

Killing **THE** **PRACTICE** Before It Kills *You*

How Throwing Out My Business Model Saved My Life



by Ronald F. Arndt, DDS, MBA, MAGD,

THE DENTAL COACH®



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■ **BOOK SYNOPSIS**

At 41, Dr. Ron Arndt had built a successful dental practice, while enjoying the blessings of a great marriage and family life. It came at a cost. He was dancing as fast as he could, trying to please his patients, family, banker and his inner voice that drove him to work, work and work some more.

Then came a heart attack. It nearly killed him. Frightening, yes, but Dr. Ron now views it as a gift. For when he opened that box, he discovered a fresh opportunity to re-order his priorities and do it right this time.

In *Killing the Practice Before it Kills You: How Throwing Out My Business Model Saved My Life*, Dr. Ron reveals his extraordinary journey of reinvention and offers valuable lessons: How to develop your core values, seal them and restructure your life around them. How to make those difficult decisions that will affect employees, your spouse and children. How to stay on task and not relapse into the same old routines. You will discover how this Master Certified Coach learned developed ideas to support dentists and professionals who want to control their business rather - than have the business control them.

Are you fed up with working, not for yourself, but for everyone else? Are you ready to discard old habits and unrealized goals? Are you prepared to stop thinking about making change and actually make change?

In these pages, you'll discover how playing your "game" to your strengths can make you more satisfied and complete.



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BOOK INFORMATION

■ **Title:**

Killing the Practice Before It Kills You:
How Throwing Out My Business Model Saved My Life

■ **Author:**

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■ **Publisher:**

Arnica Publishing, 3880 SE 8th Ave., Suite 110, Portland, OR 97202

■ **ISBN:**

978-0-9816822-7-3

■ **Bar Coded:**

Yes

■ **Price:**

\$15.00

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Dr. Ronald Arndt is the founder and CEO of **THE DENTAL COACH**®, a Professional Coaching Firm devoted exclusively to dentists interested in creating personal and professional balance. Dr. Arndt supports his clients in such a distinctive way that by working with him, his clients get more out of life, grow personally and professionally, and accomplish more than they ever expected possible. In a way that only Dr. Ron can do, he teaches them to do it faster. In addition to coaching successful dentists to create and operate highly profitable businesses, he teaches them to have fulfillment in their personal lives. The bottom line for the dentists he coaches:

less stress, more time, more money and a healthy personal life. Dr. Arndt, known affectionately as “Dr. Ron,” is the first and only dentist in the world to hold the coveted designation of Master Certified Coach (MCC), awarded by the International Coaching Federation. Dr. Arndt is a graduate of both Coach U and the International Coach Federation (ICF). He holds another remarkable distinction as the first dentist in the United States to receive the Professional Coach Certification from those institutions.

He blends 37 years of clinical practice with business training and executive experience at a leading financial firm. Widely recognized as an industry leader, he grew his dental practice to operate among the top 5% in the United States. He did this by, among other things, developing and coordinating a unique, profitable practice that integrated two specialists with two general family practitioners.

His second career was serving in several executive management roles, where he worked with doctors and small business owners, helping them integrate their practice goals with their financial goals. As Vice President of Operations for one of the largest financial planning and investment firms in the country, Dr. Arndt was responsible for the performance, coaching, staffing and profitability of eight offices spread across the country. He has presented over 300 seminars at 30+ medical association conferences and society meetings. His topics range from “Service Concepts-Dentistry’s Moments of Truth” to “Financial and Investment Management.”



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Through strategic planning and goal-setting, Dr. Arndt has been able to live his life out of choice. He retired from 20 years of private practice and five years of corporate management experience in 1999. Since then, he has dedicated his career to coaching professionals and their teams to achieve more of what they want, including: increases in profits, increases in referrals and treatment acceptance, lowered overhead, less stress, improved relations, and more time to spend with family and outside interests.

