Would You Hire This Woman?

Turn the page to discover what Townies are saying online.
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I’m looking to hire an assistant and a hygienist. The best candidates so far have arm tattoos (one gal has one on her left wrist [underside] and another candidate has a bigger one on her right forearm [underside]). Both tattoos can be covered with a long-sleeved shirt. My practice is older and rural and very conservative. Should I hire them even though they have tats? ■

At least it’s not a neck tattoo … ■

If you’re looking to hire anyone under the age of about 35, and won’t hire anyone with a tattoo, then you’re in for a long, long wait. They’re everywhere. I don’t pretend to understand it but I’m getting old, too. So long as they keep it appropriately covered to your desire, then really does it matter? Does some ink underneath the skin really have anything much to do with how a person will work? ■

My employee manual says specifically no visible tattoos or body piercings allowed. I’ve only had to deal with the problem when someone I hired showed up with a tattoo on her wrist and I told her she needed to cover it up or hit the road. She chose the latter.

My receptionist has tats, she’s been here 20+ years and the patients love her … For what it’s worth. ■

This is something I feel sometimes, too. But then I started dating girls who have them :) Seriously, I don’t think most people get them for that reason. In fact, I’d argue what Tim says above… they’re so commonplace that anymore they’re really a sign of conformity, rather than rebellion.

Now a Mike Tyson tat … that’s different. That being said … the fact that the person chose not to cover it up during the interview does reveal something. I don’t mind if people have them in my office or not. What I care about is whether they act professional, part of which means looking professional.

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One of the deans at our school supposedly has sleeves down both arms and all over the back. You’d never know because he wears a shirt and tie every day.

If they are supersthrs then why not? If tats cn be covered by long sleeves then make sure that you relay this. Tats have definitely become more mainstream and honestly, as people get to know your staffers they probably won’t even care that they have a few tats.

I have two—one on each of my ankles (they are covered at work)—but I do have people ask me if I have any, and I show them what I have (a blazing sun the size of a half-dollar and my husband’s initials, also small.) No tramp stamps here.

Of course there will be people who are judgmental and base their opinions on that, but again, I have found these types of individuals few and far between. I have worked in larger areas and more conservative areas and people are always gonna be people. If it’s not tats they are judging, it will be something else, like they dye their hair, or they wear makeup, or they are divorced. It’s just a matter of perspective. I say hire them … good luck.

Apparently half my staff has tats in places where I can’t see. Well, one you can if she bends over and her blouse rides up, exposing her back.

Hire for attitude! You’ll get over your preconceived ideas if he or she turns out to be the right person for your office.

I have only one employee with no tattoos. I have one. My brother is also a dentist and has four. I have one assistant with about eight. I have lots of patients with tattoos. Recently had a new patient who got her first two tattoos at age 63. My hygienist has a white-ink tattoo on her wrist that is barely noticeable.

When I got out of college only white-trash women had pierced ears, only white-trash women wore flip flops, and ASSUREDLY only white biker trash got tattoos. Now my million-dollar, hardworking daughter has six or seven of them and yeah, I hate it.

My other daughter has a giant tattoo across her shoulder blades (could be seen with her strapless wedding dress)—ugh. Son was in the Navy; he doesn’t have any. I got a massage at the local school this summer and my student had tattoo sleeves and my first thought was that she would never be hired in an upscale salon. Maybe I am wrong.

My 70-year-old cousin just got one, but frankly, it would never be anything I would put on my skin. Too permanent. It is done so much by kids and they mature and change and still have the tattoos from when their executive function wasn’t fully formed yet.

To me, it just is not upscale. Depends on your practice. Who is your demographic? If it is me, you don’t make points by hiring a decorated human. But I am old school with professionalism pounded into us at Marquette, and to me professionalism and tattoos are not on the same page.
I can see the older crowd frowning on it, but it’s much more hip these days and mainstream, like someone else stated. Personally, if they are the best for the job, and they mesh really well with you and your staff, hire them!

Don, you don’t mess around. I totally agree with your generalization though, and it’s a fine one to make on an interview because I think you’re just going with the odds. I actually had a history teacher in his 50s in HS, who really inspired me and others, who had a full sleeve on his left arm. I’ll never forget him for being such an inspiring, caring teacher, but at first, the sleeve really throws you off.

