

# 10 Ways You Can Get Ready to Land a Great Dental Hygiene Job Before You Graduate



*It would be awesome if when you graduated from dental hygiene school you received multiple job offers without sending out a single resume. Unfortunately, competition in the dental hygiene job market is stiff and once you and your classmates (and perhaps other graduates from nearby schools) receive your license the flood gates of RDH job seekers open up. So what you do ahead of time to prepare and make yourself stand out is going to make a difference. Here are 10 things you can do while still in school to get ready.*

## 1 Your Target Market

Define the area you want to work in. Pinpoint a specific radius and create a spreadsheet with the name and address of every dental office within those boundaries. This is who you will concentrate your marketing on - your "target market".

## 2 Define Your Brand

Decide how you want to "brand" yourself. For example, are you experienced, easy-going, friendly, hard worker, tenacious, a great salesperson, exceptionally skilled at hygiene, flexible in terms of days or hours? Choose two or three things and hone in on them in the messaging in your resume, cover letter and other printed materials. But also have it become a part of what you say when people ask about you. This is how you position or differentiate yourself from others so that you stand out.

## 3 Get Printed Materials Ready

Get your print materials ready go (this includes what we like to call your "resume kit" - the resume itself, cover letter, business card, and references if you choose to include them). Create a stunning design that makes you stand out and look different than all the other resumes offices will get. You can see samples of these in our store at [GetHiredRDH.com](http://GetHiredRDH.com)

## 4 Create a Postcard

Going door-to-door handing out resumes is very time consuming and can get kind of discouraging. Should you do it? Yes, but get your name out there first by sending a post card that can reach every office in your target market on the same day. Then do follow-up visits as you have time. Design a post card that tells offices you are available to work on a temporary or permanent basis (a local printer can do this or it can be done even cheaper at [Vistaprint.com](http://Vistaprint.com) or [GetHiredRDH.com](http://GetHiredRDH.com)). It can sometimes take a couple weeks for these to be printed so you will want to get started on this early so that when you are officially licensed you can begin using them.

## 5 Your Online Presence

Create and prep your online presence, making sure your key branding messages are showing up prominently. This might include Facebook, Twitter, a resume website, a resume video, a blog you may have or want to start, and online profile websites like [LinkedIn.com](http://LinkedIn.com). Get all these resources lined up and consistent to your brand.

## 6 Online Cleanup

Find out if you need to do any online cleanup. Studies show, employers will Google your name before they decide to bring you in for an interview. What will they find? Give it a try yourself and see if there are any "skeletons" or things you need to either clean up or cover up on social media sites, or other places. Google your

name in the web browser standard search, but also image search. And, google the e-mail address you plan to use on your resume as some employers will try to learn more about you by searching your e-mail address too.

## 7 More Online Strategy

If you are on Facebook or Twitter, start liking or following the pages of potential employers, this will give you some very valuable information about them and, who knows, maybe they will learn a little more about this new person that started liking them too. If you ever find yourself in an interview with that office, you'll have a leg up in that you will know what kinds of customer appreciation contests they run or some of the quirks that are interesting (such as what hobbies the dentist may have). Those are great conversation-starters and give you a way to begin making positive connections.

## 8 Practice Interviewing

Have you ever wondered how people get good at answering questions from the media? Repetition, anticipation, and more repetition are the secret ingredients. They first sit down and think through all the questions they might get asked, then they answer them on paper, then they practice their responses, over and over and over again until they get it exactly how they want it without sounding canned or rehearsed (even though it was).

You don't have to be a pro at it - most people interviewing are very sensitive about these situations and will be okay with you showing some "nerves" but the great thing about practicing so much is not only will your responses sound better, you will feel more confident too. And confidence is an attribute that is hard to overlook because it's also what patients expect and that reflects well on an office.

## 9 Wardrobe Check

Make sure you have thought through how you will dress in your interviews and even have one or two go-to outfits that make you look and feel professional. Clothes don't make the person, but there's no doubt you can feel much more confident when you love what you are wearing.

## 10 Network

Start attending conferences and monthly association meetings and bring your business cards along. Look for opportunities to sit next to people you don't know and introduce yourself to them, but also sit with a few you do know as this will help you feel more at ease when you meet new people.

**For more great tips, read the book [Landing a Great Dental Hygiene Job at: www.GetHiredRDH.com](http://www.GetHiredRDH.com) and follow us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/GetHiredRDH.com](http://www.facebook.com/GetHiredRDH.com)**