

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS: **Phlebotomy**

(Including Phlebotomist, Collection Specialist I, Phlebotomist I, Patient Care Tech, PSR I, Patient Service Representative, and Long-term Care PSR)

SPONSORED BY ONONDAGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PHLEBOTOMY EMPLOYER PANEL

ALEXIS T. MCGRATH

Supervisor
American Red Cross

ANN FIELD, RN, BS, CNOR

Manager Preadmission Testing
St. Joseph's Hospital

CARRIE NAPPA

Manager of Phlebotomy
Laboratory Alliance of CNY

CHARLES LANNING

Trainer/Group Lead
Quest Diagnostics

DAVID L. LATOUR

Outreach Customer Service Manager
Upstate Medical University

JOAN M. RIFFANACHT

Phlebotomy Supervisor
Laboratory Alliance of CNY

LAURA B. SQUADRITO

Supervisor Patient Services
Quest Diagnostics

SUE A. LEROY

Phlebotomy Manager
Crouse Hospital

FACILITATORS

REBECCA FRACCHIA

Employer Engagement Manager
Onondaga Community College

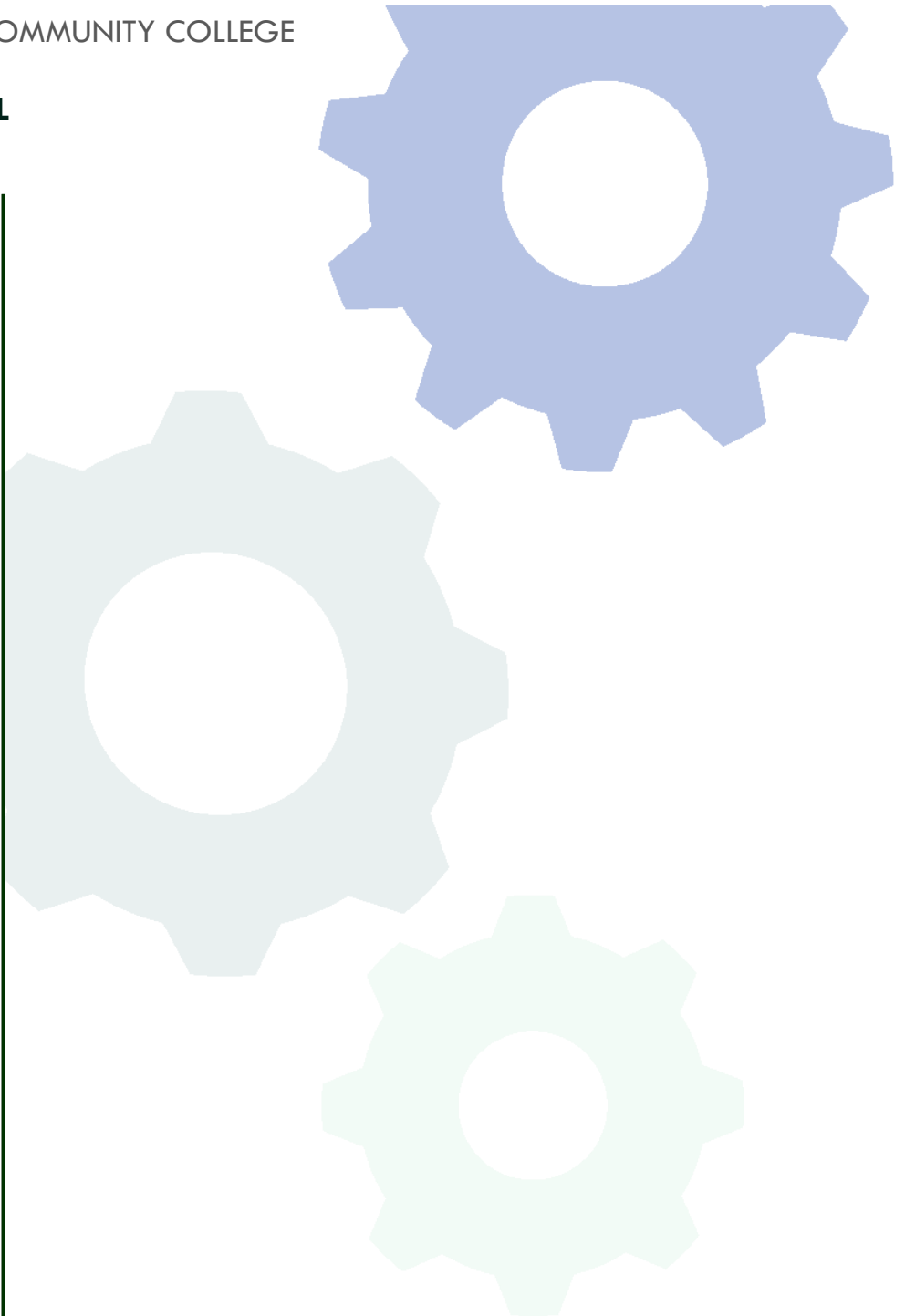
SHAUNNA JAGNEAUX

Director, Grant Projects
Onondaga Community College

RECORDER

ERIN VACCARO

Student Success Coordinator
Onondaga Community College



Employability Skills Chart: Phlebotomy

Categories

Behaviors

Make Good Decisions A	A1 Don't be afraid to ask for help when needed 6 4 1 1 1	A2 Recognize need for more information (don't guess) 1 1 1	A3 Give correct instruction to patient 1	A4 Utilize available resources 4	A5 Function within scope of practice 1	A6 Initiate action to resolve operating problems/inefficiencies 1 4	A7 Be helpful to others 1 2
	A8 Recognize when you are a part of the problem for others 1	A9 Flex your time to meet patient need 1 4	A10 See big picture 1 4				
Demonstrate Personal Integrity B	B1 Report wrongdoing to someone with higher authority 4 1	B2 Report patient/client concerns (including patient dissatisfaction) 4 1	B3 Protect confidential information 4 1				