I use to joke in my seminars that I didn’t care if an appointment-book secretary had a pink mohawk as long as the appointment book was kept 90 percent full with productive dentistry—and it was probably kept full because the patients wanted to see the lady with the pink mohawk! The point being if she’s doing her job at a high level, who cares?

So in regard to this prospective employee, if everything else about her is a “go,” then I’d say hire her and then judge her on her productivity.

When I was getting a tattoo, the guy asked what I did. Said I was in dental school. Said he “didn’t know how I could do that all day. You know, stick people with needles.” I was silent, took him about 10 seconds to realize what he said.

Personally, I do not have any tattoos and could never get one because 1) it’s not me, and 2) I couldn’t decide what I would want permanently on my body, and where.

But that’s me, and there are plenty of very good people and hard workers who have tattoos, including my sister and brother-in-law. After reading many pages of the “staff management issues” and your reasons for hiring, firing, or not wanting to fire for fear of unemployment rates, the least of your worries is a good employee with a tattoo!

Just because they have a tattoo doesn’t mean they are not good, hard-working employees. And today, it is going to be harder and harder to find a young person who isn’t “inked”? Now piercing, on the other hand, I have a hard time dealing with. I guess because they can do so much damage, dentally, with tongue bars. Even facial piercings are very hard to look at for me. I really don’t understand why a pretty young girl would want a nose ring, eyebrow ring/bar, or that thing that makes the holes larger!

Yeah Shaz, I went to DH school when you did and we couldn’t even wear earrings! So exposed tattoos aren’t very professional to me either. But as one mother told me, “It’s today!”

I have had spikey hair for the past 25 years—it’s me and it looks great! Many of my patients would ask to see “the girl with the spikey hair again”!

Hire for attitude! A good employee has a good attitude!

I have a niece and nephew with tattoos. I love the kids, but my goodness I can’t help but ask myself, “What were they thinking?” Those tattoos are butt-ugly. They are bound to regret it one day. None of my employees have tattoos. If they had one where the sun didn’t shine, I wouldn’t mind.

LOL! The last tattoo I got, the guy said, “So I finally get to inflict pain on a dentist!” We had a good laugh. Nice guy. He was a retired firefighter, nature artist, and now tattoo artist. Sweet man.
One of my assistants is pretty much covered—neck, back, sleeves, a few on her hands even. She is a great assistant and the patients love her. That's all I care about. I have never heard anyone say anything negative about her. (My 63-year-old receptionist has a tattoo on her back!) Get over your preconceived notions and judge people on their performance—not their appearance.

6/2/2011

My assistant has a nice little tramp stamp on her lower back. I hit it with the water spray every once in a while just for kicks. Also, maybe they traded the tattoos straight up for sports memorabilia.

6/2/2011

My friend is in the process of getting a tattoo. I say “in the process,” because his tattoo artist charges $200/hr and my friend can only afford parts of the tattoo at a time. Right now, his arm is only halfway colored in. I had no idea how expensive these things are. Yet, he has a hard time paying all his bills. The things people waste their money on...

6/2/2011

I would think in about 10 years a business removing tattoos would do well.

6/2/2011

One of my sorority sisters is an MD in Bremerton, Washington. She got our letters tattooed on the arch of her foot. On her wedding day, her comment was, “My tattoo was the worst mistake I ever made.” It’s small and you’d have to know her history to know where to look or what it meant, but now that she’s in her mid-30s, it’s her biggest college regret.

On another note, I interviewed for my front desk a while back and one candidate would’ve been perfect, except, she had so much ink on her neck, arms and shoulders, it couldn’t be covered. My manual states, “NO visible tattoos.”

My office manager has two, one on her back and one on her foot (I think). We never see them. Couldn’t care less. I won’t hire someone with multiple piercings, either. Not the image I want my office to project. We keep trying to tell our 16-year-old daughter, that in a lot of environments, multiple piercings (nose, ear cartilage, eyebrow) will make you unemployable. She wants them because her friends have them. We know it’s a phase, but we are trying to help her avoid problems down the road.

6/2/2011

From what I’ve read on this topic so far, maybe a tattoo parlor in the office on the three days and nights it’s closed for dentistry might be a way to generate a few referrals. Of course, patients must understand that they—like the employees—need to cover that demon spawn ink while having dentistry done.

I’m ex-Navy and I have no tattoos, but I am thinking about having my wife’s name put on my shoulder next month in tribute to being married to me for 45 years, as I’m now fairly sure she is going to stay.

6/4/2011

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