

Tip of the Month



Recipe for a Phlebotomist

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1 cup compassion	1 pound of self-esteem
2 cups empathy	1 pleasant smile
3 cups love	1 gentle touch
2 pounds dedication	1 certification card
1 shoulder (for crying upon)	an insatiable appetite
2 good ears	sleeves that roll up
x-ray vision	1 memory chip with firewall
skin of leather	immunity from disease
self-healing heart	lifetime supply of painless needles

To build a world-class phlebotomist, use the finest ingredients. Start with one cup of compassion to guarantee that all who come in contact are treated as if they were family. Slowly add two cups of empathy to ensure that reducing patients' pain and suffering is assigned the highest priority. Mix in three cups of love to activate compassion and empathy. Stir and set aside until the combined emotions gel.

When proper consistency is achieved, add certification and a memory chip encoded with the specimen collection procedure manual, CLSI standards, OSHA guidelines and a menu of requirements for all tests the laboratory performs. Program the chip to have a firewall to block the inevitable temptations to reinvent the procedure or make exceptions to proper protocol, either of which will cause the system to crash. Charge the chip by adding one pound of dedication to accurate results and one pound of dedication to the job.

Stir in one pleasant smile and a gentle touch to win the cooperation of patients of all temperaments. Add a skin of leather to protect against patients and coworkers who lack sensitivity or understanding. Mix in one pound of self-esteem so that a lack of recognition and respect will have no effect on performance.

Add two good ears for listening. Ears must be of a quality that also understands the meanings, motivations, and emotions behind the spoken word. Ears should also be capable of tuning out gossip.

Allow the mixture to sit and rest; there won't be much time for that once the phlebotomist is complete.

When ready, add x-ray vision so that the phlebotomist can see veins beneath the skin for 100 percent accuracy; add an insatiable appetite for continuing education and a willingness to pass their wisdom on to others in thought, word and deed. Add sleeves that can be readily rolled up to perform the duties and draw the patients everyone else avoids like the plague. Mix in a shoulder for patients and coworkers to cry upon, along with a heart that is self-healing to recover from the loss of their most beloved patients.

Finally, blend in a lifetime supply of painless needles and an immunity from all the diseases that will threaten longevity in the profession. Let the mixture grow and flourish. Be prepared to be amazed. Repeat recipe until fully staffed.