Take Professional Responsibility (Own it!) C	C1 Comply with company policy 3 3 1	C2 Protect company assets 1	C3 Report to work as scheduled 4	C4 Keep private life from affecting work (huge!) 1 2	C5 Take responsibility in own actions 5 5	C6 Accept accountability for tasks not completed 1 2 1	C7 Finish work before leaving (regardless of when shift ended) 1
	C8 Follow through with tasks in a timely fashion 7 1	C9 Complete tasks even without supervision 1	C10 Complete all tasks to meet regulatory standards 1	C11 Wear appropriate attire (Please!) 1			
Pursue Professional Development/Improvement D	D1 Accept constructive criticism/coaching without defensiveness 1 6 4	D2 Learn from performance evaluation (incl. peer, supervisor, self) 2	D3 Meet improvement goals in development plan 4	D4 Develop improvement goals for next year 2	D5 Adapt to changes in work situations (Must! Everyday is a different story) 5 4	D6 Learn new skills willingly 3 4	
Use Proper Social Skills at Work E	E1 Speak respectfully with co-workers 5 4 1 3	E2 Be professional with co-workers 4 2 5	E3 Avoid inappropriate behavior (i.e., sexual harassment, passive aggressive) 1 4 3	E4 Respect other people's time (e.g., patient, clients, employees) 2 3 2			
Relate Well to Internal/External Customers F	F1 Interact politely and professionally with patient/client 3 3 1	F2 Remain positive with negative patients/clients 2 1	F3 Try to help hostile patients/clients earnestly 1	F4 Demonstrate willingness to compromise 1 3	F5 Listen actively to patient/client comments and requests 1	F6 Resolve competing patient/client needs calmly 1	F7 Determine patient/client needs 1 1
	F8 Follow through on commitments (if tell patient to do something, do it) 1 1	F9 Make patient/client feel important 1	F10 Respect each patient's situation (allow space and time) 1	F11 Tailor communication to patient needs 1	F12 Work well in the team 4		
Demonstrate Workplace Safety G	G1 Follow safety procedures 2 3 1	G2 Be mentally alert 2 2	G3 Appear mentally alert 2 2	G4 Demonstrate knowledge of equipment 4	G5 Maintain work equipment 1	G6 Report safety problems 2	G7 Be aware of surroundings 2

