

Dean Jones Memorial Lectureship  
Presents

**Beyond the Chair:  
Real-World Solutions for the  
Staffing Challenges in Dentistry**

with

Jackie Brown Community Dental Partners	Tim Twigg Bent Ericksen & Associates
-------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------

**Today's goal**

*Inspire a collaborative approach  
to address staffing challenges  
and harness opportunities for  
growth and excellence.*

Introductions:  
Let's Meet Each Other

**WHAT ARE YOUR THREE  
BIGGEST STAFFING  
CHALLENGES?**

**Challenges We Will Tackle Today**

- Laying the foundation for success
- Recruitment and retention
- Social media influence on staffing and the job market
- Long-term career goals vs short-term financial incentives
- Team members as partners in the business
- Dual role of benefits and compensation
- Substantive issues and emotion-driven perspectives
- Crucial conversations
- Others you've mentioned

Laying the Foundation for  
Success

### 1st Achilles Heel / Challenge?

- Turnover and/or being short staffed ↔ misunderstandings
  - Being short-staffed → 'hiccups' in compliance and standards
  - Being short-staffed → risk and liability for everyone (you, your co-workers, your patients and your practice)
  - Being short-staffed → a risk management issue
  - Being short-staffed → increased stress
  - Bottom line: financial success (job security) is compromised

### 1st Achilles Heel / Challenge?

- Turnover and/or being short staffed ↔ misunderstandings
- Two steps forward...one step back
- Emotional and financial toll

### The Costs of Turnover

- Emotional Toll
  - Stress and Strain
  - Morale Suffers
  - How Long To Be "Up-to-Speed?"
- Financial Toll
  - Recruitment Costs
  - Time: Resumes, Screening, Interviewing, Checking References
  - Production/Collection Impact
  - Labor Related Issues/Costs

### 2nd Achilles Heel / Challenge?

- Successfully retaining employees and managing performance

### Which Is Smarter?

*Retaining Employees  
or  
Turnover and Hiring, Hiring  
and More Hiring?*

### The Tale of Two Practices

#### Practice #1

- Hire someone
- Pay them as little as you can get away with
- Provide minimal to no benefits

Why?

- Because employees can't be trusted
- Can't be counted on, only care about money
- Won't stick around, will take the next best offer

Leadership - Management Approach?

- Belief: you can't find good people
- Throw them into the job - basic sink or swim
- Be frustrated by lack of performance
- Tell them they better improve or else...
- Keep this person for "X" amount of time because the devil you know
- Finally can't stand it any longer terminate the person
- Person files for unemployment further confirming your belief

See, you were right!

- Employees are an expense (a necessary evil)
- Can't be trusted
- All they care about is money
- It's a self-fulfilling prophecy

Then: Repeat

#### Practice #2

- Hire someone
- Pay a competitive wage, with bonus opportunity
- Provide competitive benefits

Why?

- Because they can be trusted
- Can be counted on, care about being part of
- Will stay if you provide the right opportunity

Leadership - Management Approach?

- Belief: good people exist and can be developed
- Outline 2-3 year employment & training plan
- Monitor performance and timelines
- Provide productive feedback vs. goals
- Show initiative, invest in CE, developa into a good employee
- Person wants to stay and work for you, high engagement
- Long term retention, low turnover, further confirming your belief!

See, you were right!

- Employees are a resource
- Can be trusted
- They care about doing a good job and contributing
- It's a self-fulfilling prophecy

Then: Repeat

## How Do You View People?

Practice #1: Control & Dictate—No Trust



Practice #2: Involve & Engage—Trust



Which Practice Are You?  
Which Practice Will Be More Successful?

## It's All About Perspective



## Building an HR Foundation for Success Step 1:

*Begin with the  
end in mind*

## Team Member Experience

- You've thought about your patient experience, what about your employee experience?
- What is or do you want it to be?
- What does or do you want it feel like?
  - "We work hard and we laugh every day"
  - "We work hard and there is no fun allowed"
  - "We are a growing thriving practice"
  - "We demonstrate a commitment to CE & learning"
  - "We have a fun, welcoming, team-oriented culture"

## Employee Experience

- What kind of employee/leader are you?
- What is your reputation as an employee/boss/leader?
- Google and Facebook reviews!
- Is your practice one where people want to come to work?
- Your "UEP" vs. your "USP."
- Would you work for/with you?

## People Leadership

- Practice success is always related to people success.
- The foundation for people success is "People Leadership".
- "People Leadership" prioritizes engagement, appreciation, recognition and supporting each other regardless of position (personally and professionally).

