Head of Software Development

Introduction

This is a full-time office-based (with hybrid working) role near Hook in Hampshire and reports to the Managing Director.

The OT Practice is an entrepreneurial company built on a foundation of great people, but also well refined processes and systems. Technology is at the heart of our operations and enables our staff and therapists to work effectively and provides the tools they need to deliver an exceptional level of service to our clients.

The business is going through a period of significant investment and growth, as we build out the senior management team to enable our long-term development plan. This role, heading up the development function at The OT Practice, will be instrumental in the future success of the business.

This is a fantastic opportunity for someone ambitious and entrepreneurial who has gained technical leadership experience and would relish the chance to use that experience and knowledge to be the architect of a small but highly effective technology function, within a fast-growing business that fully embraces technology, from the ground up.

Our Company ethos

- We make clients & potential clients feel understood and provide sound professional advice
- We are friendly & caring, but always remain professional
- We are socially responsible – if there is a better option for a prospective client then we say so
- We are client-focused and want to ensure our clients feel they are in safe hands
- We are driven and go the extra mile if that is what is needed to keep a client happy

Context

The software development team currently has 2 permanent members of staff (Development Manager and .NET Developer) and an external agency to provide additional development expertise/development resource. We are looking to expand the capabilities of the software development function, replacing the management role with a 'Head of' that has broader responsibly for this business function and has a clear understanding of the business objectives as well as the technical objectives. They will also be expected to expand the internal development capabilities through the hire of another mid-level developer to join the team soon after joining.

Whilst management experience is essential, this new role is not just a management role, it is a hands-on development role, leading a small team of in-house and some external development resources.

To get a better understanding of whether this role is right for you see the sections below titled "Understanding this role & the technology team" and "Ideal candidates".

Details of the role

Application development

Primary Applications
- Practice Plus – established case management and workflow system for our individual client cases. Originally built in ASP on an SQL database, much has now been migrated to .NET and whilst we continue to maintain the ASP application, new features are written in .NET with a programme underway for the re-write of legacy features (primarily using external resource).
- Enterprise – a recently built .NET application for our bulk assessment clients
- Intranet – our company intranet site with a number of simple features such as meeting room bookings, attendance tracking, policy management etc. built in .NET.

Development & systems responsibilities
Hands on development work on our applications will be a significant part of this role and will occupy the majority of time on a day-to-day basis. This includes:
- Providing technical guidance with specification of new features & functions across all applications
- Manage the internally hosted hardware and development stack for our development & test environments
- Establish and enforce appropriate release procedures to the live environment
- Work with our hosting company on any live environment issues (UK hosted datacenter)
- Establish joint working practices with external development team (long established relationship and able to provide knowledge, guidance and additional development resource if necessary).

- Take responsibility for data security and vulnerability assessments
- Provide technical leadership and direction to developers
- Establish appropriate development methodologies and procedures for scaling up the development team
- Review & refine infrastructure as required for development and production environments
- Ensure reliability and appropriate infrastructure redundancy
- Managing/providing direction to external development resources.
- Coordinate support for application related queries from other teams

Strategy, management & organisation
- Planning internal process and establishing development methodologies
- Project planning and project management
- Maintaining the development roadmap
- Provide direction on which technologies we should be using backed up with both technical and business reasoning
- Risk management and data security
- Hiring technology staff and subsequent line management duties
- Advising directors on technology within all aspects of the business.
- Liaison with external development agency

Understanding this role & the technology team

- You will maintain significant hands-on development work – this is leading the development team, doing development work, not just a management role.
- It's a small team – you will not be doing lots of administration and HR, the focus is on good technical leadership and processes.
- You will have external support for the production environment and additional expert advice 'on hand' for help with complex issues and insights into legacy systems. (We have retained knowledge of legacy systems and help available.)
- Coordination of team will not be a burden due to size of team and variety of project work that can be done independently – each developer can have clear accountability for quality of their work and minimal code merging overhead.
- You will be able to implement your version of development lifecycle and methodologies using your knowledge of enterprise level standards. Take the appropriate elements and make it work for a small, collaborative development team to ensure a pragmatic approach and a highly efficient team not burdened or constrained with overly rigorous or complex development processes, whilst maintaining high standards.
- We maybe a healthcare business but one of the 3 core pillars to our business is 'process and technology'. We build technology to support our processes, we do not make our processes fit systems, making the development team instrumental the success and growth of the business. The person in this role will therefore have a significant influence over the success of the business. The seniority of this role means they will develop commercial awareness, and as they do, will increasingly contribute to the business strategy and leadership.
- There will be no conflicting requirements or priorities from competing business stakeholders, no scope creep and changing requirements mid project – there will be clear expectations & specifications and business stakeholders will be managed through a single point of contact. This role reports to the MD who has a 20 year career in managing software development teams and understands the challenges many teams face in both large and small organisations.
- Programme in place to sunset legacy code base using external development resources allowing the internal team to predominantly focus on new feature development work.