Categories

Behaviors

Categories	Behaviors						
H Commit to Quality	H1 Go extra mile to ensure quality work 3	H2 Complete tasks with consistent high quality 5 3	H3 Participate in mandatory OJT/CE 1 1	H4 Identify areas of organizational improvement 1	H5 Mentor new workers 2		
I Demonstrate Time Management Skills	I1 Proactively use slow times to benefit self and organization	I2 Demonstrate ability to plan ahead (timed draws, etc.) 2	I3 Use time efficiently 1	I4 Meet work schedules (e.g., on time arriving, returning from breaks, lunch) 1	I5 Work well in a fast-paced environment 1 4		

Legend

- 8**Critical Category
- 8**Critical Behavior
- 8**Training Most Needed by New Workers
- 8**Training Most Needed by Veteran Workers

Note: Numbers represent total votes from 8 panelists.

Employability Skills Profile: Phlebotomy

Future Trends & Concerns

Issues with New Workers:

- Finding reliable people is difficult. The newer generation (“me generation”) has a strong sense of entitlement and employers are challenged in managing multiple generations. Quality staff are needed.
- Professional maturity (which means smile, eye contact, punctuality, leaving home outside, respect for boss) is often lacking.
- Need clear expectations for first time employees (18 yr olds with no experience). Although difficult, some managers do meet and talk with new employees at the onset regarding expectations.
- Concern for new employees that blast through training, say “yes, I got it”, move on, then call about everything.
- Employers would like OCC to develop a contract for students to be used for practicum/clinical rotations. (Employers agreed to send lists, codes of conduct docs to aid in this). Students don’t understand HIPAA, computer use, grooming expectation, that this is a job, if they no call/no show they are not allowed back.

Staffing Phlebotomists:

- Concern that phlebotomists are under appreciated
 - ◇ Stress level—people giving orders have no clue of what it takes to do the job
 - ◇ Front lines—abused by RN/Doc/Laboratorian (“bottom of the totem pole”)
- Some employers would like to see Phlebotomy treated as a career not just a job
 - ◇ Concern of general perception of phlebotomist role. Phlebotomists are specialists.
 - ◇ Phlebotomists are the most important people in the lab (face of lab)
 - ◇ Cost containment affecting staffing levels
- Some employers see phlebotomy as a good stepping stone to other positions, do not see this as a negative, and see turn over primarily due to career transition (MA, PA, Nurse). Employers find these people make great employees with a clear vision.
- Increase in career opportunities (room for growth once hired)
- Understaffing is a concern for some including rapid growth and increase in workload.

Increases in Technology and Responsibility:

- Increased automation—scanners now check patient information “positive patient ID—never leave patient while performing procedure”, “no ID band-no blood work”
- Increased customer service expectation
- Increased regulations
- Increased responsibility (not just drawing blood anymore)
- Tests have become more advanced, and more numerous

Issues with Billing:

- Tests cost money and employers are losing money due to the lack of phlebotomists’ knowledge in billing/coding. ABN provides a warning “yellow stop” in the system, but those entering the information can get around the issue and employers can’t recoup the lost cost on testing/bills.

Changes in role, training and evaluations:

- Some companies have changed the title of phlebotomist to Patient Service Representatives to incorporate more duties (phone calls, registration, etc.) in order to increase pay. Can top out in the role, and in order to retain good workers, companies have needed to increase duties and change the role in order to increase the pay and retain them. PSR Float III need to know long-term care side and patient service centers (they need a higher level of understanding)
- Increases in pay and career advancement depends on the individual and how hungry they are. Motivation for doing more is key. Anybody can do phlebotomy, only a few can do it well.
- Some employers do annual role change evaluations (career advancement)
- Some employers perform a 3 month evaluation
- Managers have begun doing “stay interviews” with employees instead of exit interviews to learn what will help make them want to stay before it’s too late.
- Required training/learning is encouraged by all employers
- Diversity/inclusion training is expected
- Supervisors need administration to understand and support need for training. Administration does not always allow the needed time which forces phlebotomists to have to attend weekend training.
- Remote sites are creating issues with communication amongst phlebotomy team and supervisors.

