

## So You're Looking for a Job...

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Most AAs still find employment prior to graduation and prior to certification, which is atypical for most healthcare professions. Like general NPs and PAs, many states allow AAs to be hired and work prior to certification, though NPs and PAs aren't reimbursable until they are board certified and officially licensed. AA students and practitioners frequently ask how they can increase their employability. Below is advice from the AA practice committee and communication committee on making the most of your job search:

### **1. Form a good relationship with your Anesthesiologist's State Component Society.**

Align yourself with the right people, and good things will happen. Ask if AA's can become affiliate members, and offer to contribute to their PAC. The amount doesn't matter, if you show an interest in them, they will show an interest in you. Attend that state component society's annual meeting. Set up a booth to hand out information on AA's. Offer to give a short presentation on AA's. All AAs should become well versed in AA talking points to be able to answer questions about their profession accurately, succinctly, and positively.

### **2. Join your State Academy!**

If you don't have one, form one. It's easy. Contact the AAAA for how to do so. A strong and active presence of local AA's will open doors faster than a couple of AAs doing all the work. The AAAA will help wherever possible, but the local population of AA's will know the atmosphere in their locale better than anyone.

### **3. Do a thorough job search online.**

Besides looking at AA jobs, look at NA jobs also. Anywhere you see that the anesthesiologist is 100% medically directing NAs, that is an opportunity for an AA. It doesn't hurt to ask and knowing AAs are interested in their practice sometimes gets the wheels turning for later interest in using AAs. Some practices are interested in AAs but don't initiate the process of hiring one due to misinformation or lack of knowledge on how to do so. AAAA has all the resources you need to educate a potential employer.

#### **4. Target MD only practices.**

With the changes in healthcare, these practices are more interested than ever in physician extenders. Show them that AA's are their best option.

**5. Always have a resume prepared during a clinical rotation and don't be shy about offering it.** You should also prepare a curriculum vitae (CV) and know when to use each. The primary difference is the length and what is included. A CV is longer, at least two pages, and more detailed. It includes a summary of your academic background, teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honors, affiliations, and other details that better present you as a candidate for the job, such as a summary of your clinical experiences. A resume is brief and concise and should be one page. If it's longer than one page, you are probably including irrelevant information. The purpose of a resume is to get an interview. Resumes are reviewed in less than 30 seconds. In that 30 seconds an employer is looking for three pieces of information: your education, experience, and credentials. Make it easy to find.

**Education:** You should begin a resume with your education. List the name, city, and state of your university, followed by the month and year of your graduation. If you haven't graduated yet, write "expected" before the intended date of your graduation. Specify your educational degree (i.e. Master of Medical Science). Do not list your GPA.

**Experience:** As a student, your only relevant experience is your clinical rotations. You should only include previous work experience prior to or during school if it was medically related, in the military, or an extremely impressive position. If an employer wants to know about previous experience to AA school, they will ask you about it in an interview. This doesn't mean your experience wasn't valuable but a potential AA employer is deciding whether or not to hire you as an AA. Work experience entries should be limited to your employer and job title, not duties. New grads should create a section named "clinical rotations" to outline significant accomplishments and skills mastered but avoid a list of core competencies. Core competencies are the *minimum* skill set an employer would expect from any AA and such a list won't make you stand out. Offer objective and quantifiable information about your clinical rotations. You might state the number and type of anesthetics you performed to give your employer a clear picture of your clinical preparation.

**Credentials:** Licenses and Certifications  
You should clearly state your status in the process of obtaining both license and certification. You should include a scheduled test date for certification if you are new grad, or a date of expiration if you are currently certified. (i.e. NCCAA Board Certification-test date 6/1/2014 or NCCAA Board Certification-expiration 6/1/2014). If you have taken boards but have not yet received your results, list your status as "pending results". If you have or are in the process of applying for your state AA

license you can list that as “application pending” other wise list it as “current” with an expiration date and state. Never include your license numbers on a resume.

Once you have a resume and use it to get an interview, there are other considerations before you start working to think about and discuss with a potential employer.

- **Credentialing:** Know what you need and whom you need to give it to. Write their name and number down because you will likely communicate with this person on a yearly basis and will need to retrieve information from them when you re-credential and also if you change jobs.
- **Liability:** Ask your employer specifically what areas of the hospital you cover, what tasks are covered in your credentialing, who your insurance carrier is and whether or not you have an individual policy or practice under an umbrella.
- **Contract:** Will you have one? What is the renewal period? Is there a non compete clause and how many miles does it cover? What is your obligation for notice of resignation? How long is the probation period before you sign a contract?
- **Benefits:** Know if and what type of retirement plan is offered. Is health insurance included or do you pay a premium? Is family insurance available? Do you receive continuing educational money or time off for meetings/certifications (ACLS, PALS, NCCAA)? Most annual meetings are the same week every year, know what the policy is regarding who gets the time off and how many staff members may be off. Who pays your state licensing fee? Is disability insurance offered and is it long term, short term, neither or both? Will the employer support or make any consideration for leadership in professional

- organizations? What is the policy for taking paid leave or unplanned emergency leave?
- Fully understand the call obligation and pay for call prior to accepting a position. What is the typical amount of overtime obligation? Will you do shift work? Is there flexibility change in your schedule should your needs change?
  - Items you should consider about a hospital are reputation in the community, compliance with regulations, designated trauma level, size (number of operating rooms and beds), presence of training programs, and specialties represented. Observe the reputation of the anesthesia department in the hospital and their relationship with hospital administration.
  - Scope of practice. Find out what type of cases you will be expected to do both regularly and rarely. Know if you will place invasive lines and/or regional anesthetics.
  - Be aware of any restriction to AA practice in your state or reimbursement challenges in the past or ongoing.

All AAs should take stock of the market periodically and get an idea of who is hiring and what the typical pay for an area is. The job market for AAs is always fluctuating. Being a AAAA member is best way to stay connected to other AAs and remain vigilant about our changing marketplace. Best of luck to all of our future AAs!