## People Leadership

Goal is having employees who:

- Have a sense of belonging and inclusion
- Are encouraged to speak up
- Have a sense of purpose
- Have meaning with/for the job/role(s)
- Have a sense of contribution
- Feel valued
- Receive recognition, and
- Feel appreciated

What is My  
Role in This?

## What Kind of Leader /Team Member Am I?



## Results of Poor Characteristics

Characteristic	Feeling	Action
Is unavailable	Frustration	Call in sick
Poor communicator	Anger	Go home early
Is negative	Hopelessness	Engage in 'sabotage'
Is judgmental	Demoralized	Treat customers poorly
Doesn't listen	Worthless	Lash out at others

## Results of Positive Characteristics

Characteristic	Feeling	Action
Has integrity	Energized	Stay with the office
Is supportive	Confident	Work harder
Listens	Happy	Come in early
Shows respect	Appreciated	Deliver more
Is genuine	Motivated	Support the vision

## Focus on Key Takeaways

### Simon Sinek Video

## Key Takeaways from the Video

- Trust and cooperation
- "I did it because they would have done it for me"
- Feeling like we belong
- Feel safe because I know those around me are looking out for my wellbeing
- We can't control what's outside of our circle so focus on what we can
- When we feel safe we will do all we can to keep those dangers away
- Parent and great leaders want to give - opportunity, education, discipline when necessary, build their self-confidence
- Leaders are at all levels



### Organizational Culture

- > All organizations have an organizational culture (default or design)
- > Autocratic Dictatorial ←————→ Participatory Transparent
- > 1<sup>st</sup> culture question: to think or not to think?
- > What are employees paid to do?
- > Employees are paid to think
- > When EE's are valued for their brain, they stay, they are more committed and engaged
- > Bottom line: You need employees who can and will think (within the context of the vision, mission, purpose and values) and make mistakes
- > Pay attention to "Culture Clashes", especially as you grow and expand

### Organizational Culture

*Describe Your Current Culture*

Rules-based, By default?, Task/goal-oriented, Patient-driven, Employee-centered, Market-driven, Closed, Money-driven, People-oriented, Easy-going, Formal, Informal, Open, By design?, Strict discipline

### Organizational Culture

- > All organizations have an organizational culture (default or design)
- > Don't
- > 1<sup>st</sup> cu
- > What
- > You
- > miss
- > Nea

A safe and trusting work environment

- > Trust is the life blood of any relationship
- > Trust is a pre-condition for all teams
- > Basic emotion around "mistrust" is fear
- > Relationship or team trust is created by trustworthy behavior
- > How trustworthy are you?

### Organizational Culture

#### 5 Steps for Building Trust

1. Self-trust & credibility: promises we keep to ourselves (hard to trust others if we can't trust ourselves).
2. Demonstrating respect.
3. Doing what you say you are going to do.
4. Don't say you are sorry, behave sorry.
5. Extend trust.

### Focus on Key Takeaways

#### Inequity, Inequality and Fairness Video

## Inequality and Fairness

Successful teams, collectively, have a sense of support and belonging. It's about:

- Going to work
- Making a contribution to something bigger
- Learning something new
- Having fun
- Being safe
- Going home happy



## Organizational Culture

*Describe Your  
Future Culture  
(what changes?)*

Employee Recruitment  
and Retention

## Where Have all the Good People Gone?

- 1) Many have chosen to retire.
- 2) Many have chosen new or different career paths, given potential risk factors of working in a dental office environment.
- 3) Many are (still) needed at home for childcare, home schooling and/or care-giving.
- 4) Many have chosen to delay re-entering the workforce due to underlying health conditions.
- 5) Still impacted by the aftermath of fewer graduating students.
- 6) Many of the testing options for licensing and certifying were postponed or suspended, meaning smaller numbers of qualified/licensed candidates.

## Recruiting Talent

- In the past, you could count on schools and/or the profession creating an applicant pool - - No longer true today.
- Selling the value, benefits and the opportunity of a career in the dental profession (4-days per week, climate controlled environment, helping people, making a difference, good income, growth opportunities, etc.).
- Who might be interested in a career in the dental profession—not just working for/with you, but bigger?
- Essentially creating or developing your own talent pool to draw from by "investing" in the training, education or even certifications of potential employees.

