

Motivating Your Staff

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Motivating your staff is one of the easiest tasks to accomplish, yet it is also one of the most elusive when managing a growing practice. All too often, doctors learn to tolerate staff members after becoming frustrated in trying to motivate them to new levels of productivity.

The easiest, most effective long-term method of staff motivation is consistently and enthusiastically sharing your chiropractic philosophy and making it the core focus of your practice. The truth is that people would rather be working harder for a cause than they would for money, toaster ovens or television sets.

Motivation and Productivity

An example of how powerful our chiropractic philosophy is can be seen just after each health care class in your office. Notice how a greater sense of purpose is always brought about by serving patients beyond what was previously understood. B.J. Palmer was right when he advised that we must educate, educate, educate! Why not start in the office with your own staff?

The head doctor has the responsibility to motivate and energize staff members with a positive attitude. Sometimes, though, we expect our staffs to be more positive or energized than we are. Sometimes we try to adopt the "carrot and stick" method of motivating staff and offer a bonus for various records set in the practice. For example, if the number of new patients on a particular day or during a given week exceeds the previous level, a bonus is given. Bonuses are often given as well for new records in office visits and collections. The problem with utilizing a bonus system is that once the staff members' individual needs are met, money does little to provide motivation on a long-term basis. In practices where underpaying for work is prevalent, then perhaps a bonus is required. However, a greater level of pride can be achieved by compensating staff members at a fair market rate.

Staff members would rather have a statement of your appreciation, a compliment or an acknowledgement. They would rather know that their contribution is making a difference and that they are adding value to patients' lives than being given more money to work faster or adopt a better attitude. Have you ever called your chiropractic assistants at home, just to say "Thank you?"

Five Step to Motivation

The first step that can be taken to motivate your staff is to honestly evaluate whether your practice is money-driven or service-driven. Where are the values of the practice? If the office is laden with signs relating to money and patient payment programs, that's a clue. If a new patient is asked to sign a financial responsibility form or an insurance assignment form before meeting a doctor, that's another clue.

The second step is to decide to rededicate your practice to putting chiropractic service before money. Make serving the number one drive and motivation in your office. Replace the money-oriented signs with service-oriented signs. Announce your first health care class, your availability to speak at organizations, and your willingness to accept families and children under chiropractic

care. It's great to make lots of money, but put the service way out front, always first.

The third step is to start each day a few minutes early with your staff, discussing how the level of service on that day will be improved for specific patients. Increase your staff's participation in moving the practice forward and making a difference. Staff members must feel that they are making valuable contributions if you want them to be motivated for the long term.

Fourth, begin to educate your patients like never before. Teach them what a subluxation is. Inspire them with the philosophy of chiropractic and what it accomplishes through innate energy from brain to tissue cell. This, in itself, will remotivate your staff to chiropractic. Because each patient visit will take on a new meaning, that commitment will affect everyone in and around the practice. Referrals will also dramatically increase.

Lastly, increase your practice through exercising your ability to inspire everyone in and around your office. Quality of work and productivity of employees cannot be achieved in the long term by demanding or buying it. It must be brought about by inspiration. What better way is there to inspire the world that we live in, than by sharing the chiropractic message?

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SEPTEMBER 1993