

## How to Take Control of Your Practice

David S. Singer

Practices are a solution to problems of life, or they can be the biggest problem you have. In this article I hope to cause a shift or change in how you see your practice and your function in it. I want to renew your excitement and passion for what you do by showing you how to take control of your practice and have your practice serve you.

First, you have to realize that your business is your business. It is yours and you can't run away from it. You can't ignore it and you can't pretend it's not there. You need to recognize your practice consists of helping sick people and helping to create a great business.

You see, a business is not just people working to make money and pay bills. A business is an environment that you will spend the majority of your life in; therefore you want it to be rewarding and nurturing. Your job, should you decide to accept it, is to transform your business, and in so doing transform your life. We want to transform it from being a problem to "being a solution." We want to change it from being a burden to being a "source of pleasure."

A business is a group of people performing functions. What you need to know is that your job is to create systems or methods to perform the necessary functions that are efficient, effective and nurturing to those involved. In other words, your job is to bring to your business systems that are not people dependent. It might take some time to create and put in these systems, but once they are there, you are set for life. A little hard work now brings a lot of fun later.

All businesses have similar functions; getting customers, serving them, collecting money, paying bills, etc. What makes your business better than everyone else's isn't having the "right people." It's doing things right ... making "right people" by having the right systems. Doctors are always complaining about their staff. No one will ever work as hard as you think they should. What you want to have are systems that anyone can learn, so the job gets done right. There are right methods to perform the functions necessary to run the business. The right methods taught to any good person allows them to do the job right. There is no such thing as the "right person." There is only the right method, made understood, so anyone can become the "right person."

I once wrote out every function that is done in a chiropractic office. This included turning on the lights, emptying garbage, ordering x-ray film, calling missed appointments, etc. It came out to 256 functions.

The secret is to organize these functions and how they are done, so that you can easily train anyone to do them. Turning on the lights is easily explained. Collecting money from a patient, meanwhile, would be a several page explanation. Once written out and completed, these are called training manuals. Done correctly and completely, these manuals allow you to create a business.

Your practice becomes very simple once you know exactly how you want things done, how they are to be done (have it documented as to how), and can get people to get them done. Small businesses fail

because the owners fail to run them like a big business.

IBM, Boeing, Ford and even McDonald's have training programs. They know how things are supposed to get done. They have people, and they train them. Negative people, or those who can't learn, are replaced. Good systems create good people. Small businesses are in search for the "right people" instead of creating systems like big business that "create" right people.

"Right people" are those people who do things right. Creating your business by creating the systems to do your business allows you to have a business that doesn't have you! This is not to say that things don't ever go wrong. However, all you need to do to fix the business is find out what went wrong, who did it wrong and retrain them. Mistakes happen. Right people make mistakes. Right systems fix them so they don't happen again to that person.

Face the facts. You have a business. You need to realize it's your job to run it. You run it by getting it to run or function in a way that patients and staff feel they are special. It can be done. You can do it. It's your job.

If you would like to receive Dr. Singer's free info-letter by fax, call 1-800-326-1797 (ext. 223).

*David S. Singer, DC*  
*Clearwater, Florida*

SEPTEMBER 1997