He has earned his undergraduate degree in Communications (BA) and his Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) from the Ohio State University; a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from Baldwin-Wallace College and was awarded his Masters (MAGD) from the Academy of General Dentistry. Committed to supporting his clients and their staffing issues, he has earned a **Professional Certificate in Human Resources** from Baldwin-Wallace College. Active in Toastmasters International and organized dentistry, he completed a 12-year tenure as a trustee for the Ohio Dental Association Foundation. In addition, he served four years as the President of City Council for the community in which he resides, North Ridgeville.

Dr. Arndt has two daughters, Ashley and Brianne. He lives in Northern Ohio with his wife, Trish, a retired Kindergarten teacher.

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■ ENDORSEMENTS

Dr. Ron, you have hit a “nerve” with many dentists and yet many are afraid to admit it. Your story may “open” their eyes before the office environment “shuts” them permanently. This book is a “must read” for every dental student before graduation.”

Mario Pavicic, DDS

Assistant Professor and Course Director for Practice Management at Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine

“This is a must read for all business owners. It's captivating and filled with wisdom. The generous lessons Dr. Arndt intimately shares are priceless. This book emulates the boundless capacity of creating a great business when it is in alignment with a soul driven life.”

Chrissy Carew

Insightful Player, LLC

“Once you pick this book up you will not be able to put it down. It will add years to your life and eliminate a lot of aggravation and nonsense in your personal and business life.”

Fred S. Hecht, DDS

Staten Island Dental Care

“The life lessons contained in Dr. Ron’s personal masterpiece extend far beyond the dental profession and resonate with every business owner, manager and professional wrapped-up in the day-to-day minutia that blinds one from focusing on the “big picture” that is, those real values that matter most in life.”

Chris S. Costin, CPA

Costin + Company CPAs



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“WOW! This book is a “must read” for every professional (not just dentists) and particularly for those beginning their careers. Dr. Ron’s entire book applies to my personal and professional life. There is tremendous value when the author lived the experiences, shared his mistakes and lessons and now walks the talk! I was moved and inspired by each chapter.”

Ronald Stanich, DDS

Ohio Dental Association

“As a chiropractor I am all too familiar with the term “burnout”. You feel like a gerbil running on a wheel with no purpose or direction. Dr. Arndt’s wonderful book gave me hope. It helped me realize that I am not alone in my frustration. By applying just a few of the concepts contained in his book I felt empowered with a new focus to take control of my life and get off that wheel. I have already made positive changes in my practice to bring balance back in my life. I now enjoy going to work again.”

Phillip E. Barry, D.C., C.C.S.P

“This is not only a great story of how to construct and run a business; it is a lesson plan for personal and professional success. Dr. Ron’s book inspires us to remember the greatest lessons in life—love God, love yourself, and love your family.”

Sherry Greenleaf, RCC

Co-founder IMPACT Training & Development

“Dr. Ron’s book is an antidote to dentists, hygienists, and teams that operate in a mediocre haze. Thanks to your insights I think and act differently to the things that happen in my life and my office. Thirty-five years ago, I would have laughed you out of the room and told you to go to hell! I am a better person because of you. I have a daily vision for myself that makes me the best that I can be. I cannot tell you how that mantra gets me through a rough day.”

Shawn Petrillo Molchan, RDH

Registered Dental Hygienist



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"Dr. Ron's book is powerful, introspective, transparent, and cathartic. He reminds us all that life is a journey, and when we have a chance to rediscover what is important - grab on. Support and acknowledgment of loved ones is enrichment to life. You will learn to be positive with your life and when stuck, help is available. You'll discover how playing your "game" to your strengths can make you more satisfied and complete."

Douglas A. Krueger, DDS

Restorative & Cosmetic Dentistry

"A concise, poignant...real life, near tragic experience! Dr. Ron's story is a valuable reflection, helping all business and professional leaders to redefine personal and professional goals: 1) WHAT do I want? 2) WHY am I doing this? 3) HOW do I accomplish my goals? Honest, direct, and thought provoking; YOU will rethink your life's direction!"

