



TOP FIVE TIPS TO ADD LIFE TO YOUR TEAM MEETINGS

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From my years of coaching I have discovered that if you take all the employee relations problems you've experienced as a dentist over the years the problems are a result of one or both of the following: lack of communication or lack of recognition. Experience has taught me that both can be handled through the much-maligned regular staff meeting. If they are done right, staff meetings can become the perfect vehicle for constant communication with and among your staff members and can give you the opportunity to recognize their efforts in front of others.

1. **Involve staff in building the workplace culture.** Creating an inclusive environment is not solely your responsibility. It belongs to everyone on your team or in your department. Involve staff in creating their own ground rules for behaviors on the team that would support their desired work environment.
2. **View your employees as an asset** and not a liability as they appear on your Income Statement. Successful businesses behave in a way that demonstrates that they believe their people are their most important asset. Remember they represent you in all facets of the business. They are the ones your patients will be dealing with, both when you are present and not. How do you treat your other investments? With care, skill, and judgment? Do the same with and for your team.
3. **Don't wait until it's a CRISIS.** Like my brother, Dr. Scott says, "I never think about this hiring stuff until someone quits or I have to fire them. Then it's a crisis because I don't know where to begin." Stop taking the hiring process lightly. Put a simple plan in place in advance. At least have ads for each position pre-written; keep your compensation package updated; have a list of general open-ended questions written up in advance; and be prepared to screen applicants initially by phone. If you wait until you are desperate for help, you will lower your hiring standards and subsequently the quality of your team.
4. **Know what you're looking for.** Create an "Ideal Employee Profile." Not a physical description...rather a list of the qualities, characteristics, and traits you are looking for in your employees. Some examples might include: communicates well; detail oriented; prompt; collaborates; willing to go the extra mile; or positive in time of crisis. By compiling this list it will help you know if and when this person is sitting in front of you. Create your profile and share with your current team and your patients asking them to help you find this person.

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5. **Maximize the impact of staff meetings.** Use regular and department meetings as team development opportunities. Build in time for some relationship building and learning activities at each meeting so that time spent achieves the task objectives and strengthens communication and trust on the team.

How you treat employees, your best and most expensive asset, will set the tone for their satisfaction and the success of your business. Take the steps listed above to create your plan and mindset for that time when you least expect it...when you need to hire a new member of your dental family. Set a time line of 30 days, involve your current team, and finalize at one of your monthly staff meetings. You will then have a much better chance of hiring RIGHT.

Dr. Arndt is the Dental Coach®. He works with dentists and dental teams to be highly profitable and completely fulfilled in their personal and professional life. What that means for them is less stress, more time, more money and a healthier business. As a businessman and entrepreneur, he blends 20 years of clinical dental practice, five years of executive corporate experience in the financial planning and investment management industry with his graduate business training and hands-on experience. He delivers his highly personalized Coaching to doctors throughout the United States utilizing scheduled telephone calls, e-mail and fax. To learn more about his telephone coaching techniques, his group teleclasses or to subscribe to his newsletter, contact Coach Ron at

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