

Five Qualities of the Dynamic CA

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Dynamic Chiropractic welcomes Michelle Geller-Vino as a new columnist, one of three now writing the chiropractic assistant articles. She brings with her a vast amount of experience on a practice and national level, and is currently active consulting DCs and their staffs.

Ms. Geller-Vino's articles, a "Talk Back" forum and a brief biography of the author are available online at www.chiroweb.com/columnist/jagebi.

The most successful chiropractic assistants, diverse as they may be, seem to share some common characteristics. Ask yourself, "How well do I possess each of these qualities? How well do I exhibit them in both my professional and personal lives, and how can I use them to help myself become the most dynamic chiropractic assistant I can be?"

1. Personality. Do you always have a smile on your face, even when you answer the phone? Believe it or not, the person on the other end knows if you do! Your doctor, co-workers and patients count on you to always have a friendly personality and a warm manner. Successful CAs are creative; knowledgeable; flexible; respectful; empathetic; and genuine. They are active listeners, work well with all kinds of patients, and know how to accept criticism and compliments. Because you are the first person a patient sees when he or she walks into the office, it is important that you have a positive attitude and radiate with energy. And remember, smiles are contagious!

If you could improve three aspects of your personality, what would they be?

(Examples: I would be more assertive; I would show higher self-esteem.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. Be a team player. We've all heard the cliché, "There's no 'I' in TEAM." The same goes for working in a chiropractic office. When everyone in the office has a common goal, everyone must work together to achieve that goal. When one member of the team is not putting forth as much effort as the rest, the entire team's productivity suffers. Brainstorming with teammates will help you come up with strategies to accomplish your goals through hard work and imagination. Education is the key to keeping the team's skills up to date, so it's a good idea for the players to attend seminars at least a few times during the year. Weekly team meetings are also essential because they provide team members with an opportunity to discuss the week's events, visualize the potential for growth and change, communicate any problems or concerns, and maximize the potential for achievement. The right players make a winning team!

List five qualities that make you a good team player.

(Examples: You can compromise; you have compassion; you are dependable.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3. Leadership. Do you take control of a situation, or do you just wait for things to happen around you? It is important for you to be able to think on your feet and make some decisions on your own. Successful leaders set goals, make plans and take action. They focus on unutilized strengths instead of weaknesses. They think about what they're going to say before they say it. They have the perceptiveness, know-how and assertiveness to tackle any obstacle. They come into the office early to get a jump on their day and use their time effectively. They are patient; adaptable; persistent; decisive; and aren't afraid to take on new challenges. Leaders also have mentors from whom they can learn and model their success. So, are you leadership material?

What are four important traits of a successful leader?

(Examples: decisiveness; the ability to delegate without coming off as "bossy.")

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

4. Common sense. When a crisis arises, do you run and hide, or do you use your common sense and experience to help you find a solution? Fear, fixed habits, dependence on authority, and perfectionism are all limitations to one's natural ability to handle a problematic situation. An intelligent individual has the ability to frame any problem so that it is workable. He or she has the guts to admit mistakes and the sense to learn from them. It is important to be in tune with your instincts, tolerate differences in others, and be open to new experiences and perspectives. If you don't know the answer to something, take the initiative to find out, instead of just offering any old response. You can have all the knowledge in the world, but it's the ability to use that knowledge that makes you wise!

Name three situations in which you recently had to use your common sense.

(Examples: What to say when a new patient calls; how to deal with an upset/angry patient.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. Set an example. You can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk? Don't expect others to do what you won't. Take responsibility for yourself and your actions, and others will surely follow. Self-improvement exercises will allow you to get healthier physically and mentally, and others will see

the change in you. Your words; body language; confidence; appearance; posture; and actions are all reflections of yourself. You have the power to influence others in either a positive or negative way through how you live your everyday life. Don't just tell them what to do - show them!

List five words or phrases that describe how you look when you're feeling your best.
(Examples: Confident; I exhibit good posture, neat appearance.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you possess these five qualities and exhibit them everyday, you will help the office run smoother and allow the doctor time to do what he or she does best - treat patients!

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