Kenneth A. DeLuca, Ph.D.

Clinical Psychologist

"Coach Ron's book is important to read because taking charge of your practice has a direct and profound effect upon your health, happiness and income."

William P. Prescott, E.M.B.A., J.D.

Attorney & Author

"Spot on!! Dr. Ron's book should be required reading for all newly licensed health care professionals, not just dentists. Get control of your practice from the get-go; not 20 years later. Some things are more important than weekends and nights at the office. Read his book to discover the value of planning your personal and personal life well—you only get them once."

Charles Norris, OD

Optometrist



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“Good job Dr. Ron. I have tried to value an attitude of servitude toward others because God asks this of us and it is ultimately what makes us feel good about ourselves. Your book reminds us that the essence of life is about relationships and healthy choices and not about career, wealth, and serving self.”

Robert J. Veenema, DO

Pediatric Hospitalist

“I worked with Dr. Ron as his dental chairside assistant before and after his heart attack. “Killing” his practice was a difficult transition and it shifted the climate of the office to a very positive place to work. Our team became unified and singularly focused. His leadership decision was an important change driving the success of our practice. Dr. Ron has been a true mentor for me and I’m grateful to continue the benefit of his leadership and guidance for my career and life through his business coaching.”

Lisa Filka, CDA, EFDA

Certified Dental Assistant and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary

“The message is one that will resonate with many. Enjoy life, love the ones that share your life and there is more to life than work. Unfortunately for many they don't realize these lessons until a health scare or much later in life when most of it has passed them by. You have put these life lessons front and center and challenged the reader to act. You've also given the reader the opportunity for change, the beneficial reasons to do so and left it in their hands to decide their own fate. The first half of the book tells the reader why it was important for you to change and hopefully allows them to see some of themselves in your story and the second half demonstrates the implementation of change. I also need to exert more control over my life instead of my life being in the hands of another. Have a plan for life so that life doesn't plan you.”

Kevin Corcoran, Esq.

Bob Schmidt Homes, Inc.



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“Your book “inspired” me to begin evaluating my business and personal life. I am the gerbil on the wheel, my team is not buying into my vision and I have allowed their non-action to impact my life. Time to STOP! Dr. Ron continues to amaze me with his thinking and clarity. Because of this book I am ready to really dissect my business to create the life I want.”

Michael J. Dennis

X-Pools, LLC

“Dr. Ron's book is a "must read" for all dental students, prior to graduation, or for anyone else about to start out in the business world. His message is fun and entertaining, while striking at the backbone of some very serious concepts in life. Life can be a real joy if you manage to achieve a balance of success in both your business and personal life. Dr. Ron's goal is to teach us how.”

Catherine Vetrano, D.D.S.

Dental Centre

“First of all, don't let the title fool you. Even though a dentist writes it, the message is applicable for anyone that's ever owned a business or been in a management position. Killing the Practice Before it Kills You: How Throwing Out My Business Model Saved My Life, is a poignant synopsis of how all the seemingly little things, and our reaction to them, are what truly shape our lives. If you feel like you're life is out of control, and your business is running you rather than the other way around, this book is a must-read.”

Patrick A. Thompson, D.D.S.

Joplin Dental Care



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"Every dentist faces a multitude of challenges in their practice and life. Ron Arndt, as both coach and dentist, provides great insight into the delicate balance of work, family, and self. You'll discover a template for life changes, and in some cases, truly save your own life. A must read. I couldn't put the book down!"

Charles Blair, DDS

Author, Coding with Confidence and inventor of Practice Booster and dentistry's foremost authority on practice profitability, analysis, and overhead control.

"The message was frightfully clear to me. As a type A personality myself your book jolted me to realize I must "shift" my ways and learn how to have fun again. Just like the cliché, this book is as "serious as a heart attack!" Dr. Ron's insights have been a huge wake up call for me. Life isn't all work and no play. You encouraged me to realize that change begins with me. You proved the point that, "it's never too late to shift your thinking!" Change you did! Thank you for this gift."