***“Selecting qualified employees  
is like putting money in the  
bank”***

*John Boudreau*

## Results of Happy Teams

- ROI
- Greater productivity
- Lower stress
- Better work environment
- Lower turnover
- Greater profitability

## What Do People Want?

- A pleasant and harmonious work environment - minimal stress.
- A competent and compatible staff.
- Assistance in learning: communication, decisions and initiative.
- Clearly defined job responsibilities.
- Recognition: acknowledgement, contribution and appreciation.
- Adequate compensation and benefits.
- Feedback
- Good communication

*It's so much more than just getting a paycheck!*

## Before You Begin

1. Why are we hiring for this position?
2. What are we looking to achieve or accomplish with this hire (benefits)?
3. How does this align with and support our vision?
4. What's positive and negative about the workplace culture?
5. What is our "UEP"?
6. How are you going to ensure/support this person being successful?
7. What needs to be known about working with and for us?
8. What is the career path for this role?
9. How will performance be measured?
10. What are the traits / characteristics that lead to success—and failure?
11. What are some of the challenges related to the role?
12. Comprehensive updated job description for the position (essential functions)

## Recruiting Talent

Today we are balancing the need to have (any) employees against finding the right individuals for the position (long game vs. short game).

- Mistake #1: Hiring based on skills & experience (pulse)
- Principal #1: Hire for attitude and fit (the things you cannot teach or train)

## Good Attitude Video

### Recruiting Options - External

- Indeed, Zip Recruiter, Dental Post
- College / universities / technical schools
- Employment & temp agencies
  - Cloud Staffing Professionals
  - Dental Dynamic Staffing
  - Mayday Dental Staffing
- Social media
- Job fairs NPS - Google, Indeed, Glassdoor
- Professional associations
- Community networking
- Suppliers / vendors

### Recruiting Options - Internal

- Collaborative recruitment strategies; involving team members in brainstorming and hiring process
- Referrals
  - Offer bonuses
  - Work with a friend
  - Bring your relatives
- Existing Patients
- Marketing
- Competitions - # of referrals



### Interviewing Questions to Ask

- Developing questions
  - Your avatar (is it a match?)
  - Questions to match the kind of person you want
  - Avoid yes/no questions
  - Legal issues

Do not ask questions that when answered will point to the applicant's protected class status.

### Four Categories of Questions:

- CREDENTIAL / TECHNICAL: questions focus on education, licensure and certification, if applicable or questions designed to determine whether a candidate has the kind of technical knowledge that is necessary to do the job.
- EXPERIENCE: questions designed to find out about specific experience, expertise or skills.
- OPINION: questions focus on self-evaluation, which yields information that describes what the candidate thinks about a given situation.
- BEHAVIORAL: questions focus on work-related job experiences from the candidate's past.

### Recruiting Talent

- Categories of questions

	Old	New
• Credential/Technical	17%	10%
• Experience	28%	20%
• Opinion	54%	10%
• Behavioral	1%	60%

### Recruiting Talent

- Behavioral-based
  - Underlying theory
 

*Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior*
  - Questions are designed to elicit how the applicant behaved to past situations

*What are some "Situations"?*



*"Did you know that 87% of people who leave their job, organization or their team do so because of Personality Conflicts and NOT Capability?"*

Dr. Kurt Einstein

## "Personality Hires"

- Hiring for personality vs. skills and qualifications
  - Attitude
  - Workplace culture fit
  - Mission alignment
  - Good communicator
  - Nurturing relationships

## Personality Hire Video

## How to Predict Personality

*"Personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation. Personality is concerned with all the behavior of the individual, both overt and under the skin."* ~ R.B. Cattell

### ➤ Hidden traits and characteristics

Using assessments can increase your success rate to 75%

- Motivators/De-motivators
- Environmental Flexing
- Communication Style
- Problem Solving Style
- Core Competencies
- The "Intangibles"
- Emotional Intelligence

## Focus on Key Takeaways

## Travis Bradberry Video

## Recruiting & Retention

- Recruiting / hiring = 50% of the game
- Onboarding = the other 50%



### Retaining Talent - Onboarding

- Studies show that robust onboarding:
  - Increases retention by 25%
  - Improves employee performance by 11%
  - Employees are 69% more likely to stay with an organization for 3 years
- It takes 6-12 months for new hires to be as proficient as their tenured colleagues
- Facilitated by SOPs (virtual / digital)

## Onboarding Video

### Current Onboarding

*Reflect on Your Onboarding*

What is the first day, first week, first month, first year on the job like?


Every person in the office should be part of onboarding!