Safety and Compliance Concerns:

- NY State is mandating blood/spills to be red bagged and sent for bio hazard testing. This means uniforms containing any blood spills are not to be washed at home because of exposure.
- Concerned about employee safety especially when alone in a patient’s room. Patients have become more challenging. Increase in drug abusing patients creates more challenging situations (when patient’s require drug screenings, and they are not within required temperature range, they can get hostile). Employers are needing to require four eyes and four ears with patients (don’t be alone with patient).
- Safety devices are becoming more prevalent (don’t get stuck with a needle, don’t by pass the safety device, activate with one hand)
- In house phlebotomy is going to disappear in some hospital settings. The trend is to train other employees to perform the tasks of the phlebotomist (nurses, etc.)
- Blood draws performed by nurses are a compliance concern. There are more issues with specimen integrity and redraws needed which costs money and lowers patient satisfaction.
- Phlebotomists should make themselves indispensable as the experts they are.

Knowledge & Skills

- Alphabetical order
- Ability to follow instructions/procedures/requirements
- Analytical skills
- Basic components or test
 - ◊ More knowledge of tests (don't guess)
 - ◊ Research –tests, new test everyday
- Basics of phlebotomy
 - ◊ Venipuncture, finger & heel sticks
 - ◊ Know what a vein looks and feels like and how to attempt to get blood from that vein
 - ◊ Understand the day in the life of a specimen
- Billing/coding (just some knowledge of)
- Biometric screenings (blood pressure, heart rate)
- Blood tests
 - ◊ Genetic testing
 - ◊ Pre-op testing
 - ◊ Know kits
- Clerical skills—"Lots of paperwork"
 - ◊ Scheduling
 - ◊ Order entry
- Communication skills
 - ◊ Interpersonal skills (see customer service)
 - ◊ Call laboratories/get back to doctor
 - ◊ Speak English proficiently
 - ◊ Bi-lingual (helpful) - Spanish language is important in certain areas
- Computer skills
 - ◊ Computer savvy (helpful)
 - ◊ Keyboarding/typing (helpful)
 - ◊ MS Office (helpful)
 - ◊ Fill-in forms
 - ◊ EMR (EPIC software)
- Confidentiality
- Conflict resolution
 - ◊ Must be able to diffuse the situation and communicate effectively
- Customer service/interpersonal skills (patient care)
 - ◊ Interacting with patient is equally important skill over technical ability (for all)
 - ◊ Know how to react when a patient starts yelling at you
 - ◊ Know what you are allowed to say to calm the patient, and when you need to refer them to their provider
 - ◊ Know that client = nursing homes and referrers
 - ◊ Understand anxiety of parents, teach them how to train parents to assist with child draws (proper holds). Phlebotomists can sometimes be intimidated by patient's parents. Need general knowledge of what to expect, how to communicate with them, how to calm them.
 - ◊ No cell phone/ear plugs
- EKG
- Ethics
- Figure out needs of doctor
- Front desk/admitting procedures (knowledge)
- Know how to access necessary resources
- Know HIPAA regulations
- Know how to make a resume
- Listening skills
- Math skills
 - ◊ Add/Subtract
 - ◊ Multiply/Divide
 - ◊ Measurements (mL, units)
- Medical terminology
 - ◊ Be aware of acronyms
- Multi-tasking skills
- Negotiation skills
- Order of draw
- Organizational skills
 - ◊ Filing skills
 - ◊ Keep clean work space
- Policies/procedures (know and understand)
 - ◊ Read SOP during down time
 - ◊ NYS DOH regulations
 - ◊ Know when to inform/notify supervisor
- PPE (know the importance of proper wear for protection)
- Pre-analytical skills (critical!)
 - ◊ Identify correct patient
 - ◊ Draw quality specimen
 - ◊ Mix appropriately
 - ◊
- Problem solving skills
- Reading/Writing skills
 - ◊ Read and follow procedures
 - ◊ Read English proficiently (very important)
 - ◊ Fill-in forms
 - ◊ Spelling skills
 - ◊ Read prescriptions
- Telephone skills
- Tubes and their associated use and colors (need general knowledge, mentors will quiz on the job)
- Understand importance of what you are doing

Tools & Equipment

- Alcohol swabs
- Aseptic wipes
- Band-Aids
- Betadine
- Bio bags
- Blood pressure cuff
- Centrifuge
- Chlorohexidine
- Cold pack
- Common test cards
- Computer
- Drawing chair
- Face mask
- Fax Gloves
- Gown or lab coat
- Hand cleaner
- Heat pack
- Lab coat
- Lancets
- Needle holders
- Needles, assorted sizes
- Occult blood
- Pen
- Pin worm paddle
- Printer (label)
- Racks
- Refrigerator/freezer
- Scanners
- Sharp container
- Shields
- Spill kit
- Sterile specimen containers
- Stool kit
- Telephone
- Timer
- Tourniquet
- Tubes

