

How to Get Your Staff Doing What They're Supposed to Be Doing ...in 9 Simple Steps

Step One: As the leader you need absolute clarity and knowledge about how everything fits and works together in your practice. Leave no questions unanswered. Your staff needs to know that you know.

Step Two: People naturally resist change. In fact, it's likely that your best most loyal employees don't like change. So how do you get them to change? You need to be able to tell people WHY you are making changes. You see, when we want someone to change something, the typical approach is to share the up side of changing.

But the fastest, most effective way to get someone to change is to share the downside of not changing. Many people are more motivated by pain than by gain.

The best option is to discuss both the up side and the down side. But hit that downside to get them on board *faster*.

Step Three: Now that I'm on the subject of change, consider the different times you may have tried change and you fell back into old ways. Why did this happen? Was there lack of clarity? Was there lack of commitment? Was the vision not strong enough? Either way, if this has happened in your practice your staff will be weary of any new change you try to implement. This is because they have proof that it may not last or be real. They'll think, "Here we go again... nothing has changed before, what will make it change this time." And, most people are motivated to keep things the same.

Answer? You have to be clear. You have to be committed. You have to be willing to listen to your staff as well. Push back may not be push back. Maybe what seems like push back may simply be questions about how to move forward or get around some things. There may be very good reasons why something will be difficult to change. There is typically a domino effect on everything that comes with implementing something new. So you learn, you adjust, you figure it out and you commit to it so they see you're committed to it and you don't take no for an answer. It's your practice.

Step Four: One great way to get and keep everyone doing what they're supposed to be doing is to have what I call Purposeful Staff Meetings. It's easy to get caught over trusting that people and systems and everyone is trained, that everything is running like clockwork and therefore go without team meetings.

You must have purposeful meetings with written agendas, carry over to do items and accountability for what's done / not done, etc...

Step Five: Cash flow is king. But for this discussion we're going to say *communication* is king. You can say exactly the same thing to two different people and they can walk away with two different ideas, steps, tasks, timelines, deadlines or outcomes in their head, as if in completely different meetings!!!

Do yourself a big favor and read [or re-read] Habit 5 in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. It might even be life changing [good change] for you. It was for me. Habit 5 is, "Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood". Don't let the clear title keep you from reading. It's not only instructive but I believe it's critically important for every relationship in your life.

Now, tying this to your agenda concept for Purposeful Team Meetings, here are two big tips for you and if you do these it will change the game for your business.

1. No Guessing! "Meaning lies in people not in words." You think some word means this they think it means that... don't guess. Make no assumptions. Be clear. Tell your team, "Look, I like to ask a lot of questions just to make sure we're on the same page." Or, I'll be checking in on what everyone means just for the sake clear communication, okay." Simple.
2. Anytime you meet with someone try to find a way to learn what they're hearing you say. You can do this by saying something like, "Okay great, so what are you going to do and when might you do it?" If you want to really put this idea to good use, at the bottom of every written agenda you should have this question, "Who's doing what and by when?" Then have each person answer this question based on what they heard in the meeting. You will block a lot of mistakes and wasted time, learn a lot and get the whole team on the same page.

Step Six: Clear Guidelines and Accountability. You can read all about this in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People too. What's hard is the accountability part. People don't know how to hold others accountable effectively. In fact, it scares most doctors! Here's a tip for you. Accountability increases exponentially when they get to choose their outcomes or actions. They have to take ownership. Again, it's a conversation and all about the way you have these conversations. It does not have to be drama filled.

Step Seven: Take the best steps to hire the right, lowest risk people, in the first place. You can take your ducks to eagle school, march them across the stage, give them little certificates, etc... but they'll still be ducks. Yes I think people have potential and can grow. But let's not start out making mistakes in the hiring process.

Step Eight: Connect *your* vision and goals to *their* motivators. Don't know what motivates them? Here are two tips for you.

1. Ask them. Have a conversation where you can learn what motivates. Why are they working for you? Where do they see themselves in 2 or 5 years? What are their hobbies or books they like to read, etc... ?
2. Have them take the Hiring MRI™ or DPMHiring.com Performance Profile. [Same thing] This will tell you what motivates them very quickly.

Step Nine: In all your learning about practice management, learn how to manage *people* for *performance*. Practice management and people management are often very different issues.

What drives performance in people? Is it logic? “Work is logical. Performance is psychological.” What blocks performance in people? Perhaps you or your office administrator is doing things that inadvertently block performance in your staff everyday. If you don't know, you don't know.

Ultimately, your practice is made up of three dimensions; Systems, Tasks and People.

It's all about *people* doing *tasks* and following *systems*.

So think, are your systems aligned with the outcomes you seek? Are people clear about the tasks and the timing of tasks in their role? Do they take ownership? Are the people capable of making good clear decisions and choices consistently everyday for your practice? Are they motivated to do so? Do their reasons align with your reasons?

Finally, let me share a quick analogy with you. You know that on a golf course the tool by which you get things done is a golf club. Right? In Tennis the tool is a tennis racquet.

Well, in your practice the tool by which you get things done is the *decisions* you and your team make everyday. To get the very best out of your people and the decisions they make you should take care to help facilitate their thinking.

Get in their world and it will be much easier to get people to do what they're supposed to do everyday in a way you like.