- Internal IT network infrastructure/security and desktop equipment, including helpdesk support for staff outsourced. It is not the responsibility of this team.
- You get to build out your team immediately by hiring a new developer recruited by you.

Skills and qualifications

The following skills and qualifications will be required/desirable:
- Full stack development and MVC experience essential
- Established skills in HTML, CSS, JQuery, Bootstrap, JavaScript, .NET, ASP and MS SQL are essential. Significant commercial application of these skills will need to be demonstrated.
- Experience working with APIs
- Computer Science/STEM degree or equivalent in work experience
- At least 5 years professional experience in IT covering both application development and systems administration
- At least 2 years leadership or management experience – ideally leading a development team in some capacity
- Good project management skills and excellent ability to organise/prioritise tasks
- A good understanding of development methodologies and best practice procedures
- A good understanding of system architecture and experience with setting up and maintaining both development and production environments
- Excellent understanding and practical implementation of highly effective data security
- Experience working in a people facing role
- Excellent communication skills
- Experience reporting to or communicating to director level
- Problem solving and independent investigation skills
- Good multi-tasking and time management skills
- Fast learner and a desire to self-teach and learn new skills & technologies.
- Willing to undertake a DBS check

Personal skills & attributes

Fundamental to this role is the character and temperament of the individual. They will be expected to be highly organised, efficient and have a strong sense of responsibility. Important personal skills and attributes include:
- Caring, friendly and always willing to listen
- Taking responsibility and having the ability & confidence to make good decisions
- Problem solver and determined
- Ability to work independently and within a team environment
- Act on own initiative, self-motivated and tenacious
- Exceptionally well organised and able to put their own strategies and processes in place to maintain a well organised working environment
- Be able to earn respect and in turn have authority within the team and therapist network due to willingness to help and capability
- Outstanding attention to detail
- Personal pride in their work
- Desire to progress and develop their technical knowledge and increase their level of responsibility within the company
- Efficient working style and ability to juggle tasks without missing things

- Excellent telephone manner – chatty and confident but always professional
- Able to remain calm, composed and professional under stressful or confrontational situations
- Discrete and trustworthy – with this role comes a significant responsibility for information security.

Ideal candidates

The ideal candidate checklist:
- Very experienced full stack .NET developer with management experience – still a hands-on developer but in lead role with significant responsibility for a team.
- Exceptional technical ability and efficiency is prerequisite.
- Attention to detail and always considering consequences when making decisions
- Takes the approach of long-term stability and future proofing over short term quick option or temporary fix. Takes every opportunity to remove technical debt and 'do it better'. Leads by example with team and able to performance manage developers not adhering to best practice approaches.
- Fast problem solver and lateral thinker.
- Keen for next step in career – ambitious for a more influential position and thrives on having responsibility.
- Has large enterprise level experience but desires smaller team environment where they can have a significant impact/influence and see the advantages over working in larger teams.
- Gets satisfaction not just from the successful delivery of a project, but the impact their work has on the commercial success of the business

Working with The OT Practice

We pride ourselves on being a caring, friendly and professional company. We believe the growth of our business to date is directly attributed to ensuring our values are at the core of everything we do. New joiners will receive an initial induction period and undergo a 6-month probation period.

Working hours: Hours Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm (5pm Fridays).

Location: RG27 9HY, Hook Hampshire (free on-site parking and close to Hook railway station).

Hybrid Working Scheme (if full time, eligible role, and upon successfully passing probation) 52 days per year to book as home-working days on a Tues, Weds or Thurs.

Holidays: 31 days per year (including Bank Holidays) with option to "purchase" up to 3 additional days each year.

Access to Health Cash Plan providing video GP appointments, cover for routine prescription / other medical costs as well as access to telephone counselling and online physio assessments.