Mr. Tom Lamoda

GC America Inc.

"My first reaction to this book was regret that I hadn't read it at the start of my career! This is a book that is a resource not only for dental professionals - but for any professional. It is, hands-down, the most readable business book I've ever come across. His real-life stories are humorous, touching, warm and sometimes crazy - but it makes it all the better. It is written in such a style that makes you want to keep turning every page until you have finished. This book includes lessons of perseverance, dedication and a bit of risk taking. The best thing about this book is that you come away with simple, do-it-yourself strategies for making your business better - now!"

Danielle Cuomo, MBA

Virtual Assist USA

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do you know if your dental practice is killing you?

Have you ever experienced any of these warning signs?

Check off those that reverberate with you.

- You find it difficult to get a good night's sleep because you are worrying about the business
- Your attention is on home when you are at work and on work when you are at home
- You tell your spouse they are number one in your life when silently you are more focused on the success of your business. After all, it's who you are!
- Your energy level begins to fade, and you make excuses when you know you have not been taking care of yourself
- You are too busy to play games with your kids, who are so hungry for your attention
- On a weeklong vacation, it takes three to four days to unwind. You feel like a new person for one or two days, then the tension builds again, tightening every muscle. Sunday nights are the worst.
- If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself. It takes too much time to explain and delegate a task to another person.
- You hear this voice in your head: "I don't need anyone else. I'm smart and can do it all"

If you checked off a single one consider this a "red flag". Don't pass it off as inconsequential. The accumulation of these signs slowly and insidiously over time can be deadly.

2. Why are developing personal core values so important to the success of a dental practice? How do they translate into working with patients and your office team? In other words, Why would they care?

I found myself defining my sense of worth based on the success of my business. It fueled my ego that I was creating an economic future of choice for my family. That, of course, included a beautiful home, vacations, parochial school, saving for college, and planning for retirement. Does that sound familiar? Big numbers, big production was the name of the game . . . or so I thought. I was working to be the biggest, baddest, fastest, coolest, wealthiest, and most respected dentist in town. I was unaware at the time that a manager cannot lead the band and play all the instruments. After my heart attack,



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I shifted in many ways: my outlook, my attitude. I affirmed my new direction by codifying my values in writing.

My Core Values serve as the litmus test against which I identify what is right and honest. I set aside quiet-time, so I could work on identifying my core values. As a basis for this process,

I used the following elements:

- My core values are ideas that I want to publicly affirm;
- My core values are ideas that I greatly prize and have a positive influence on my life;
- My core values are ideas that I am willing to act on;
- My core values are ideas that I would repeat if given the circumstances again and again; and,
- My core values are ideas that I choose freely and with a clear understanding and recognition of the consequences of my choice.

3. What was the significance of firing - and then re-hiring - employees? How did that help you define leadership?

It was a dramatic message that the old way of doing business was over. I was not leading my team successfully and the dental team was lulled into a mindset of entitlement...a deadly combination. I killed the practice and then offered up a solution for the way I wanted my practice to operate. This was an all-or-nothing approach that was necessary to get everyone's attention. The choice was up to each employee if they wanted to re-apply for openings in my new practice. After Killing the Practice I spent the next several hours detailing how I was going to run the practice. I introduced them to my core values, dissecting every word. I gave them the opportunity to ask questions. I did the same for my vision, again reminding them that they didn't have to buy into what I was explaining. But if they didn't, they no longer had the opportunity to work with me. For the first time, I became the real leader.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

4. How can a dental practice raise their fees and not upset the patients?

I made the decision that I was going to be paid what I was worth. I expected to connect my compensation with the value, the love, care, and extra attention I brought to my patients. No more of wondering if the insurance will cover it. Or, worrying if that's over "Usual, Customary, and Reasonable." That old thinking had to go. My practice was not usual and customary; we were extraordinary. My expectation was to offer financial options for our patients that were written, fair and easy to understand. Certainly, there would be a small percentage of price shoppers that would be upset, yet they were not our ideal patients. No matter what our fees, patients will view them as "a little pricey." I validated that with a study I did. I learned if we deliver excellence, combined with true patient care and outrageous service, our patients will perceive the value and not only continue to visit us, they will refer us to others. This is not about gouging people, it is about being compensated for delivering remarkable service.

