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Don’t Let Technology Stop You
You are more techno-savvy than you think, but there are also ways to build your skills.
By Linda Jones

After 10 years of being a stay-at-home mom, you’re ready to get back to your chosen career in healthcare. You brush off your résumé; add transferable skills from recent experiences; take a refresher course for your clinical skills; and become paralyzed by the thought of how much healthcare delivery has changed, especially “paperwork.”

When you left to raise your children, documentation was done at a workstation with pen and paper. Orders came over the phone and the fax machine was always buzzing. Today, it seems healthcare providers have to be able to text like a 15-year-old and navigate a variety of computer programs to get anything done. And worst yet, most of it is done right in front of the patient.

Updating Your Technology Skill Set
The challenge you face is that you cannot learn the exact computer programs being used in the facilities you will be applying to. Programs are usually facility- and situation-specific, and not accessible outside of the institution. That said, you are closer than you think to being familiar with how these systems work. The key is not to be intimidated by technology.

Luckily, the programs are designed to be user friendly and intuitive (even if they don’t always seem that way). You can apply the logic you’ve learned interacting with other programs, as well as taking courses on computer basics. That will give you the confidence to interface with any new system.

Google “learning computers” to find myriad online courses, many free. You can also find classes at your local community college or adult learning center.

You’ll realize the same logic used to check in at the airport, make a purchase online and operate your phone is incorporated into just about every interaction you have with a computer. The information you gain with the course will give you the confidence you need in an interview. When you are asked, “Do you have experience with electronic health records?” you can respond with: “While I have not worked at an EHR facility, I am confident in my ability to learn quickly as I am familiar with many computer programs and the basics of how programs work. And to prepare for this, I also recently took an online course on computing. A high-tech environment will not be a challenge for me and I look forward to working in this more efficient environment.”

Linda Jones is editorial director at ADVANCE.
As a student or new graduate, the prospect of finding a job can be daunting. From the initial search to résumé-building to the interview process, the task to find a good position can be challenging. However, with the right tools, guidance and advice, this endeavor doesn’t have to be discouraging. With this in mind, ADVANCE for Nurses presents an educational resource center for students and new graduates that is rich in content to help build a solid career foundation.

With helpful employment advice and tips, the Student & New Grad Center features compelling articles, interactive learning and daily nursing news — all to help prepare you as you enter the world of nursing.

In addition, connect with your colleagues and future employers on Facebook and Twitter. Or check out, ADVANCE’s job board on Twitter. ADVANCE also offers a new grad blog. Authored by new graduates and current students, these women and men share their classroom and professional experiences and their special perspectives about the field.

In a recent blog post, Lorenzo Ortega, a student at California State University, Sacramento, shared his experience as a volunteer at the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services. As a nursing student in Sacramento, Ortega and his classmates often volunteer in the community.

During this recent experience, he was asked to make conversation with people waiting in line. Ortega soon became aware of the common health problems that surfaced — high blood pressure and high blood glucose levels. In Ortega’s posting, he advocates a universal healthcare system because “every person should have a right to basic healthcare because the health of our society as a whole needs to be strong.”

Visit www.advanceweb.com/NurseGrads to learn more.

Webinars

Online learning is an easy and efficient way to stay up-to-date with issues affecting the nursing community.

Each month, join ADVANCE for a free informational webinar series. If you miss one, you always can check out the archived events.

On June 12 at 2 p.m. ET, Cheryl Dellasega, PhD, GNP, discusses relational aggression/female bullying, and how it impacts the nursing profession across generations and genders. The author...

Your CE Checklist

Here are some quick tips to help you determine the CE training that will best meet your needs.

Pre-approval. Has the training you plan to attend been approved for continuing education (CE) units?

Before attending any seminar, ask the provider if its seminar has been pre-approved for CEUs by your professional organization or licensing board. If not, be sure that the certificate of attendance you receive for attending the course can be converted to CEUs before you attend.

Matched to your level of education. Ensure that the seminar instructor has at least your baseline level of knowledge. This doesn’t mean you wouldn’t learn from a course instructed by another type of professional; but you should be aware of the credentials of the instructor who teaches your course. Beware of ethical and scope-of-practice issues. Just because you learn a fabulous technique at a seminar doesn’t mean you are permitted to perform it on a patient.

Immediately usable. One of the most common complaints among seminar participants is that the information provided during the seminar was helpful — just for someone else’s practice.

Many healthcare professionals pay good money to attend a seminar and end up with few usable ideas. Also, your facility and programs may vastly differ from those used in the instructor’s examples.

Instructed in a hands-on lab. Many seminars don’t lend themselves to labs — business, ethics and administrative content are examples. However, some seminars purporting to teach technique may look good in the brochure, but skimp on kinesthetic learning. Lecture-style learning only goes so far. If you’re not provided the opportunity to practice techniques on each other, the information often fades before you hop in your car and head home.

Andrea Salzman, MS, PT, is the founder of the Aquatic Resources Network and director of programming for Aquatic Therapy University, www.aquatic-university.com
of When Nurses Hurt Nurses: Recognizing and Overcoming the Cycle of Bullying, Dellasega will offer advice and tips to improve your work environment.

In July, Charlene Romer, PhD, MSN, and Toni Hebda, PhD, MNEd, MS, present a discussion on disaster preparedness for the bedside nurse. This webinar will help prepare registered nurses in acute care settings to respond effectively to a variety of disaster situations that impact hospitals. Learn more about the nurse’s general role as well as a nursing informatics perspective.

To sign up for live events or to see a selection of archived webinars, visit www.advanceweb.com/NurseWebinars.

CE Live

Learning is a dynamic process whether inside a classroom or at home at your computer. With this in mind, ADVANCE for Nurses presents CE Live, a brand-new educational series. Experts will share their knowledge in topics across the continuum of healthcare in these webinars.

These online courses are another convenient way to earn credits. You may earn 1 contact hour by taking and passing a test following each CE Live. Viewers can watch the live presentation or view archived events. Those who attend live events can participate in a Q&A after the session.

As a legal consultant and principal of Chizek Consulting, Inc., in Westmont, IL, Mardy Chizek, MBA, RN, FNP, BSN, AAS, presents the first four sessions.

In the next session, Chizek will discuss customer service tips, and how to understand how customers evaluate their experiences. Avoiding unhappy customers is the best risk management strategy, Chizek explains.

Visit www.advanceweb.com/NursesCELive to attend online courses right in your home or office.

Job Fairs

Embarking on a job search can lead down many paths, but ADVANCE offers a centralized resource center to help the process. Geared to its healthcare community, ADVANCE delivers free access to dozens of medical job fairs and virtual job fairs. ADVANCE is committed to providing opportunities to engage with recruiters and future colleagues.

Offered throughout the country, in-person job fairs allow you to meet face-to-face with recruiters, take free classes and network.

However, if you need the convenience of home or work, visit one of the many virtual job fairs. Offered regionally, virtual job fairs allow you to connect with recruiters, submit your résumé and participate in education sessions.

Interested in a particular facility? Check out the virtual open house to find out more about a featured exhibitor with immediate opportunities. Talk to recruiters or submit your résumé.

As always, ADVANCE is dedicated to providing information about industry trends and technologies in a convenient, affordable way. View expert presentations and network with vendors at ADVANCE’s virtual conferences. Upcoming topics include “Best Practices in Nursing,” and an “Education Fair for Healthcare Professionals.”

Visit www.advanceweb.com/Events for more information.

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