

A Team Meeting... continued

3. Icebreakers: Too many team meetings focus on problems in the office and the team is always on edge when the meeting starts. Provide something fun or motivational before things get underway. Express your personality to the team. Show an inspiring clip off YouTube, quote your favorite speakers or ask a thought-provoking question.

- What one thing would you do if you could not fail?
- Tell us how you got your name?
- Act out your favorite activity you like to do outside of the office and have us guess what it is.

4. Meeting guidelines: There have to be some rules to the meeting. You never want to be overbearing but you need to encourage guidelines that allow the meeting to run smoothly, on time and allow everyone's opinion to be respected. Lay ground rules to discourage negative behavior. Some common topics to cover are staying on time, cell phone usage, discussing sensitive issues, not interrupting others and methods to resolve disagreements that may arise.

You never want to present the rules yourself. Allow your team to come up with their own rules and simply ask questions to guide them at achieving an agreed upon set of meeting guidelines. While they come up with the rules, write them on a dry erase board for everyone to see.

5. Let others speak: As the leader it's often too easy to speak your mind a little too much. Always try working in dedicated time for other people to present ideas and speak their minds. Encourage other team members to come to the front of the room and explain their opinions to the group.

6. Count to 12: Whenever you pose a question, count 12 seconds before speaking again. (1 Mississippi, 2 Mississippi, 3 Mississippi...) This allows time for people to process your question and think of an answer. Also the "quiet time" will put more pressure on someone to speak up. If there is no response, then re-phrase your question. Manage your impulse to speak up and answer the question you posed. Someone will feel compelled to speak up.

7. Brainstorm: Some of your team members possess tendencies of being more reserved or may need additional time to process their responses due to the fear of being incorrect. Allow everyone at the team meeting to have a note pad. As you ask certain questions allow for a 5-minute "quiet time" when team members can write out their responses. This can also be a great methodology for questions that may have personal responses which can remain confidential and be turned in after the meeting.

8. Defer to the group: Some decisions require a majority vote. Your team may have an outspoken or opinionated member who tends to be predominately vocal

during meetings. If this team member is dominating the meeting and responding to every question, then by using phrases such as "how about it group?" will encourage more participation. Asking the team to take a vote is an easy way to gain more involvement. Important topics presented at meetings are best handled by allowing the majority to steer the decision. After a majority decision has been reached, then it is vital to follow up with a juxtaposition of pros and cons of the decision to ensure everyone's voice is heard.

9. Small group discussions: Listening to one person speak for an hour can become mundane. Inviting others to also speak can help freshen up the meeting but small group break-out sessions allow people to stand up, stretch, refresh their thoughts and intermingle with people they may not typically interact much with during the working day. Some of the best ideas come out of small group discussions. For instance, having a hygienist discuss a problematic issue with a front desk person and an assistant provides three different perspectives leading toward one common solution. Often people learn a great deal about how their team functions when they can see things through a different perspective.

10. Always make a decision: Every meeting must have at least one decision. Otherwise it was a wasted meeting. Ideally there should be one major decision that the leader should follow up on, but there should be other decisions that are delegated out towards other team members. All decisions should immediately be assigned to someone at the meeting for follow up. Holding productive team meetings will allow your office to distinguish itself from other local offices. You can begin to distinguish yourself by having a higher level of engagement and more unified team. Hopefully, as your meetings become more productive, your team will become more motivated and those previously dreaded meetings will become highlights on your schedule! Let me know how you do.

A Gift... Another Key Point - Location: Switch it up. Take your team to different locations besides the office - somewhere with less distraction and that is accustomed to hosting groups. Let the team decide the locations from time to time. For bigger meetings, like a weekend, it helps if you give the team freedom or a fun team building day the first day. Take them to dinner, layout the rest of the weekend agenda and you will have a focused, hard working team ready to get things done. They will be thinking of "all" the investment you are putting into them so the law of reciprocity states they will want to return the favor.

