

10 Attributes To Look for When Hiring a Credentialing Specialist



Hiring a credentialing specialist is an important decision that impacts the efficiency, compliance, and revenue outcomes of a healthcare organization. Check out this list of the top 10 things to look for in a qualified healthcare credentialing candidate, along with interview questions to assess their skills.

- 1. Industry Knowledge:** The candidate's expressed knowledge of federal and state-specific rules and regulations, which sources are credible, and where to access the most up-to-date information will help you to distinguish between various levels of expertise.

Interview Question: Can you explain the differences between accreditation, certification, and credentialing?

- 2. Credentialing Experience:** Look for candidates with experience in processing applications, verifying credentials, and managing provider enrollment. You want the specialist to be organized and create or follow standardized processes and workflows to reduce delays.

Interview Question: Tell me about your process for provider enrollments.

- 3. Regulatory Compliance:** The specialist should be well-versed in the most up-to-date regulatory aspects of healthcare, including state- and federally-funded programs like Medicare and Medicaid. This would include knowledge of CMS, The Joint Commission, AAAHC, and other accrediting body requirements.

Interview Question: How do you stay updated on industry regulations and best practices?

- 4. Attention to Detail:** Credentialing involves meticulous attention to detail. The specialist must be thorough in verifying credentials, licenses, certifications, education, work history, and other provider information and documents. Careless mistakes can delay the credentialing process, costing your organization time and money.

Interview Question: How do you keep track of documents and deadlines for payer enrollments and recredentialing?

- 5. Interpersonal Skills:** Effective communication is crucial, as the credentialing specialist will interact with providers, staff, payers, and regulatory bodies. A qualified candidate needs to be competent and confident in getting prompt responses from not only payers, but also medical staff for correctly establishing facility and provider privileges.

Interview Question: [Scenario-based] You feel like a payer is unnecessarily delaying the process – What steps would you take to resolve the delay in an application?

- 6. Technology & Software:** A successful specialist is comfortable with technology and capable of navigating an array of online resources, including OIG-LEIE, SAM, and state exclusion check databases, the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB), CAQH ProView, and many others.

Interview Question: What software or tools have you used for credentialing, and how comfortable are you with technology?

- 7. Problem-Solving Abilities:** Credentialing can involve complex situations, such as resolving discrepancies in records or addressing issues with licensing. A strong and proactive problem-solving ability is important to avoid falling out of compliance.

Interview Question: Can you give me an example of a complex credentialing case you successfully handled?

- 8. Time Management:** Managing critical timelines and deadlines, especially expiring licenses or certifications, means the specialist needs to be highly organized, efficient, and capable of multitasking.

Interview Question: How do you prioritize tasks to ensure timely completion of credentialing applications and is there anything you do to expedite the process?

- 9. Understanding of Provider Types:** Different types of providers (physicians, nurses, therapists, etc.) have varying credentialing requirements. A thorough understanding of these nuances and what each application process entails is a necessary qualification.

Interview Question: What types of providers have you credentialed?

- 10. References and Track Record:** Check the candidate's references and track record. If possible, inquire about their performance in previous roles and their ability to meet deadlines, maintain compliance, and stay up to date with regulatory changes.

Interview Question: What makes you a credentialing expert that I can trust and rely on to meet our credentialing needs?

By carefully evaluating candidates based on these factors, you'll be better equipped to find a credentialing specialist — or service — that can effectively manage your credentialing processes and contribute to the overall success of your healthcare organization.

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