### Onboarding Keys to Focus On

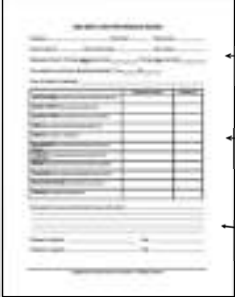
- What impression(s) do you want new hires to walk away with at the end of the first day?
- What do new employees need to know about your culture and work environment?
- Onboarding Roles: Leaders? Direct managers? Co-workers?
- What goals should we set for new employees?
 

• First Day	• First Week	• First Month
• 90 Days	• 180 Days	• One Year
- How will you gather information/feedback to evaluate progress and success?
- Touch points: Training, Mentoring, Check-ins, Shadowing, Rotations, Type and Kind of Communication-Conversations

### Weekly Communication



### New Employee Performance Review



- ← Employment History
- ← Performance Objectives
- ← Action Plan

## Retaining Talent - Onboarding

*Exercise: Revising Your Onboarding Process*

Handout

## Retaining Talent - Communication

**Conflict Results from:  
Unfulfilled or Unmet  
Expectations**

**Which results from:  
Miscommunication or a lack of  
communication**

## Absence of Communication

- People will assume the negative; you don't like them or didn't like what they did
- Will be less likely to seek out assignments or tasks or offer ideas
- If asked or assigned in the future, the effort won't be 100% -- why bother?
- Confidence and engagement will go down
- Is a source of conflict

## Everyone Owns Communication

- Clarify duties
- Align expectations
- Change behavior
- Better understanding
- Improve performance
- Protect/defend action



## Everyone is Part of the Success - Goals

- Owner and/or management team determine practice goals and objectives
- Set short and long term goals
- Determine which employees can directly and indirectly affect specific goals and objectives & include them
- Determine which teams of employees will be working towards the same specific goals and objectives & provide clarity

**Planning Your Ideal  
Workday**

Handout




## Goal Setting



The graphic displays the SMART acronym with icons: a target for Specific, a ruler for Measurable, a ribbon for Achievable, puzzle pieces for Relevant, and a clock for Time-bound.

**S** Specific  
**M** Measurable  
**A** Achievable  
**R** Relevant  
**T** Time-bound



Two side-by-side screenshots of a digital interface, likely a form or dashboard, with various input fields and sections.

## Retention Strategies


- Onboarding never stops – experience continues
- Develop mentorship programs
- Career paths
- Task forces
- Co-innovation initiatives – submit ideas for process improvements, etc.
- Everyone focused on TEAM, CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

## Pros, Cons and Influences of Social Media




## Con - Unrealistic Expectations

- Misleading Perceptions:
  - Employees may develop unrealistic expectations about job roles, salaries, and workplace cultures based on curated content they see on social media, where companies often showcase idealized versions of their environments.
- Comparison Culture:
  - Social media fosters a culture of comparison, where employees compare their own job conditions, pay, and benefits to those of friends or influencers, potentially leading to dissatisfaction and disengagement.



*The Bentist*

## Con - Privacy & Confidentiality

- Over-sharing:
  - Employees sharing too much information about their workplace or specific projects can lead to breaches of confidentiality and privacy, inadvertently exposing sensitive company information.
- Public Venting:
  - Frustrated employees might vent about their jobs, managers, or coworkers on social media, which can harm the company's reputation and internal morale.

## Con - Employer-Employee Relationship

- Trust Issues:
  - Employers screening potential or current employees' social media profiles might come across content that biases their view of the individual, potentially affecting professional relationships and evaluations.
- Work-Life Boundary Blurring:
  - The ease of access to employees outside of work hours, through social media, can blur work-life boundaries, leading to burnout and decreased job satisfaction.

## Con - Recruitment & Retention Challenges

- High Turnover:
  - Exposure to constant updates about new job opportunities, coupled with the comparison to seemingly better workplaces, can lead to higher turnover rates as employees chase perceived better opportunities.
- Cultural Fit Misjudgments:
  - Both employers and job seekers might make snap judgments about cultural fit based on social media presence, leading to mismatches that affect team cohesion and individual job satisfaction.

## Con - Legal & Ethical Issues

- Discrimination Risks:
  - Inadvertently discriminate against candidates based on protected characteristics visible on their profiles
- Privacy Violations:
  - There are increasing concerns and legal considerations about the extent to which an employer can use an individual's social media activity in employment decisions.
  - Check the laws for your state!



