

**Dr. Stephen Lege – Physical Therapist**

**JOB SHADOW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

1) What qualities does a person need to possess to be in this type of position?

- Some qualities that someone would need to be a physical therapist are that they have to like to talk to people all day. They also have to be patient and understanding with the people they see on a daily basis. Along with being patient, they have to be critical thinkers, or what he used, problem solvers for people that are difficult to work with or for people who can't do certain exercises. They need to problem solve new ways to help each patient. Another important quality a physical therapist needs is they need to have empathy for each patient they see because everyone is different and they may take certain things differently.

2) What training or education is required for this type of work?

- He said that a lot of the training that he did while on his journey to become a physical therapist was done in internships. That was one of the main recommendations he had for me. He strongly felt that as I am in the process of becoming a physical therapist that I need to do a lot of internships and get a lot of hours in.

3) What are the basic prerequisites for jobs in this field?

- The courses that he took in college were Anatomy, Biology, Chemistry, Physiology and some type of English course. But again he said that while I'm in college, I should really consider getting an internship in clinics like physical therapy businesses and even hospitals to show that I can vary the workplace I could potentially work in.

4) How well did your college experience prepare you for this job?

- He felt that college didn't prepare him as much as the internships did, but in college he really learned about the anatomy of a human body and the science behind each body part. He said that he learned a lot of the things he knows now from being on the job, that there was no way that he would know half of the stuff he knows now, without actually working with the people he has worked with. A lot of the different exercises and different cases that he's seen have all been part of his learning experience and he says that he will continue to learn new ways and exercises every day.

5) Do you take your work home?

- As a physical therapist, he has to take notes on every patient he sees and when he meets with new patients an evaluation has to be done. After every patient, he has to record what they did at their appointment and explain whether or not they did better than the last. After an evaluation with a new patient, he has to send measurements, different exercises he gave to them and much more information to his bosses and the doctor who referred that patient to show that he has met with them. There is actually a lot of work and note-taking that is involved in being a physical therapist, so it is actually very possible that he could take his work home with him, but he tries his hardest to finish it all at work so that when he's off the clock, he's really off the clock.

6) What advice do you have for a person aspiring to enter your career field?

- As a physical therapist, he felt that some of the most important advice is to actually find a specific area of physical therapy and focus on that area solely. He also said that to be in this career field that I need to be very open-minded and to know that the type of patients that I will end up receiving vary extremely and I need to be able to change to their needs.

7) Are there any necessary credentials for your line of work?

- Physical therapists actually do need to do continuing education. Every year they must take a test. They also need to be first-aid certified and have to pay for their para-licenses.

8) What is the most rewarding part of your job?

- The most rewarding part for him, as a physical therapist, is seeing their patients succeed and get better. It makes them very happy to see that their patients are able to do what they were doing before and to be able to say that they helped them get there. That they were an aid to their healing process is what they feel is the best and most rewarding part of being a physical therapist.

9) What is the most challenging/frustrating part of your job?

- He felt that the most challenging part of being a physical therapist is not having the patients' trust. A big part of being a physical therapist and having the patients come in means that they need to make that bond that shows that they both trust each other. He said that when his patients don't trust him, they often feel neglected, and that is not at all what he wants their doctor-patient relationship to be like. A frustrating part of being a physical therapist is when patients are late to their appointments or when they don't show up at all.

10) What entry-level jobs are there in your field or with your company?

- He said that some entry-level jobs are being an aid or a receptionist.