Worker Traits

- Accountable
- Able to work in fast-paced environment
- Adaptive
- Assertive
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Confident
- Controls anger
- Detail oriented
- Empathetic
- Ethical
- Honest
- Independent
- Open-minded
- Has patience
- Positive attitude
- Quick learner
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Be comfortable when serving patients
- Self-motivated/starter
- Strong work ethic
- Not squeamish at site of blood, or body areas (phlebotomists see lots of body parts and fluids)

Physical Attributes

In order to perform the necessary functions of the job, the worker must be able to:

- Stand for minimum of 8 hrs
- Navigate narrow and/or confined spaces
- Walk to/from lab and draw site, patient location, facility space, etc. throughout 8 hour shift
- Bend, crouch and reach overhead cabinets to reach supplies and patient (given this and space limitations for patient access this could be difficult for the wheelchair bound)
- Lift 10-50 lbs, and be able to help patient who loses consciousness
- Maintain stamina to withstand busy non-stop shift for 4-6 hour durations that can start as early as 4:30am
- Be physically fit and able to kneel beside patient to collect samples (probably should not start career with a bad back)
- Differentiate color in order to collect specimens correctly
- Hear to listen and communicate with patients
- Need to be able to see in order to perform functions of the job
- Use arms and hands to work with patients, collect specimens, handle soap while washing, and to type.
- Use hands and fingers to work with small objects such as needles and tubes, and palpate patients veins (need enough dexterity, mobility, and sensitivity in at least the index/middle fingers to perform this function)

Appearance

Personal hygiene

- "Don't smell (no scent including perfume, smoke, etc.)
- Brush teeth
- Smell is not just about body odor

Dress/Outward Expression

- Scrubs or business casual with lab coat per institution
- Clothes should be clean and not wrinkled
- Pleasant facial expression (no R.B.F.)

Hair

- Off shoulder - put up if long (safety concern)
- Clean
- Neat
- Extreme hair color is frowned upon by some employers (unprofessional image, could make patient uncomfortable)

Nails

- No artificial nails
- Clean,
- 1/4" length

Piercing

- No facial piercings (safety issue)

Jewelry

- No visible tattoos, for some. Tattoos cannot be offensive (for all)
- No big earrings
- No gauges (for some)
- Gauges and piercings can be a safety issue

Hiring Requirements

- H.S. Diploma/GED
- Smile (indicator of a candidate's customer service orientation)
- Pass respiratory fitness test
- Reliable transportation (expected by all, but cannot require/ask)
- Must pass (30 day or less) criminal background check & drug test
- Must be flexible regarding schedule (days, evenings, weekends, part time)
- SSN- Eligible to work in US
- Certification (ASCP) a plus

Hiring Barriers

- Job hopper - takes one year for company to recoup training cost
- Not showing up on time
- Poor grammar/spelling
- Not using a readable/ professional font on resume or application (no flowers around the i's)
- Not knowing how to interview
- Unprofessional dress
 - No Jeans, No club wear, don't wear revealing inappropriate attire- Pressed pants, collared shirt, button down, closed toed shoes (clean)

Attendance/Work Shifts

- Most hire full time. Typical shifts/hours are daytime as follows:
 - LTC - 30 hr/wk plus rotating on-call. Typically begins at 5:00am
 - PSC - average 30-35 hr/wk. Most open between 6-7:30am
 - Phlebotomists: First shifts either 6am-2:30pm, 7am-3:30pm, 8am-4:30pm, 8:30am-5pm. Some sites require techs to rotate shifts on a weekly basis.
- Some opportunity exists for part-time, and part-time includes partial benefits as well
- Flex schedule (some)
- Per diem offered at some hospitals in early morning (5am-7:30am) shifts. No benefits offered with per diem, but higher rate of pay. Some start employees out on per diem one weekend/month.
- Some employers hire on a temp basis as a "try before you buy" solution, but others are moving away from that.
- Must be punctual no matter the shift
- Corrective action begins anywhere from 3 late or absent occurrences, to 5 unscheduled absences/year and can escalate quickly to termination if chronic.

