

Seven Steps to Hiring Dental Superstars

BY: PENNY REED



“Chances are good that up to 66% of your company’s hiring decisions will prove to be mistakes in the first twelve months.”

–Peter Drucker, Management Consultant


On a daily basis, dentists tell us how tough it is to find good employees. Often the reason underperforming team members are kept on board or aren’t coached on their poor performance is the impending dread of hiring and training new staff. While a lack of specific training or motivation can be viable reasons for staff members not to achieve their potential, very often there are other factors. Most of the time, the root of the problem is the hiring process.

Having a “hiring process” goes beyond finding someone who looks good, sounds good, and can work the hours necessary. Your time is valuable and so is the time of your office manager and dental team. Bringing the wrong person or type of person into the practice can be a real downer. Poor hiring practices create a cycle of continually hiring poor performers, affecting the marketing of your business by causing your patients to wonder, “Why do they have a different group of people working there every time I come in to get my teeth cleaned?”

There is hope! Begin by modeling and implementing a proven hiring system, ensuring you have the best strategy to determine who does or doesn’t need to be on your team, before you bring someone in as a new-hire.

1. Empower your existing team to assist in the hiring and interviewing process. Put the framework in place for interviewing and hiring by creating a hiring committee of at least one person per department in the practice. The dentist should approve any ad before it is placed and review submitted resumes with the hiring committee. The hiring committee will then call potential candidates for permission to check references and perform reference checks. This will eliminate a great deal of time the doctor must personally spend on hiring new staff.
2. Review the resumes and have each candidate complete a job application. Unless the position requires a specific registration or certification, don’t rule out candidates without a dental background. Look for past performance and length of stay at each job over the past five years.
3. Call references and past employers. **This is the most overlooked step in the interviewing process.** Call the applicant and ask permission to contact current/past employers. It may be understandable if they do not want you to call their current employer, but you must have one or two past employer references. (You may request our Reference Check Form at the end of this article.)

4. Call the applicants who look the most promising, after you have checked references. Do a brief phone interview.
5. Schedule a group interview with about six of the top applicants. This interview should be 45 minutes in length. You will ask similar questions as you would in a one-on-one interview. Pay attention not only to the answers you are given, but also to the level of attention each candidate gives to the person who is talking. This is a good way to evaluate how each individual interacts with a group and how the group dynamic is affected by each response.
6. Administer behavioral/work-style assessments to top candidates. While it is important that everyone share a similar vision, having a team of people who exhibit mostly dominant and aggressive (or passive and low influencing) behavior does not make a well-rounded team. You will also learn what motivates these individuals and can start off with a great working relationship. A sales strategy assessment can be very beneficial in hiring staff members who will be assisting in the case presentation process.
7. Make an offer to the selected candidate(s). Call the chosen individual and offer them a position. Be sure they understand when you want them to start and get a commitment that you will hear back from them within 24-48 hours on their acceptance of the position.

Email resources@dentalgenius.com or fax **1.800.404.3895** with “reference check” in the subject line and we will promptly send you a complimentary “reference check form” to use in your hiring process. 

Penny Reed is co-founder of Dental Genius™, a practice management and marketing firm specializing in the business of dentistry. Dental



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