

Professional Skills for the Medical Interpreter

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Presentation Objectives

- Understand what hiring managers are looking for in a candidate
- Become more marketable in a competitive job-seeking environment

Learn to:

- Be an active participant in the onboarding process
- Adapt to your new work environment
- Bring positive energy to the workplace

What is CHA?

CHA is a public safety-net health system serving:

- 140,000 patients in the Metro-North region of Greater Boston, MA

CHA operates, under 1 license:

- 3 hospital campuses
- 15 primary care practices
- 19 specialty centers
- Cambridge Public Health Department

CHA employs 102 medical interpreters (56 fulltime)!



CHA academic partnerships include:

- Harvard Medical School
- Harvard School of Public Health
- Tufts University School of Medicine

What's in a resume?

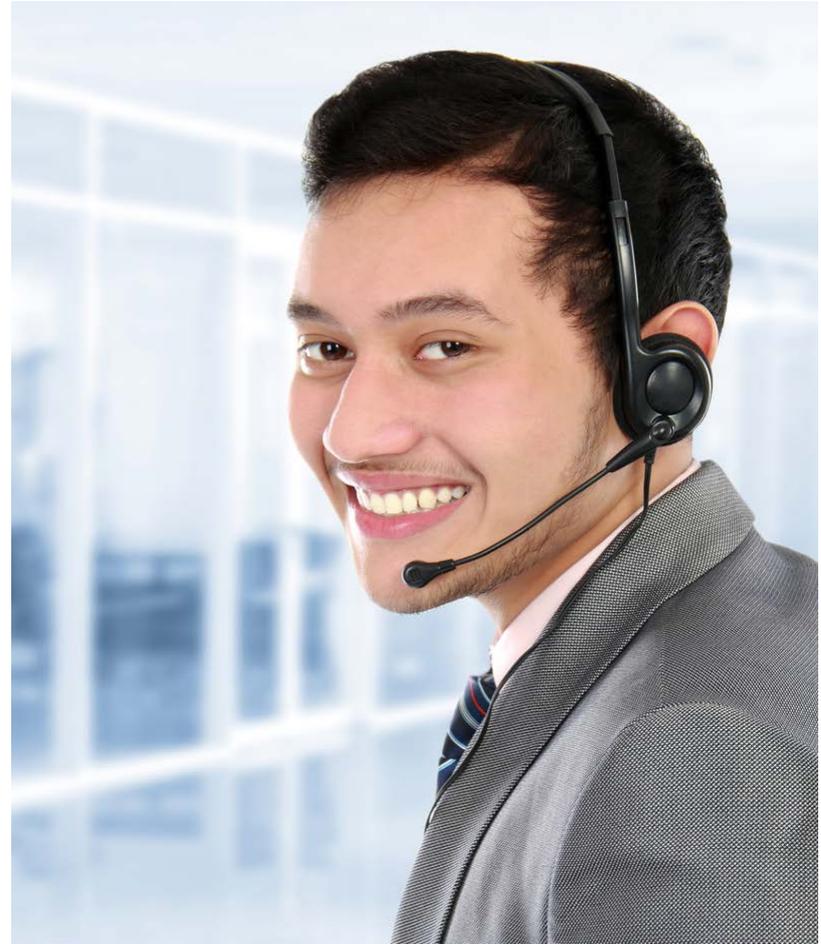
- Software vs human filter
- Intro to interpreter program manager?
- Online application is generally required to start process
- International formats may not be appropriate
 - photo
 - marital status, etc.
- Training certificate
 - 40, 54, 60 Hours
- College-based training
- Degree (if required)
- Professional experience as medical interpreter
- National certification
- Keywords from job description increase chances to match

A better job search

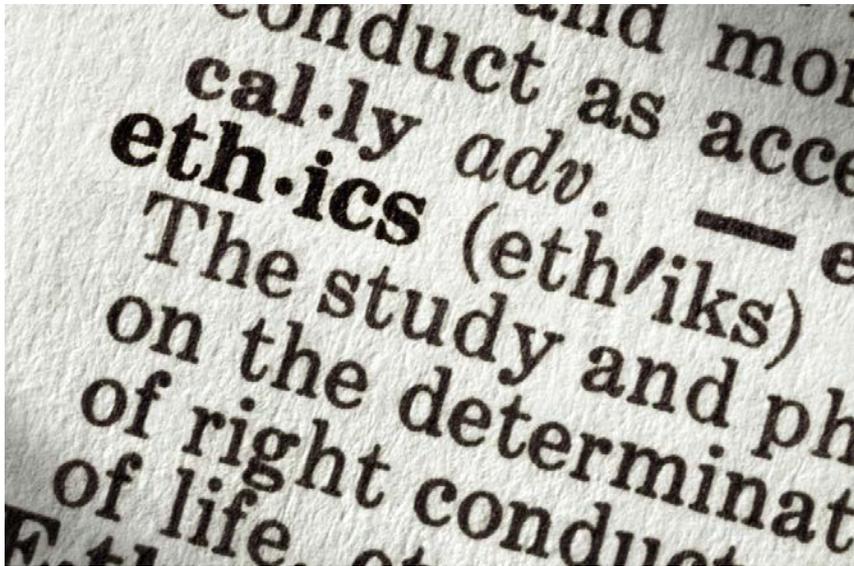
- Proactive
- Apply online before you contact HR/Hiring Manager
- Complete application process (mobile vs full)
- Have documentation ready for verification (certificates, certifications, licenses)
- References for medical interpreting vs character references
- Responsiveness, availability for calls, meetings, occ health
- Treat job search like job
- Value the interview – give priority
- Prepare for interview

Prepare for the Interview

- Find out more about the org – services, locations
- Find out about program – modalities, phone, video, in-person, dual role
- Be prepared with questions about language access delivery
- Admit limitations in experience, express willingness to grow



Prepare for the Interview cont...



- Know your core values and ensure alignment with prospective employer
- Be prepared to discuss sensitive topics (how would you handle assignments involving abortion, end-of-life, etc.?)
- Should you discuss special accommodations (ADA)?

What Managers Don't Like to Hear

Know the difference
between a Hiring Manager
and an HR discussion!

Hiring managers might not
discuss (in a 1st
interview):

- salary/compensation
- vacations
- benefits packages



Ace the onboarding

- Don't expect to be spoon fed
- Be proactive about identifying resources
- Ask thoughtful questions
- Tap into knowledge of existing staff
- Listen, and don't be defensive, even if you disagree
- Honor and respect colleagues and institutional experience
- Self-monitor for:
 - volume
 - respect for shared spaces
 - adherence to dress code and fragrance policies

Positioning for Employment

Achieve national certification if available in your language pair!

- Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese, ASL
- CHI, CMI, NIC, RID, CDI

If full certification is not yet available:

- Gather portfolio of prior tests
- Know which one your prospective employer uses
- Prepare for test (study guide? online resources?)
- Benefits of CoreCHI, QMI

What about independent contractors?

- Be organized – you are your own business
- Communicate well – rapid response
- Follow client processes
- Build in travel time
- Professional attire/badge
- On-time arrival = 15 min early
- Bill on time (30, 60), and never duplicate!
- Annual requirements
- Vaccines
- Maintain credentials



Takeaways

- What new information or perspective did you hear in this conversation?
- What applications of this content will you make to your job search in the next 90 days?
- What applications of this content can be made by an interpreter who is not currently seeking employment?