

The Right Match of Caregivers & Care-Seekers



The primary goal of a professional caregiver is to provide the best possible care and the highest quality of life for the care recipient. Finding the right care seeker-caregiver match will put you well on your way to making this happen.

It goes without saying that care seekers need to carefully evaluate potential caregivers – experience, salary expectations, special skills, personality, availability – but it’s just as important for care givers to evaluate their potential employer. Trust me; both parties will be glad they did!

Those who go into professional care giving tend to do so because they want to do something meaningful by taking care of those who can’t always take care of themselves. When I asked a friend of mine from graduate school why she decided to go into this line of work she said:

“...it makes me feel like I am making a difference in the world, even if it is a small difference.”

My friend is the epitome of a good caregiver. She is empathic, a good communicator, flexible, committed, patient, and has a good sense of humor to boot. All of these are important attributes that care seekers look for in potential care givers. But at the same time, caregivers should ask the right questions to ensure the relationship is the right fit. Caregivers have to understand and evaluate the preferences of the person who will be receiving care. Does the recipient feel more comfortable with a caregiver who comes from a similar cultural background? And is he or she more comfortable with a female caregiver or a male caregiver? The latter may be an important question if the position involves personal care such as dressing, bathing and toileting.

While care seekers tend to focus on what they need – and you can’t really blame them – don’t forget about what the care giver needs. Employment is an agreement between two equal parties whose needs must be met if the match is going to be lasting and successful. The most important thing to remember is that everyone is working toward the same goal: providing the best care for the person who needs it.