## Pro - Recruitment & Talent Acquisition

- Wider Reach for Employers:
  - Reach a vast network beyond local or traditional job posting sites
  - Platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and even X
- Targeted Advertising:
  - Find candidates who meet specific job criteria
  - Targeted advertising features to reach specific demographics, skills sets, and interests

## Pro - Job Search & Networking

- Access to Opportunities:
  - Job seekers can find job listings posted on social media platforms, join professional groups, and follow companies they're interested in to stay informed about new openings.
- Professional Branding:
  - Individuals use platforms like LinkedIn to showcase their professional experience, skills, achievements, and to build a professional brand that attracts potential employers.

## Pro - Branding & Company Culture

- Showcasing Company Culture:
  - Attract candidates who align with the company's culture and values
  - Building relationships even before formal recruitment processes begin
  - Sneak peak into office, people, activities (*careful when including patients*)
    - Behind-the-scenes posts
    - Milestone celebrations
    - Conferences, workshops, career fairs
    - Video tours
    - Networking groups
    - Cultural highlights

## Pro - Screening & Background Checks

- Candidate Research:
  - Gauge their professionalism, cultural fit, and how they present themselves publicly
- Risk of Bias:
  - There's a growing awareness and debate around the ethics of using social media for screening, with concerns about privacy and the potential for unconscious bias.
  - Check the laws in your state!

## Pro - Networking & Professional Development

- Building Professional Networks:
  - Connections - build relationships with peers, industry leaders, and potential mentors
- Continual Learning:
  - Professional growth - share industry news, trends, and educational content

## Pro - The Gig Economy

- Freelance Opportunities:
  - Platforms like LinkedIn and specialized community sites have made it easier for freelancers to find short-term gigs and project-based work, expanding the gig economy.



## Navigating the Social Media Impact

- Address Comparison Culture:
  - Have open discussions about career paths, compensation, and development opportunities within your organization to address any unrealistic expectations fostered by social media.
- Provide Channels for Feedback:
  - Ensure there are clear, confidential channels through which employees can express concerns or dissatisfaction before they turn to social media.

## Navigating the Social Media Impact

- Establish clear social media policies; acceptable use; privacy
- Promote a positive company culture online and in-house
- Focus on professional development; align with employee goals; advancement
- Monitor and manage your employer brand; showcase your values, culture, benefits of working there
- Legal and ethical considerations; respect privacy; train on non-discrimination

## Long-term Career Goals vs. Short-term Financial Incentives

## Job vs. Career

- Hire people who want a career and then support their growth:
  - Communication
  - Productive feedback
  - Goal-setting
  - Taking corrective action as needed

## Why Is This Important?

- When both employers and employees adopt a long-term partnership mindset within the business, it creates a synergistic environment that drives mutual success and satisfaction.
  - Improve employee retention
  - Effective collaboration
  - Everyone focused on winning

## Enhanced Job Satisfaction

- Recognition and Value:
  - Recognizing everyone as critical team members and treating each other as partners enhances everyone's job satisfaction.
  - Feeling valued is a key driver of employee happiness and commitment to the company.
  - A true partner reflects on their individual actions and how they are contributing to the overall success of the team and the practice.
- Work Environment:
  - A positive work environment where everyone feels respected and important fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty, reducing the desire to look for opportunities elsewhere.
  - Understanding that everyone's contributions are vital to the business's success promotes a more cooperative and supportive work environment, leading to better team dynamics and productivity.

## Your Why!

- Team members
- Office that provides long term career growth
- Why one office vs. another—what criteria?
- Career growth vs. dollars
- Job jumping vs. stability
- If paying a lot, then why openings?

## Your Why!

- It's (should be) so much more than just the dollar!
- Successful people feel a connection
- Relationships
- Communication
- Culture



## Benefits of Career vs. Cash

- Greater sense of fulfillment and purpose
- You are supporting the success of a business that supports your success
- Stronger relationships that foster a supportive and collaborative work environment
- Reduced stress from learning new people and processes
- Enhanced overall life satisfaction
- Grass isn't always greener on the other side!

Employee Engagement:  
Involving Team Members  
as Partners in the Business

### TODAY'S FOCUS: TEAMS

There is no such thing as 'them and us.' In a world this size, there can only be 'we' - all of us working together.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CONTRIBUTE TO A COHESIVE TEAM ATMOSPHERE?

Today, you can't be a successful business/ practice without being concerned about employee engagement.

Employee Engagement	=	↑	Sense of belonging
			Performance
			Retention
Employee Engagement	=	↓	Loneliness
			Ghosting
			Turnover

An engaged workforce,  
i.e. team, is the true  
competitive edge.