5. How does cutting some benefits completely, but increasing others dramatically work?

I broke typical dental management thinking of "give everything and anything" to retain employees.. In the real world, great performance dictates greater compensation. In dentistry, this statement is more enigmatic: "Dr., I have been here for another year and I am entitled to a raise." My new view was: no more entitlements. I explained clearly that the new wages would be no less than what each currently made, however, future raises would be as a result of increased output-performance-revenues. I made major adjustments to my benefits package, because it was being abused. I was now going to track expenses like a real businessman, compare them to industry averages and make better decisions. I did expand the education credit because it encouraged their growth, enhanced their value and better served our patients. I introduced my new incentive program: a Win-Win, Pay-4-Performance arrangement. It was team-centered and fair. Did it work? You bet it did. My final 5 years in practice were my most profitable and my team members made more money than they had ever done.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

7. What does practicing “meat and potato” dentistry mean? Why does it work?

Meat and potato dentistry is my name for the routine, common procedure mix of services the typical patient wants. My practice was not a high-end cosmetic or full-mouth rehab business. That was not what the majority of my wonderful blue-collar patients requested. We were a "family practice" and as such served moms and dads and their kids along with their grandparents and neighbors. Nothing fancy, yet extremely personalized relationship-based care.

8. What is one tip that you would give to someone starting out their own private practice?

Start with the end in mind....a Steven Covey mindset. I'm coaching a young pediatric dentist. My first bit of coaching was to get him to dream and envision what he wants! What will make the biggest difference is to identify who you are via your own Core Values. Armed with Core Values and their Vision Statement, the strategic plan magically begins to unfold. Anytime they get stuck, they refer to their core values and vision. Above all things, this is what I want for new dentists.



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TOP TEN INSIGHTS TO OPEN BOOK MANAGEMENT

Coach Ron's Top-10-Ten

Ronald F. Arndt, DDS, MBA, MAGD

TOP TEN INSIGHTS TO OPEN BOOK MANAGEMENT

How well do your employees know your dental business? Are they educated to the basics of how to make money for the business? Do they know the reasons they are being asked to reduce costs, increase productivity, serve the customer with excellence and resolve problems? Open Book Management is an approach to operating a business (and Dentistry is a business) that gets everyone to focus on helping the business make money.

1. BE OPEN TO NEW WAYS OF SOLVING OLD PROBLEMS

If you continue to do what you have always done, you will continue to get what you have always got! If your business simply manages to “scrape” by, if your overhead continues to consume a higher and higher percentage of gross income, or if patient satisfaction is declining, there is another way to approach your problem. Open Book Management provides the avenue to better manage costs as well as many other areas of your practice.

2. THERE IS NO ONE “RIGHT” WAY

Just as there are several solutions to every problem, there are different ways to implement Open Book Management. The key word however, is open. The attitude of leadership, the characteristics of the employees and the current practice profitability will help form the open-book style.

3. LET GO

One of the greatest fears is losing control. Another is that once your employees see the financial statements they will use them against you. They may even figure out how much money you make. There is the fear of your patients or your competition learning about your practice operation. Fear is False Evidence Appearing Real. Risk takers earn their rewards. There is no reason to operate in the dark any longer. Your employees and those you serve WANT you to be successful. Your competitors are too worried about worrying about you.

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Coach Ron's Top-10-Ten

4. QUIT SOLVING PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS FOR THEM

When an employee approaches you complaining of a lousy pay program, many become defensive or set out to solve the problem. Instead, invite the employee to develop alternatives that serve the business and the employee.