Dr. Dobracki is actively practicing in an innovative and progressive private practice. He is a co-founder of G.I.F. T. Inc., Growth In Finances and Trust and has been a featured author in multiple business and clinical publications. If you are a clinician looking to expand your practice, contact him for a complimentary analysis of current missed opportunities in your practice. You may reach Dr. Dobracki at kdobracki@giftcoaches.com, www.giftcoaches.com or 734-325-GIFT.

The 3 Roles of a Successful Hygiene Department

by Wendy Briggs, RDH²



In today's dental practice, realizing success in hygiene is not out of reach. Although it may seem that achieving high productivity consistently from your hygiene department is a fantasy, we have found a formula for success. The incredible thing is, we have taught practices all over the country how to convert lack luster hygiene productivity into an incredible revenue stream.

To realize potential in hygiene, we must be sure that we are maximizing the 3 roles of a modern day dental hygienist.

The first role is that of a Preventive Therapist. Dental hygienists have a significant responsibility to be focused on the prevention of disease. We are the only health professional who is given the primary role of prevention! The truth is, many patients today are considered high-risk by the ADA. Those who consistently struggle with chronic decay have a very high level of frustration. They do not want cavities, they are tired of always having problems with their teeth and they are very interested in preventive options.

Too often we assume that if insurance doesn't cover a certain preventive procedure the patient will not want it. When we present the opportunity the right way, patients jump at the chance to prevent future problems. Especially within the context of a risk assessment discussion, patients today are very interested in preventing problems and minimizing chronic decay. Preventive services like fluoride, sealants, de-sensitizing agents, radiographs, advanced oral cancer screenings and many others become commonplace procedures happening daily in hygiene. If we are truly maximizing preventive therapy in hygiene, a nice thing happens to productivity - it goes up drastically.

Just last week we recognized some incredible dental hygienists that are serious about offering their patients the very best care. They do not withhold the opportunity for preventive services from anyone! One of them just topped her record production day and has set a new record. She produced \$ 5,717 in one day. That is incredible and yet it is achievable when we are maximizing 3 roles in hygiene.

The second role is that of a Periodontal Therapist. Many consultants and hygiene speakers focus heavily on periodontal therapy, as it is a critical component in the life

of a dental hygienist. However, it is not uncommon to see a practice that is still treating periodontal infection today with the same strategies and technology that they were using 5 years ago. Sometimes even 10 years ago. This is truly alarming! Many things have changed. In dentistry today, we now have better tools, better science about what causes periodontal infection, and how to drastically reduce it. We know so much more about the oral-systemic link and serious health risks that exist with the presence of inflammation in the body.

We have laser techniques, we have oral DNA testing methods, we have better home care products, we have additional resources like Arestin and other adjunctive options for patients. If we are truly maximizing potential in our role as a periodontal therapist, we are seeing periodontal disease, talking about it and treating it.

We have extremely high acceptance rates for these advanced services, supervised neglect is not an option. We discuss periodontal disease with existing patients, as well as new patients and we are treating it with every available weapon in our arsenal. Practices need to know what to do differently, how to achieve higher acceptance from patients for periodontal procedures and how to better incorporate new technology to better serve their patients.

The third role is that of a Patient Treatment Advocate. Hygiene often underestimates what a critical role we have in helping our patients make choices about the dentistry they need. How many times have they turned to the hygienist or another clinical team member to ask, "Do I really need to have this done?" or "How long can I wait before I get this taken care of?" The reality is, patients do want the team's opinion and recommendations when it comes to the choices they have about treatment.

Providers need to embrace and incorporate technology that aids in better maximizing this role. Having time and the skills necessary to use the intra-oral camera on every patient is vital. Other incredible devices like cavity detecting lasers only help us facilitate treatment being accepted.

Verbal skills, knowing which questions to ask and helping the patient decide which option best accomplishes their goals are what we are aiming for in developing this role. Presenting treatment and having the patient choose better dentistry can be incredibly rewarding. It also helps drive more treatment into the restorative schedule which keeps everyone on the team smiling!

Wendy Briggs is a practicing dental hygienist and the President and CEO of Hygiene Diamonds. She and her team of Hygiene Coaches (all hygienists) work with practices who are extremely productive, while still providing world class service to patients.