**Owners, Doctors, Supervisors** → How much time do you spend on employee engagement?

**Team Members** → How engaged are you?

## Improved Retention Rates


- Lower Turnover:
  - Employees who are engaged and satisfied with their jobs are less likely to leave, leading to lower turnover rates. This stability is crucial for maintaining productivity and morale.
  - Knowing that you're an important part of the business and that your work makes a difference can significantly boost your job satisfaction and personal well-being. This sense of fulfillment is crucial for long-term career happiness and work-life balance.
- Attracting Talent:
  - A practice culture that values its employees and treats them as partners becomes known in the industry, attracting top talent who seek meaningful and rewarding work environments.

## Better Customer Experience

- Employee Satisfaction and Customer Satisfaction:
  - Satisfied and engaged employees are more likely to provide excellent customer service, leading to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.
  - With a partnership mentality, you're more likely to go the extra mile for customers, understanding that their satisfaction directly impacts the business's success. This can lead to better customer experiences, loyalty, and ultimately, business growth.
- Brand Reputation:
  - Companies known for having good people and treating their employees well often enjoy a positive public image, which can attract both customers and potential employees.
  - Employees go the extra mile, understanding the direct correlation between their efforts, customer satisfaction, and the business's prosperity.

## Financial Performance

- Reduced Costs:
  - Everyone in the office owns retention. Lower turnover rates mean reduced costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training new employees.
  - Thinking of yourself as a partner in the business means you care not only about your work, but about the people you work with.
- Increased Productivity:
  - Engaged employees work more efficiently and effectively, driving up productivity and, consequently, profitability.



## Adaptive and Resilient Workforce

- Flexibility and Adaptability:
  - Employees who feel part of a team are more willing to adapt to changes and challenges, making the company more resilient in the face of adversity.
- Collaboration and Teamwork:
  - The partnership approach enhances teamwork and collaboration.
  - Recognizing the value of every contribution fosters a cooperative and supportive work environment, which is essential for achieving collective goals and maintaining high morale.

## A Partnership Approach

- Viewing yourself as a partner in the business encourages a proactive, engaged, and growth-oriented approach to your work.
- This mindset benefits not just the practice but also your career satisfaction and progression.
- It transforms the way you work, collaborate, and contribute, aligning your success with the success of the business.



## Increased Employee Engagement

- > Sense of Ownership:
  - Employees who feel and act like partners are more likely to take ownership of their work, leading to higher levels of engagement and productivity.
  - They're more invested in the success of the company because they see the direct impact of their contributions.
  - Seeing yourself as a partner fosters a deeper sense of ownership over your work and its outcomes.
- > Innovation and Creativity:
  - When team members feel valued and part of a cohesive unit, they're more likely to contribute ideas and solutions, fostering an innovative and creative workplace.
  - As an active partner in the business, sharing ideas and solutions makes my job better and improves overall processes and efficiencies.

## Why Employee Engagement

- > 34% of employees are engaged at work (they care)
- > 48% of employees are not engaged at work (don't really care)
- > 18% of employees are actively disengaged at work (really don't care...and spread it...thrive on getting in the way of making good things happen)

Re: Gallup Poll

## What is Employee Engagement?

- > The extent to which you enjoy and believe (making a difference) in what you do.
- > The extent to which you feel valued (appreciation and recognition).
- > The extent to which you are committed to something or someone in the practice.
- > The extent to which you will stay in or with the practice based on that commitment.

## Employee Engagement

Gallup groundbreaking research identified 12 core elements that are the best predictors of employee engagement and performance. These consistently and powerfully link to 5 key business outcomes:

### 12 Core Elements

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I know what is expected of me at work.</li> <li>2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.</li> <li>3. At work, I have the opportunity to do my best every day.</li> <li>4. In the last seven days, I have been recognized or praised for my work.</li> <li>5. Someone at work seems to care about me as a person.</li> <li>6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.</li> </ol> | <p style="text-align: center;">7. At work, my opinions seem to count.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8. My voice matters at work.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9. I have a supervisor who is fair.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10. My supervisor, or someone at work, has asked for my ideas and suggestions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11. I have a clear understanding of what my supervisor, or someone at work, expects of me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 5 Key Business Outcomes:

- > Profitability,
- > Employee retention (stickiness / glue),
- > Productivity,
- > Safety records, and
- > Customer (patient) engagement.

## Focus on Key Takeaways

**Employee  
Engagement Video**

*Appreciation  
and  
Recognition*

## Why Appreciation & Recognition

- 79% of employees who quit their jobs cite lack of appreciation as the reason for leaving
- 65% of North Americans report they received little to no recognition or appreciation at work in the past year (from supervisor or co-workers)

Re: Gallup Poll

*“Next to physical survival, the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival, is to be understood, to be affirmed, to be validated, to be appreciated.”*

Stephen Covey

### BOTTOM LINE

Everyone needs to be shown appreciation in order to do their best work.