Certification/Licensure

Mandatory

- Valid driver's license (for some)

Helpful/Useful

- ASPT Certification/ASCP Certification
 - ◇ Certification sets a phlebotomist up for a career, not just a job
 - ◇ Certification means higher rate of pay with some employers (\$.75/hr-\$1.00/hr more at some places)
- EKG
- CCT (for ER)

New Worker Expectations

Note: Items marked with an asterisk (*) indicate concerns or reasons mentioned most frequently amongst panelists.

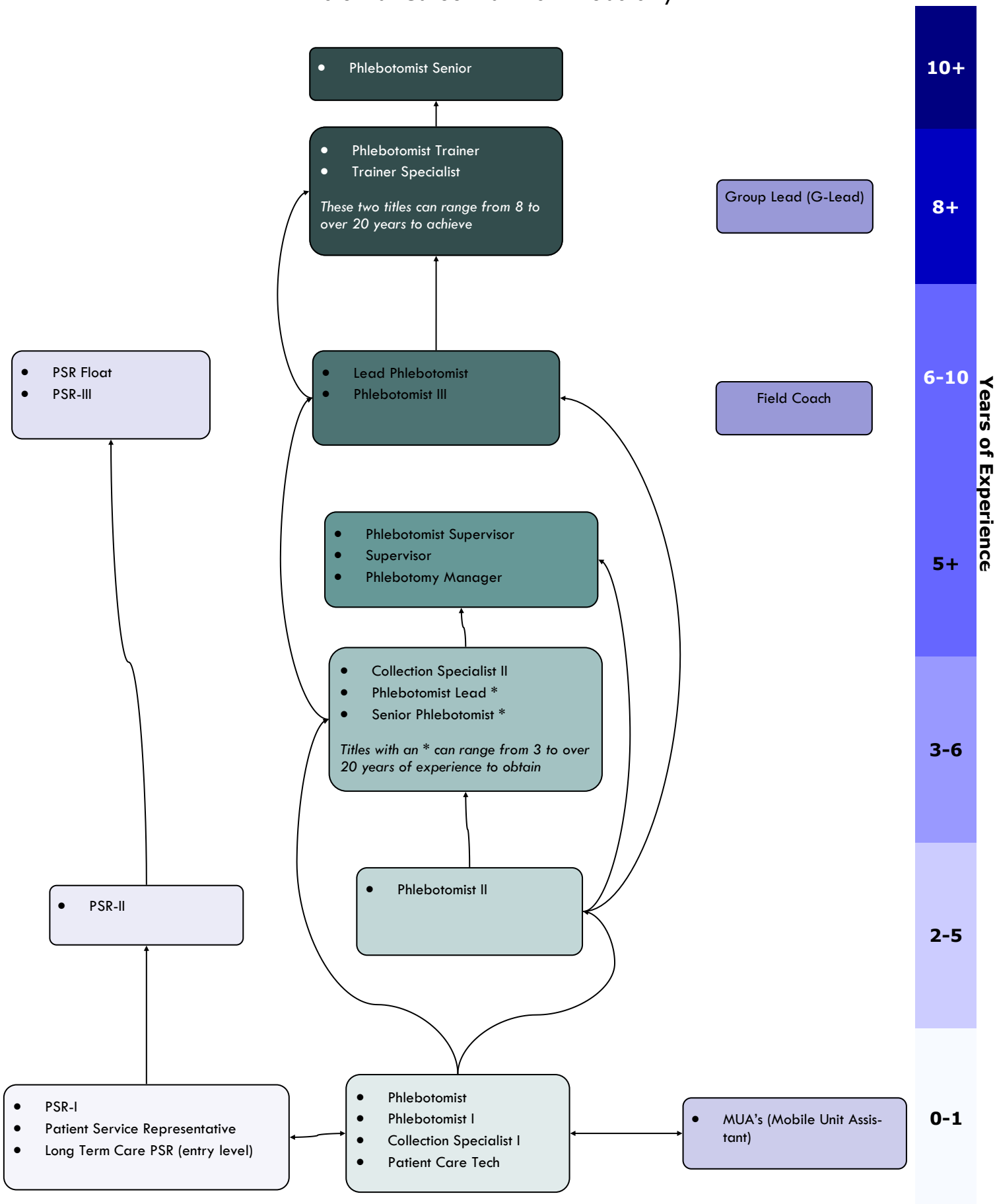
Workplace Expectations

- Companies expect their phlebotomists to do more than just drawing blood, and some have titles that represent this (PST or Patient Service Rep). Expect to perform registration, not just take blood. Other duties may include:
 - ◇ Biometric screenings (blood pressure, heart rate)
 - ◇ Billing and collecting payments
 - ◇ Supply ordering, keeping up on stock
 - ◇ EKG (In house)
- Exposure to hazardous materials is a given. Understand that you will draw on people who are sick, and that you must draw anyway. PPE is there to protect phlebotomist.
- Expect to need help - takes 2 to assist patient sometimes
- Cell phones - used in private areas on own time
- New hires (recent graduates) can expect 4-12 weeks of training upon hire (or more for some).
 - ◇ Donor sites require extensive training (not fully trained for 6+ months). Not a good place for PA's—employers want longevity.
- Employers find it easier to train someone new on their company way rather than changing from a known way (used to do it one way, now being asked to do it another).
- Can't be in it for the paycheck
- Don't call out
- Expect to always be training new workers (once trained, mentor others at some companies)
- Not a 9-5 job - expect to work weekends, nights, etc.
- Sign up for extra training - it reflects well on evaluation
- Must wear mask during flu season (if no shot, for many)
- Stay until work is done regardless of scheduled shift
- Phlebotomists cannot add tests to order or make diagnosis
- Lucky to get patient and phlebotomist in same room because rooms can be small (in some locations)
- Love! When they see something to improve ???
- Take the time the patient needs – don't rush out the door
- Patients often present with anxiety, many are dealing with health issues that cause stress and worry
- Patients don't always know what they are being tested for, and may be expecting to be tested on something not on the script provided to the phlebotomist. Be prepared to have to explain what you are able to explain to patient.