5. EDUCATE EMPLOYEES THAT THEY HAVE A DIRECT STAKE IN THE BUSINESS SUCCESS

The objective of the business is to make a profit. All employees need to be a part of that process. Teach employees that they are business people and not only workers. If the practice is profitable, they get a piece of the action. If there is no profit, they don't.

6. LEARN MORE ABOUT OPEN BOOK MANAGEMENT

Read *The Great Game of Business* by Jack Stack or *Open-Book Management: The Coming Business Revolution*, by John Case.

7. INSTRUCT AND COACH YOUR EMPLOYEES

Give them the WHY as well as the HOW and then follow up with feedback. Be sure they understand all the why's: why is the practice in its current position; why do they need to know how the business runs; why you are sharing this information. Then show them how this new Open Book Management will work and benefit them. Then provide regular Coaching and feedback....real-time learning.

8. SHARE YOUR NUMBERS

Every business (including Dentistry) has benchmarks against which they measure their performance: production; collections; remakes; patient complaints; etc. Things that get measured, get done. When employees begin tracking these critical benchmarks, they now see opportunities for improvement. They will provide solutions and will now own the results. Your stress is less. You no longer are required to have all the answers. Share financial information with employees. Teach them how to read the numbers....they send a powerful message.



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▀ **Coach Ron's Top-10-Ten**

9. TEACH BUSINESS BASICS

Inc. magazine suggests that Americans know very little about business. Many believe the word business equals success and money. They have little or no idea about routine business expenses, what percentage of profit is healthy or the distinction between profit and income. Develop a program in-house that teaches business basics--- how to read a financial statement. Start with employees personal finances and apply the new understanding to the business. Compare personal income statements and balance sheets with those of the business to speak the language of business and deepen their understanding.

10. SHOW EMPLOYEES HOW TO THINK LIKE OWNERS

Profit and loss are strong motivators. Make sure every employee shares directly in the business success and in the risk of failure. When employees trust and understand management, profit and loss will motivate employees to get clear on what they are working for each year. When they have the opportunity to be rewarded like an owner, they will think like owners.

Open Book Management, according to Mark Miller of Chick-fil-A's, is a system to create a business of business people. By teaching the business of business, providing tools to measure performance and supporting employee growth, Open Book Management has the potential to reduce employee discontent, improve decisions and increase profits. Business can be fun.



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TOP TEN TIPS TO PREPARING & DELIVERING YOUR EMPLOYEE SUCCESS CONFERENCE

Coach Ron's Top-10-Ten

Ronald F. Arndt, DDS, MBA, MAGD

TOP TEN INSIGHTS TO OPEN BOOK MANAGEMENT

Have you noticed how your employees HATE to do the dreaded performance review? So if it's not working, change it. That's where replacing the traditional finger-pointing, negative, and blaming performance review is replaced with the Success Conference.

For dentists, being able to use Success Conferences to develop and encourage employees is a core management skill. And it can be learned. Regular, constructive feedback on performance is vital if your staff are to build on their strengths and grow in their capabilities and contributions to the practice.

Your employees are your most important asset. They represent you in all facets of your practice. If you nurture and take care of your employees they will nurture and take care of your patients. So the question is, "how do I motivate my team to do their job as if they co-owned the business?" One piece of this practice growth puzzle is to deliver quality, focused, and regular Success Conferences where the focus of these meetings is supporting employees to achieve current and new practice goals.

Consider the following Top Ten Tips to making your Success Conferences really successful.

1. Understand the purpose of the Success Conference.

To develop people by encouraging them to work to their full potential; to provide feedback and praise for good performance when you see it; to motivate people to continue positive behaviors; and to make certain people know how important they are to your practice.