### COROLLARY

Even as good as you are or might be, is there room for improvement?

**Appreciation  
+ Recognition  
= Engagement**



## The Value of Appreciation

- Improved relationships
- Increased job satisfaction



## Barriers to Appreciation

- It's someone's else's responsibility
- Expectations too high
- Personality conflicts
- Inadequate information
- Personal problems
- Lack of training
- Lack of accountability

## In the Absence of Appreciation

- Low engagement
- Employee turnover
- Poor attendance & productivity
- Patient/customer service suffers
- Poor relationships among the team
- Overall negative morale & organization culture

## Clues that Appreciation is Missing

- Discouragement
- Irritability and Resistance
- Increased Absenteeism or Tardiness
- Cynicism and Sarcasm
- Apathy and Passivity
- Social Withdrawal
- Negative Work Environment

## People Will Feel More Valued When

The appreciation is individualized and the appreciation is delivered in the "language" most important to the them

### And....

Appreciation must be: Authentic and Genuine  
Appreciation must be: Communicated Regularly

## The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace



## When Do You Feel Most Appreciated?

- Is it when some one says something encouraging to you?
- Is it when someone spends quality time with you?
- Is it when someone recognizes you need some help?
- Is it when someone gives you something you want or value?

## The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Quality Time
3. Acts of Service
4. Tangible Gifts
5. Physical Touch

## Words of Affirmation

"the language that uses words to communicate a positive message to others"

- Personal one on one
- Praise in front of others
- Written communication



## Quality Time

"the language where we give another person our time & attention"

- Focused attention
- Companionship
- Shared experience
- Personal connection through listening & sharing



## Acts of Service

"the language that provides physical assistance to others"

- Ask first
- Be cheerful
- Do it their way
- Finish the task



## Tangible Gifts

"the language of giving the right gift to a person who appreciates tangible rewards"

- Gifts do not have to be expensive
- Investigate what hobbies or interests
- Most common gift is food



## Physical Touch

"the language that has the potential both to encourage & hurt"

- Handshakes
- High fives & fist bumps
- Pat on the back



## Employee Engagement - Activity

1. If we were to make appreciation *more* a part of our office culture, what positive results would we experience?
2. What changes need to be made to create a culture of appreciation?
3. What might hold us back from creating a culture of appreciation?
4. What can we do to overcome these challenges?

## 10 Ways to Express Appreciation

1. Give a verbal compliment
2. Write an email
3. Stop by and see how someone is doing
4. Do something together
5. Do a small task for someone
6. See if you can help
7. Buy coffee/tea/snack
8. Book related to an area of interest
9. High five when task is completed
10. Greet each other warmly

## Dual Role of Benefits and Compensation

## Importance of Compensation & Benefits

- A well-structured compensation and benefits package impacts all roles within the practice.
- Assists with attracting talent, fostering loyalty, and promoting a supportive work environment.
- Recognition of diverse needs and expectations across different positions.

## What's the Difference?

- **Definition of Compensation:**
  - Direct pay provided to employees for their work, including wages, salaries, bonuses, and commissions.
- **Definition of Benefits:**
  - Indirect and non-cash compensation in addition to regular salary or wages. This includes health insurance, retirement benefits, paid time off, and other perks.
- **Dual Role:**
  - Both serve to attract, retain, and motivate employees but also reflect the organization's values and commitment to its workforce.

## Balancing Compensation and Benefits

- **Tailoring to Needs:**
  - Understanding the diverse needs of your workforce can help tailor a compensation and benefits package that is most attractive.
- **Cost vs. Value:**
  - Offering benefits that are cost effective but also support the needs of the employee and align to the financial success of the practice.
  - Cost of benefits and compensation to the practice versus the value they bring in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.
- **Legal Compliance:**
  - Ensure your compensation and benefits comply with all relevant labor laws and regulations.

## Comp and Benefits as Recruitment Tools

- **Attracting Talent:**
  - Competitive compensation and comprehensive benefits packages can attract high-quality candidates.
- **Employer Branding:**
  - Employer branding and the external perception of the practice. Use real-life examples or case studies that demonstrate how your practice has successfully used compensation and benefits as part of its employer branding strategy.

