

Lehigh University Counseling Center

Finding and Applying for Jobs

- 1) What are some examples of the types of counseling-related positions in your organization?

We provide outpatient therapy. We also have Mobile Therapists and Behavioral Specialist Consultants. We provide social skills groups, after school programs, and a summer therapeutic program.

- 2) How do you recruit for positions? If there are multiple methods, which do you prefer?

We use Monster.com and post positions there. Elwyn also has listings on their site. We do not utilize LinkedIn.

- 3) What credentials do you look for? Is licensure required in your organization and if so, which kind?

We have master's level staff. Applicants must have some experience working with children or adolescence and should have experience with Autism. It is helpful if the applicant has had training in various areas.

- 4) Do you ever recruit at colleges/universities and if so, do you develop lists of target schools?

We do not necessarily target schools for staff positions within the organization. We do, however, utilize Muhlenberg College students for internship experiences.

- 5) Could you describe the application process in your organization, including all the application materials you request from candidates (letters of recommendation, etc.), and how the resume/CV screening process works.

Applicants can apply online at Elwyn.org or Monster.com. On these sites, you should attach your resume and cover letter. The cover letter is extremely important (you can outline your experience with Autism). If an applicant's resume is not clear, they will not be called. If you are offered an interview, we ask that you bring your driver's license, social security card, official transcripts of original diploma, all clearances and CPR/first aid certifications if you have it. We do a driver's record check from the past 3 years. You must also fill out an arrest and conviction report because you cannot be hired in these positions (or as a teacher) if you have certain prior convictions.

- 6) What advice do you have for candidates with regard to seeking open positions and applying for internships or full-time employment?

You should definitely use a cover letter and make it reflect your interest within this organization. (Do not reuse prior cover letter- information/interests should change). Sometimes it is very clear if someone does not change their cover letter because they may be applying for a mobile therapist position and say that they are interesting in become a teacher in the cover letter. Applicants should look at the positions they are applying for and see what it entails. Make your application unique to what it is you want to do.

Resume

- 7) Which do you prefer- a resume or a CV?

No preference.

- 8) When you review resumes or CV's, in terms of overall content, what specific information are you most interested in?

I need to know what degree's you have. I also want to know where you have worked and your experiences in those positions (what population you have worked with, roles, responsibilities, etc.). It is important that I understand how your experience is relevant to the position you are applying for. I also see if you have listed that you have been discharged from employment (which we can review during the interview).

- 9) Should candidates list their undergraduate/graduate GPAs?

Sure

- 10) Do you look for a list of assessment tools that the candidate is knowledgeable of?

Only for some master's level positions.

- 11) How important is it for candidates to list the counseling theoretical orientations they have knowledge of and/or have demonstrated?

I ask for this when someone is applying for a mobile therapist position.

- 12) When screening resumes or CV's, are there personal qualities that you look for? Is so, what are they? How are they demonstrated on good resumes or CV's?

I like for resumes to be organized. There should be no spelling or grammatical errors. In cover letters- sometimes people are too presumptive and forward. Sometimes people think that I am obligated to interview them and they demand to be contacted. I do not like when people complain about prior experiences. I want people to highlight their positive qualities. Candidates should list their experiences and also use examples. (Don't

just say I have experience working with kids...explain where and how you have worked with children. In what capacity?)

- 13) What kind of computer skills do you look for?

Computer skills are not necessary for the positions- it is just important that applicants be able to juggle multiple tasks.

- 14) What is the level of detail you prefer in the “experience” sections of resumes?
(Population served, specific tasks, methods, and/or assessments used, outcomes).

I like more detail than less. It is really helpful if you can give an example of the role you had in an organization and identify the population served (ages, diagnoses).

- 15) What kind of outcome information is important to you? Could you give an example?

It is ok if someone lists that they have utilized applied behavioral analysis strategies and gives examples.

- 16) What are some of the biggest mistakes you have seen candidates make on resumes or CV's?

In general, people have listed objectives that are not related to the position they are applying for. (To me, an objective is not necessary...it is sometimes fake sounding and can be construed as “fluff.”) Sometimes people have a lot of spelling errors. I have seen candidates you have omitted important information. I have also had people list the wrong telephone number so I cannot contact them. E-mail is important in society right now...I use it to contact for candidates. Do not use your phone (it is easy to make mistakes) to write back e-mails. For example, I once contacted a girl and she used her phone to instantly reply an e-mail back and she said, “OMG, yea im still interested.” I actually prefer not to get hand delivered resumes because I do not like when people are “too pushy.” If I think you are a good fit and I am interested, I will contact you.

Interviews

- 17) How does the interview process work (How many rounds, who conducts them?)

The program supervisor conducts them for the mobile therapist and behavioral specialist consultant positions. A social worker will conduct the interview for a position in the outpatient program. There is typically only one interview. However, occasionally there will be multiple qualified candidates and we are only looking to fill one or two spots. In this instance, we may have two interviews. The hiring process is long and may take up to a month (we need to have employees complete a drug screening, physical, a tb test, and also wait for clearances if they are not complete).

18) Who ultimately makes the hiring decisions?

The program supervisor

19) In your opinion, what is the best way for a candidate to prepare for an interview in your organization?

It is important to have some knowledge of the position you are applying for. Sometimes people have no clue what they are applying for and it is evident. It is helpful if they know a little bit about the company because it shows they have looked into it. It is important to think through different scenarios about issues they have dealt with in the past or obstacles they may face with coworkers. Applicants should also think through their strengths and go over possible ethical dilemmas. It is helpful if a candidate brings in certificates from previous trainings or a sample of their work.

20) Do you use behavioral interview questions and if so, which one?

I use scenario questions in general. I ask which methods or strategies someone might use given a certain situation. I will also ask communication questions too. For example, if something was going on with a family- who would be a point of contact for the employee and who might they involve.

21) What are some of the biggest mistakes you have seen candidates make during interviews?

People have unattractive body language sometimes. For instance, I had someone who came in and slumped on his chair and then put his head in his hands. I do not like when people bash companies they have worked for although it is ok to state professional problems in the past and how they have handled them. I have had people come in for interviews and use clients' names and give too much personal information about someone else. Sometimes people try to "over sell" knowledge that they have, even though they do not actually have the experiences. I had someone who said they worked with children and I could tell she was not being completely honest. I called the company and they only served an adult population and I asked her again if that was the company she worked with children at and she lied to me. People try to "expand the truth" and I am really good at telling if they are lying- I will contact previous employers. It is completely Ok to admit you may not have experience in an area but show interest.

22) Certainly, all candidates should be prepared to answer any interview question. But which question or questions are the most important ones that candidates should be prepared to answer?

People must answer questions using a balance- there are not necessarily questions that are most important. For example, someone took an hour and a half to answer one question and would not let me intervene. I do not like short answers though that are yes or no. I appreciate when someone can expand using a scenario or example that has happened. It is

ok to process the question and pauses are helpful to gather your thoughts. I like when someone can tell me about a time when they have had difficulty and tell me how they handled it. It is ok to go back to a question and clarify and answer but you should not go back after I expressed an opinion and change your answer.