

From Patient Satisfaction to Employee Motivation

What a tremendous cycle. Satisfied patients motivate employees. It's a chain reaction of contagious enthusiasm.

Recently, in a practice that I work closely with, this patient comment was received. "I wanted to commend Dr. Williams and his staff for how well they treated me yesterday during my first visit. Despite the waiting area being filled beyond capacity, his staff remained friendly, courteous and helpful. Everyone had smiles on their faces from the time I walked in, to the time I booked my second appointment and left the office. To be honest, I was thinking that this would be my first and last trip to see Dr. Williams when I had to park across the street due to a full parking lot, and walked into a waiting room that was standing room only; but the moment the receptionist greeted me, I felt as though I were the only client being served. I was never made to feel as though I was in the way or adding to the already hectic and strenuous workday of the staff. I just want you to know that I would park a mile away to have my teeth cleaned by such a warm, courteous and professional staff! Dr. Williams, thank you, thank you, thank you for providing me with such wonderful care. I look forward to having both of my cavities filled in 3 weeks!"

Good patient service has a compound effect. When the staff of Dr. Williams' practice received this feedback, the enthusiasm went through the roof! Thus the chain reaction is created, from customer satisfaction to employee motivation. The personal satisfaction that employees derive from delighting the patients makes it almost impossible for them to be cynical or unmotivated about their workplace.

I am sure that many progressive practices reading this article also have very satisfied patients. The key here is bridging the gap with patient feedback. Are your patients giving you feedback? Furthermore, are you allowing the feedback to reach the employees? The role of managers and practice owners in this process is to develop ways to make positive patient feedback as motivational for employees as possible. For the two Gentle Dental Care practices owned by Dr. Kevin Williams, these types of comments are harvested through an online form submission, from his website

home page which allows for questions and feedback from the general public.

You can spend a fortune bringing patients in the front door, only to have them exiting through

the back door unsatisfied with their treatment. Most practices begin their existence with a strong and well-defined purpose of benefiting the patient, but over time a variety of factors contribute to diluting that purpose. Factors include a concern for profitability, patient volume, ego, office politics and more. The best way to increase your bottom line is focus on the reason you got into dentistry in the first place—which was hopefully to be a provider of exceptional dental health care.

Empower your staff to delight your patients, and to allow your staff to reap the glory of patient delight. This is a continuous, time-released motivator which creates a win/win/win situation for dentists, staff and patients.

Best wishes for continued success.

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