

Part IX: The Halfway Point

Not long ago you were gathering your paperwork, feverishly searching rehab therapy job sites and speaking with recruiters to find your next physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech language pathology assignment. Now that you've made it to the halfway point, it's a great time to take a breath, reassess, and make any adjustments needed in order to finish strong and set yourself up for a next assignment that's even better.

The Highs and Lows

Every travel rehab therapy assignment is going to have its great days and not so great days. At this point in your assignment, take some time to step back and evaluate how it's going overall. Ask yourself some of the important questions below, and consider keeping a journal of your thoughts. This can help you greatly in making sure each assignment you take builds upon the last.

The Assignment Overall

What are 10 positive aspects of your assignment? List them out and then identify which of the 10 are things you'd like to achieve on every assignment.

Do you like the location? Is this a location you'd return to? Perhaps you found surrounding areas you might consider on another assignment.

How would you rate the facility? Did the facility, staff and overall environment provide an atmosphere in which you could grow professionally? Take note of some of the things you noticed (staff levels, caseload, supervisor qualities, etc.) and be sure to look for them in future rehab therapy assignments.

Do you enjoy the people you work with? Who are the people you enjoy working with the most? Are there personality types that you find yourself professionally compatible with? What professional relationships are

you developing that might you want to work on to help your assignment finish even better than it started?

What would you change next time? While both you and your rehab therapy recruiter work very hard to make sure everything about your physical therapy, occupational therapy or speech language pathology job is as close to perfect as possible, there will be things you'd like to change. What would you avoid next time? Take note of them and share them with your recruiter.

Professional Growth

Many of our physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology travelers choose this lifestyle for the freedom and financial benefits, but even the most committed travelers grow weary if they're not growing professionally.

- Revisit your expectations at the start of the assignment. Are they being met?
- Are you learning to use new equipment, acquiring new skills and being exposed to different approaches?
- What new skills would you like to develop even further on future assignments? Make sure you share these with your rehab therapy recruiter so they can look for positions that will allow you to do this.
- Have you been challenged in a way you didn't expect? Was this a positive or negative experience?

Recruiter Relationship

The halfway point of your assignment is a great time to evaluate your relationship with your rehab therapy recruiter and to make sure expectations are being met?

- Is this assignment meeting your expectations? As your recruiter, we work with the information you give to us and search for assignments that we believe meet your needs. Ultimately, however, we need your input to improve our search efforts for you over time. Share with us how it's going and we'll get better at finding the perfect assignment for you.

- Is the level of communication you receive more or less than you need? By now your recruiter should have established some common patterns for communicating with you while you're on assignment. They should also have laid the groundwork for an open door whenever there's an issue you need help with. If you'd like to make any adjustments to the communication, now's the time. Share your thoughts with us and we can accommodate you.

Work/Life Balance & Personal Growth

While some out there seem to live to work, don't most of us truly work so that we can live? Our professional lives should be a fulfilling enabler of our personal lives. In many cases, dissatisfaction on the job comes from the fact that the work isn't providing for a fulfilling personal life. Perhaps it takes up too much time, doesn't pay enough, or doesn't allow for the flexibility that's sometimes needed in a young and growing family. It is tremendously important that your personal life not be put on hold for too long.

Evaluate the other side of your life and make sure that your career, and even each travel rehab assignment, is allowing you to live the life you want.

- Are you earning enough?
- Are you healthy? What changes do you need to make?
- Are your personal relationships fulfilling?
- Are you challenged intellectually?
- Do you take time for recreation?

There are some great tools for assessing your life overall on a number of different variables. The Wheel of Life is a well-known assessment tool that demonstrates (based on your rankings of how you feel you're doing) where the priorities seem to be in your life and which aspects might need more attention. Use these tools or just keep a journal of your thoughts.

Finishing Strong

You should be able to make a solid assessment of how your assignment is going in a short amount of time, but the important part is identifying what needs to change and taking action. While you're halfway through the assignment, you're only halfway through. There is time to rethink, adjust and work on the things that can improve the overall outcome. After completing your evaluation, go through it again and pick one or two things in each category that you want to work on and then identify specific actions you'll take. Involve your recruiter in this process. We serve as your advocate to the client and we can help resolve issues for you. It's our job to help make your assignment everything you need it to be.

As they say: What gets measured gets done, so let's get to work and finish strong!

About Cirrus Allied Staffing

Cirrus Allied Staffing (CAS), formerly MDI Medical, LLC, is a Cirrus Medical Staffing, Inc. Company. CAS is a Joint Commission Certified, national healthcare staffing company located in Atlanta, GA. We specialize in the contract and permanent placement of rehabilitation therapists and other allied healthcare professionals across the country.

MDI Medical's sister company, Cirrus Holdings, LLC, dba Cirrus Medical Staffing, provides national travel and permanent placement for nurses through its Charlotte, NC office. Cirrus Medical Staffing, LLC is ranked as one of the top 10 travel nurse companies in the U.S and is Joint Commission Certified. In addition, the Cirrus companies provide international therapist and nurse staffing augmentation through our recruitment organization, Medtivia located in the Philippines. Medtivia is continuously ranked as one of the most outstanding international therapist and nurse recruitment organizations.

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