this can all distract the interviewer. The primary aim in an interview is to convey a clear sense of who you are, how you work and how you would deal with particular work-related situations.

Research

If you are applying to a hospital, make sure you have researched the hospital and are aware of its ethos or mission statement. Check the hospital website for information, including the different specialties it covers, or if you know someone working there, ask them for advice before the interview. Interviewers will expect you to have basic knowledge about the hospital you are applying to work in.

Nursing in Ireland

We are currently experiencing a very difficult time in Ireland due to the economic situation and government cuts to healthcare spending. However, there are available vacancies in public Irish hospitals for specialist nurses for areas such as intensive care, critical care, theatre, emergency departments, oncology and clinical nurse manager and director of nursing posts.

Nursing in the UK

If you are interviewing for an NHS hospital it is essential that you know about:

- The six Cs: care; communication; compassion; courage; competency; and commitment
- The Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust Report – this found that there was a high mortality rate in this trust due to nursing staff

shortages and poor nursing care

- The Francis Report – this report was published following an extensive inquiry into failings at Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust
- The Care Quality Commission – the UK equivalent of Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)
- Accountability and responsibility in nursing and midwifery – you will certainly be asked about these aspects of your role.

Registering with the NMC

NMC stands for the Nursing and Midwifery Council which is the UK's equivalent of The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (formerly known as An Bord Altranais).

Registering with the NMC is a long and lengthy process but a nursing recruitment agency can assist with the NMC application. Applications will be reviewed before they are sent to the NMC in order to avoid delays in the application process.

Accommodation

Nursing recruitment agencies also provide a meet and greet service for applicants for when they arrive off the plane. They organise transport to the hospital and assist in finding accommodation to make moving to the UK as easy as possible.

Prospects and coming home

Working in the UK offers nurses and midwives the opportunity to work in a specialist area for up to two years and then return home with greater experience and improved employment prospects.

Dara Ann O'Malley is a former student and new graduate officer of the INMO and now works as a health recruitment consultant