To find out more about maximizing the potential from Hygiene in your practice, simply visit www.hygienediamonds.com/profitabledentist to request your free DVD. Or call to request a complimentary consult call with one of our amazing hygiene mentors at 1-888-756-4454.

A WIN FOR DENTISTS AND THEIR PATIENTS:

GOV. JOHN HICKENLOOPER SIGNS SB 190 ON NON-COVERED SERVICES INTO LAW

SB 190 prohibits dental plans from setting fees for services that are not ever covered by a patient's specific plan. It does not change payment policies for covered services or for services that would be a covered service if the patient had not met a frequency limitation, a waiting period, an annual maximum, or similar covered service restrictions.

The bill takes effect Aug. 9, 2017. The CDA is talking with dental plans and carriers to provide additional information on the practical effects and implementation of this bill in coming weeks.

WHY CASTLE ROCK ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY INFORMS OUR PATIENTS ABOUT DENTAL STEM CELLS

We take great pride in delivering world-class oral surgery through leading edge science and technology combined with the highest standards of care. With this in mind, we have begun informing our patients about the future medical potential of the stem cells contained in teeth that are coming out.

Advances in Regenerative Medicine focus on the use of stem cells to heal tissue damaged through injury, disease, aging or congenital defect. Teeth have been determined to be a rich source of these cells. Patients losing teeth, either baby teeth or extracted adult teeth, have been choosing to preserve (bank) those stem cells for their personal use in the future. These would not only be for use in the mouth, but potentially for use in many tissues throughout the body.

Upon positive viability, the cells are cryopreserved to be available for utilization in future personalized regenerative therapies.



To learn more about how you can secure your family's future health by banking their stem cells, call our office today or visit www.store-a-tooth.com.

STAFF TRAINING

Need help with staff training? Check out <https://epracticemanager.com/videos/>

A Team Meeting Where You Don't Need Coffee?!



by Dr. W. Keith Dobracki¹

Let's be honest, a team meeting can be something the doctor and team both cringe at when it appears on the schedule. But the most productive practices understand their importance and could not function efficiently

without them. How come some offices hold team meetings which prove to be so beneficial, while other offices hold energy-draining wastes of time? What are the secrets some of us are not aware of?

America's top practices swear by regular meetings where a lively platform is created to share progressive ideas about the practice. It still boils down to solid leadership and proper management of a well-planned team meeting. A motivated leader, an engaged team and a common goal are all the results of a good meeting.

There are three general types of meetings: Sharing information, learning new skills/information and making decisions.

Typically you want to focus a meeting on one of these formats as a general guideline. If you choose to focus on solely sharing information, then you need to be very creative in the construction of the meeting due to the fact that these can become extremely dull. Either find unique ways to spread the information or minimize the length of these meetings to 45 minutes, especially if there is a speaker involved. Providing an email with an outline of the major ideas to be presented during the meeting can also lead to a much more engaging

team meeting. Here are our top 10 ideas to keep the team awake:

- 1. Have an agenda:** This was briefly touched already. You need a road map to success for your meetings. It is too easy to get off track or skip over important points. Before the meeting, email a copy of the meeting outline with the intent of receiving constructive feedback and hopefully spark some questions so that team members can come prepared. One of the worst things you can do is show up and ask: "Does anyone have any problems and questions?" then magically expect a meeting to begin. Chaos will ensue and your team will leave more stressed then when they came. I remember when I was at an office and the only positive thing the team ever said about any of the meetings was, "We got free Jimmy Johns."
- 2. The meeting organizer cannot contribute their opinions:** If you organized the meeting and are running the meeting, then by default you automatically have the most power in the room. Now if you are running the meeting and are also the boss, then you have the utmost power. As the most powerful person in the room, if you are expressing your opinions about the topics you are presenting, then you will rarely get any feedback or "other" opinions. No one likes to argue with the person in charge, especially when that person is responsible for his or her livelihood. As the leader, you must remain neutral and focus your attention on running the meeting smoothly and encouraging participation. You should never divulge your opinion about the content. I always encourage clients to rotate who runs the meeting or else make different individuals responsible for segments of the meeting.

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