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TOP TEN TIPS TO PREPARING & DELIVERING YOUR EMPLOYEE SUCCESS CONFERENCE

2. Schedule it.

Consider a Success Conference at least twice a year and preferably once a quarter. Things that get measured and acknowledged get done. By scheduling these reviews more regularly you will be on the offensive rather than the defensive and you are in a better position to offer suggestions for improvement more regularly and consistently.

3. Set the objectives.

Plan ahead. Current job descriptions are critical in order to use the Success Conference as a way to discuss, revise, and align individual objectives with your practice goals. Consistent with your core values and vision, what are the specific outcomes you want from each of your employees? Be prepared to provide detailed outcomes you are looking to see from your team members.

4. Establish measurements.

Things that get measured get done. Provide agreeable, challenging, realistic, and quantifiable performance measures for each objective. Performance outcomes measured in numeric or percentage terms will provide your employees with specific targets and give them a sense of achievement when they surpass them.

5. Create a reporting mechanism.

Each week or month prearrange a 10 to 30 minute project update review time for your employees to report to you on their progress. This way you will always know of their progress and how to best support them. Ask the following four questions: 1. How are you doing? 2. What's not working? 3. What's working? 4. What resources do you need from me?

6. Empower your employees.

By starting with the presumption that people come to work to succeed, delegate to them to gain their commitment to action and encourage them to use their own initiatives. Give them control over what they achieve by agreeing on the objectives and their responsibilities to bring the project or goal to completion. By being less dependant on you, the manager, they have the potential to be more effective and can save you time. Insist that your employees come to you with solutions rather than problems.

An ECG (heart rate) graphic with a blue and purple color scheme, overlaid on a grid. The text is positioned to the left of the graphic.

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TOP TEN TIPS TO PREPARING & DELIVERING YOUR EMPLOYEE SUCCESS CONFERENCE

7. Acknowledge, acknowledge, acknowledge.

Behaviors that get recognized and rewarded get done. Find out what it is that motivates each member of your team. There is no limit to the number of ways to recognize your team members for their successful completion of a practice or individual objective. Remember, success routinely breeds further success. Match the reward to the level of difficulty of the objective or goal.

8. Look back at the period since the last Success Conference.

Discuss how the employee has used the challenges and successes in their previous development plan to improve their capabilities. This helps the employee understand the value of the Success Conference, the value of the development activities they have undertaken, and how they are improving their ability to contribute to the team and the success of the practice.

9. Encourage discussion

You as the manager ask most of the questions and listen the most. Encourage the team member to start talking about the challenges and obstacles they have overcome in achieving their objective. If they have not successfully hit their goals, question further to encourage them to give you their own answers to what steps to take to make this outcome a reality. Keep asking open-ended questions to gain their involvement and to encourage an expansive answer.

10. Confirm the date for you and your employees next Success Conference and the new set of objectives.

Plan ahead for the next review. Be certain the date is on the calendar and clarify your next 2-3 specific and measurable objectives to accomplish between now and the next Success Conference. Leave nothing to chance or conjecture. Be specific. Be concrete. Be enthusiastic.

Your job as a dental CEO is to manage and coach your employees on how to improve their performance. Simply telling people what to do is not effective: results need to be measured and monitored to provide important, specific, and timely feedback. Take the action step now to arrange individual Success Conferences with each of your team members. You can expect elevated performance from your team; more fun in practicing dentistry; and a certain increase in your income if you follow the steps above.



Killing **THE PRACTICE** Before It Kills *You*

How Throwing Out My Business Model Saved My Life

TOP TEN TIPS TO PREPARING & DELIVERING YOUR EMPLOYEE SUCCESS CONFERENCE

Dr. Arndt is a certified professional dental Coach. He blends 20 years of clinical dental practice with five years of executive corporate experience in the financial planning and investment management industry. With his graduate business training and hands-on experience, he coaches dental professionals throughout the United States and Canada. Dr. Ron is the author of a series of ThinBooks© and web-based Right Hiring and Retention for the Dental Team© learning modules. Dr. Ron can be contacted at:

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