



A Team that *Works*

By Cathy Jameson

A team that simply gets the work done is quite different from a team that is cohesively and positively working together toward a shared set of goals. Without dynamic, motivated, and supportive employees, a practice cannot thrive to its full potential.

Employers must: (1) continuously acknowledge the value of team members to the practice, (2) make sure the practice holds opportunities for development, and (3) create an environment where staying with the practice is mutually beneficial for both the employer and the employee.

The success of each person's role within the practice is dependent on each person's willingness and ability to perform consistently well. How do you get and keep good people?

- 1 Establish minimum standards for excellence in each position in the practice, and stand behind your commitment to that excellence.
- 2 Be unwilling to hire anyone who does not meet your standards—even if this means waiting. Hiring correctly is far better than hiring too quickly in order to fill a position.
- 3 Provide excellent education for each team member on a continuous basis. Skill level must continually be developed. The ever-progressive movement in dentistry requires constant training/coaching/continuing education.

- 4 Establish an equitable and motivational compensation package—one that is competitive in today's work environment. Dentistry must be competitive with major corporations—which can be a problem. Your careful evaluation and attention to this aspect of your practice becomes critical.

Even if your team members love you, they may take what looks like a better offer. They may not feel they have a choice as they consider what's best for their families. Every time you lose a quality team member, it costs you well over \$15,000, including lost productivity leading up to departure, costs of locating and hiring a new person, and the time and money invested in training. If someone is deserving of a raise, consider this: the alternative of losing that person may be much more costly.



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