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Is a physicians answering service better than a receptionist? Continue reading and youâ€™ll get the answer...

Receptionist

A receptionist performs the following tasks:

- â€¢ takes calls, screens, and directs them

- â€¢ takes messages and transfers them

- â€¢ greets clients warmly and answers their queries

- â€¢ greets people arriving at the hospital or corporate house

- â€¢ directs people in the hospital or company to the concerned department

- â€¢ provides information and support to callers

- â€¢ provides general clerical services and administrative support

- â€¢ replies to mails, takes deliveries, sorts out mails, prepares documents, schedules appointments and meetings

- â€¢ keeps a record of calls, appointments, and events in the company

- â€¢ looks presentable as well as keeps the reception area attractive.

Aesthetic value is not so important in case of a physicians answering service.

A receptionist must possess:

- â€¢ excellent oral and written communication skills

- â€¢ professionalism in talk and conduct

- â€¢ knowledge about impeccable customer service

- â€¢ aptness in managing data, organizing, and planning and paying attention to detail

- â€¢ interest in the job because it reflects in the tone of voice

- â€¢ reliable nature, pleasing personality, and ability to handle stress and workload, especially in case of call overload

Hospital Answering Service

An answering service performs the following tasks:

• takes calls with a warm greeting and gives the required information, transfers calls, and takes messages

• handles devices such as telephone, interactive radio, switchboard, intercom, and others

• transfers oral and written messages, and schedules meetings and appointments

• transfers emergency calls to the concerned person

• keeps the concerned person informed of all calls, maintains a record of calls

• maintains confidentiality of patient's information and not let a third party access the patient's records

• Monitors alarm systems to ensure secure conditions

• works under the protocol of the hospital and handles the routine inquiries of patients. This is one of the several important features of physicians answering service.

• creates a database of calls, messages, and patients' records

An answering service must possess:

• telephone etiquette

• excellent communication skills and the spirit of teamwork

• Ability to work under the protocol of the hospital and having an understanding of how the medical field works

• computer expertise, technical skill to handle communication devices, and good managing, organizing, and planning skills.

• ability to respond promptly and sensibly to diverse calls, and to keep calm during emergencies

• ability to handle work pressure and take calls 24x7

• reliable nature and the assurance that the system won't break down during call overload

Read and compare the tasks and qualities of a receptionist and that of a physicians answering service carefully. You'd realize that a receptionist comes with certain liabilities. Say, you have to bear their moods, which may affect their way of speaking with the callers. The presentation of a person sitting at the front desk matters too. You just can't hire a shabbily dressed, ill-groomed person. You may need to train the in-house receptionist.

On the contrary, answering service professionals need no training. They're a skilled lot. Physical appearance doesn't matter here; it's all about communication. Moreover, they are high tech phone experts who know how and what to talk. So, a physicians answering service gets the thumbs up. It's time to bid the receptionist good bye!

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[John Austin](#) - About Author:

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