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# Identifying & Managing Staff Frustrations

*Strategies to Increase Team Longevity*

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Prepared exclusively for:



## Let's Start With a Question...

### What is frustrating you?

- ...because it is also frustrating your team
- ...because a frustrated team has shorter longevity
- ...because turnover is costly and time consuming
- ...and definitely not fun!

## Part 1

# The Current State of Dental Staffing

# The Current State of Dental Staffing

## 1. Staffing has hit a crisis level



# The Current State of Dental Staffing

## 2. Dental is more affected than many other businesses due to:

- More complex training
- Education levels
- Experience levels
- Limited growth opportunities
- Limited financial advancement
- Work from home

## The Current State of Dental Staffing

3. All dental office jobs are more complex which means broader and deeper training
  - Training is expensive
  - Training takes (lots of) time
  - Production is lower until the training takes hold

## The Current State of Dental Staffing

### 4. There are fewer available experienced staff to hire

- 10% of hygienists - gone
- 6% of dental assistants - gone
- ?% of front desk staff - gone
- 64% of practices are seeking one or more staff (2023 survey)

# The Current State of Dental Staffing

## 5. Staff compensation is rising

- Shortages always create increased compensation
- Since 2022, staff compensation has risen approximately 10%
- It will continue to rise



# The Current State of Dental Staffing

## 6. What is harder today?

- Recruiting - fewer candidates
- Interviewing - many do not show up
- Hiring - increased compensation
- Training - longer learning curve
- **RETAINING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

## Part 2

# A Simple Assessment Scan

## A Simple Assessment Scan

- Rank each staff member in all 10 categories
- Determine if the staff member can improve



## A Simple Assessment Scan



- Attitude
- Work ethic
- Knowledge to do the job
- Task completion
- Quality of results
- Works independently
- Teamwork
- Interpersonal Relations
- Customer Service
- Lifetime Learner

## A Simple Assessment Scan

- Look for the patterns
- Identify the top 3
- Now you have a compass
- Get started

## Part 3

# What is Frustrating Your Staff?

## What is Frustrating Your Staff?

- Staff frustration decreases longevity
- Lower longevity increases overhead and decreases profit
- Frustrated team members frustrate other team members
- Good performers often leave first

## What is Frustrating Your Staff?

- Frustration kills the culture of positivity
- Frustration kills teamwork
- Frustration leads to poor customer service
- It only takes one bad mood to kill the entire team that day
  - or week
  - or month
  - or ongoing



## Top Frustrations

- Chaotic environment
- Job skill sets
- Respect for leadership
- Lack of respect for the staff member
- Lack of teamwork
- A poor performing co-worker
- Co-workers' personalities
- Patients
- Compensation
- Hours
- Distance
- Jealousy
- Culture

## Part 4

# Three Frustrations You Can Address Today

## Frustration #1 - Chaotic Schedules

- Chaos at varying times most days
- Unpredictability
- Getting out late
- The problem is the day-to-day chaos
- Leads to fatigue and burnout
- Creates confusion and turnover
- “Our practice starts out with a scheduling plan and then it falls apart”
- A mathematically designed schedule solves this problem
- Systems create predictability

## Frustration #1 - Chaotic Schedules

**Solution** - Create a new well-designed schedule and skills to support schedule (most practices are minimally 30%-50% below potential)

- Low no shows and last-minute cancels
- Low late patients
- Excellent scripting and communication skills
- Emergency patients
- Train scheduling coordinators to move patients into the right appointments

## Frustration #1 - Chaotic Schedules

**Solution** - Create a new well-designed schedule and skills to support schedule (most practices are minimally 30%-50% below potential)

- Slight redesign might not do it
- Procedural time studies
- Steady daily pace for production
- Create a flow and eliminate bottlenecks

## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

- Compensation for many staff is still a frustration
- “I’m underpaid” (No one is ever overpaid)
- Staff compensation has risen over 10% since 2022
- Staff compensation will continue to rise at the rate of the CPI
- The main reason is the shortage of staff in the dental labor force.
- Fear of Covid 2020-2022
- Work from home desires
- Jobs closer to home - the 45-minute rule

## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

- The changes in staff compensation are permanent and will not reverse
- Minimum wage effect
- Labor union publicized deals
- Cost of basic necessities
- Competition for trained staff

## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

**Solution** - Create clarity around compensation

- Where are you (the team member ) today?
- What are your benefits and what are they worth?
- Apples to apples
- Great work environment for the following reasons...
- Bonus opportunities
- Any career advancement opportunities in the future



## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

**Solution** - Create clarity around compensation

- Most staff do not care about retirement
- Most staff do not care about paid leave
- Most staff do not care about skill set improvement opportunities

## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

**Solution** - Create clarity around compensation

- Idea - the longevity bonus
- 1,3,5,10,15,20-year increments
- Scales up for reaching the next longevity bonus
- It is usually much less expensive to pay longevity bonuses than hire new team members
- Levin Group estimates the cost of turnover at \$50,000 - \$100,000

## Frustration #2 - Staff Compensation

### Solution - Create transparency

- Team members today want to know everything going on in the office.
- Transparency needs to be greater than ever before, especially regarding compensation
- Remember, every team member can see online what the offers are in the area
- There are no secrets anymore and team members will leave the practice if they feel they are not at the right level or see no future for them

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

- Unexpected as a top frustration
- Perceive they are not doing their job
- Feeling there is more “falling on them”

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

### The reality of new team members

- Many do not have extensive experience
- Many do not have expertise yet
- Many are new to dentistry
- More does fall on them

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

When new team members are not yet up to speed...

- Eventually wears down the experienced team
- They have to do their job and others' jobs
- Leads to frustration... and even burnout

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

Teams are rarely fully balanced (new/veterans)

- Work ethic
- Teamwork attitude
- Desire to perform at the highest level

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

Build a “culture of positivity”

- Everyone feels responsible for the practice
- Everyone wants to support the entire team
- There is no “not my job”
- Everyone feels good



## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

Build a “culture of productivity”

- Leadership
- Vision
- Mission
- Culture

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

Create a good feeling about teamwork

- Compliment teamwork actions
- Highlight pitching in
- We are a team!
- Team-based fun activities
- Drive the message

## Frustration #3 - Lack of Teamwork

Teamwork increases practice production

- Greater work ethic
- Greater efficiency
- Better results

# The 12 Consequences of Not Having a Great Team

1. Lower production
2. Higher stress
3. Customer service breakdown
4. Breakdown in the systems
5. Higher turnover - the good people leave
6. More miscommunication

## The 12 Consequences of Not Having a Great Team

7. Less get done
8. Less gets done well
9. Harder days
10. More fatigue
11. Possible burnout
12. Slower learning curves

## A Great Team Is...

- More fun
- Easy
- Effortless
- Enjoyable

## Part 5

# Understanding Level 4 Leadership

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## Thank You!

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