- PSR Floats have a very challenging position—takes the right person with the right mindset to handle it.
 - ◇ Need to “turn on a dime”
 - ◇ Need to be flexible with work location, “You have no home”
 - ◇ Position is much more than just a phlebotomist
 - ◇ Can be called at any time of night/day
 - ◇ Easy to get burnt out
- Career Advancement
 - ◇ Years of experience is not as important as how good you are. You can move up quicker if you are motivated or “hungry”.

Acronyms

ABN: Advanced Beneficiary Notification	PPE: Personal Protective Equipment
ASCP: American Society for Clinical Pathology	PST: Patient Service Technician
ASPT: American Society for Phlebotomy Technicians	RN: Registered Nurse
CCT: Critical Care Technician	SMA (SMO)- Sequential Multi-Analysis (now BMP/CMP)
CEU: Continuing Education Unit	SSN: Social Security Number
MUA: Mobile Unit Assessment	
NAACLS: National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences	
PCT: Patient Care Technician	

Potential Career Path for Phlebotomy



Please note: The numbers in the shaded graph represents years of on the job training and/or experience required. Job titles vary per institution/company and location and in cases where the titles are the same, the years of experience required to obtain them can vary. It is not necessary for a person to move through each of these phases of advancement to reach a particular position level. The titles and levels indicated are a measure of jobs typically performed from entry level (little to no experience and/or training) to more advanced skill level.

Onondaga Community College wishes to extend a special “thank you” to the following businesses for donating their expertise to the development of this employability profile for Phlebotomy and to all of the managers and supervisors who served on this employer panel. Our program will be better because of your direction and guidance.



This employability profile was validated by local employers based upon the *Chart of Employability Skills: Phlebotomist/Patient Service Technician (PST)* sponsored by Raritan Valley Community College, 2014, and the workplace behavior categories determined by Learning Resources Inc. OCC's Workforce Development Programs have been funded under a 2.5M United States Department of Labor TAACCCT Grant whose purpose is to facilitate greater employment by improving workforce education. For more information visit: <http://bit.ly/occ-taacct-iv> This is an Equal Opportunity program; adaptive equipment available upon request to individuals with disabilities.