## Comp and Benefits as Retention Tools

- Success for You and the Practice:
  - Explore opportunities for professional and financial growth for staff and the practice; discovering benefit options that might include bonuses and making sure the KPIs that bring financial success are where the dollars are being distributed.
- So Much More than Just Benefits:
  - Benefits being offered don't just include medical and dental insurance, but could include flexible schedules, discount programs, quarterly bonuses, monthly culture focused activities like Halloween pumpkin decorating and a Christmas party.

## Challenges and Considerations

- Budget Constraints:
  - Challenges of balancing budget constraints with the need to offer competitive compensation and benefits.
- Evolving Expectations:
  - Changing workforce demographics and expectations affect compensation and benefits strategies.
- Pay for Performance:
  - Annual increases - with performance review, during budget roll out, bonuses

## Why Have a Bonus Plan?

- Share in growth and financial success
- Gain greater team/employee satisfaction
- Support "psychic ownership" on the part of team
- Realize greater productivity
- Increase revenue
- Boost bottom line income
- Shift a portion of payroll from fixed to variable
- Reduce employee related stress
- Create team cohesiveness & longer term view
- They are an easy and inexpensive alternative

## Important Note....

"Bonus Plans are not about people not doing their jobs...

*but rather about people,*

*through working together and accomplishing more,*

*getting to share in the financial growth and success of the practice."*

## Disclaimer

There are a bizzillion different opinions and theories

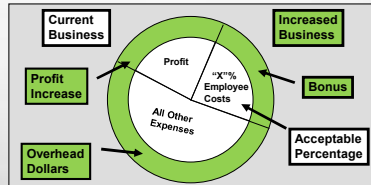
## Common Bonus Plan Mistakes

- Unrealistic expectations—not motivational
- Production only or collection only—doesn't include everyone
- Not relating the level of business to cost of doing business
- Using net profits or total expenses
- Too hard to understand or administer—K.I.S.S.
- Constantly changing the "rules"

**The Killer = Resentment**

(on the part of the team and/or the doctor)

## A Bonus Plan That Works



- As the practice grows, and an acceptable salary percentage is maintained, then bonus dollars are generated, while
- Profits also increase proportionally, and
- Overhead dollars are available to cover increased costs.

## Benefits

- **For the Team:**
  - They know what it takes to make more
  - They control their own destiny and earnings power
- **For the Doctor/Owner:**
  - Objectively rewards growth and success
  - Reduces money related stress
  - Security in knowing that overhead will not go up without
  - A corresponding increase in profits

## Value of Benefits Beyond Paychecks

- Wide-ranging benefits: health insurance, retirement plans, professional development opportunities, and work-life balance initiatives.
- Tailoring benefits to meet the diverse needs of the dental practice team.
- Benefits as a tool for stress reduction and job satisfaction.

## Ideas that Bring Value

...but don't break the bank

## Effective Compensation & Benefits

- Feedback loops and surveys in understanding the needs
- Review data on usage
- Communicate compensation and benefits within the practice
  - Salary letters with full compensation and benefits included
  - Newsletters
  - Fliers
  - Testimonials
  - Competitions

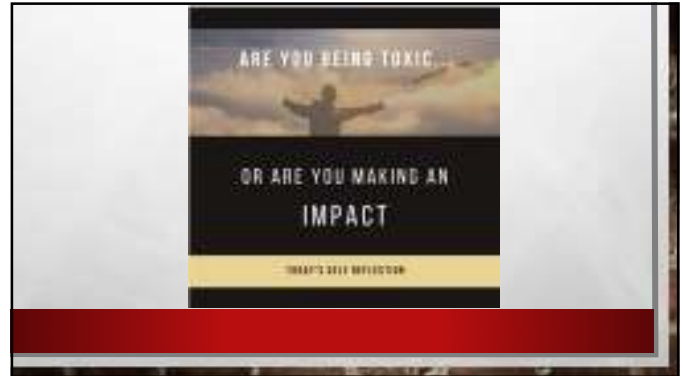
Substantive Issues vs.  
Emotionally-driven  
Perspectives



## What's the Difference?

Understanding the difference is crucial for effective problem-solving and communication.

- Definition of Substantive Issues:
  - Core, factual matters or problems that need resolution within the workplace.
- Definition of Emotion-Driven Perspectives:
  - Responses or views influenced by personal feelings, biases, or emotional states rather than objective facts.



## Identifying Substantive Issues

Based on facts, data, and objective analysis.

- Examples: Budget constraints, scheduling conflicts, compliance with dental practice regulations.
- Approach: Focus on gathering and analyzing relevant information to address these issues.

## Recognizing Emotion-Driven Perspectives

Often subjective, based on personal feelings, experiences, or assumptions.

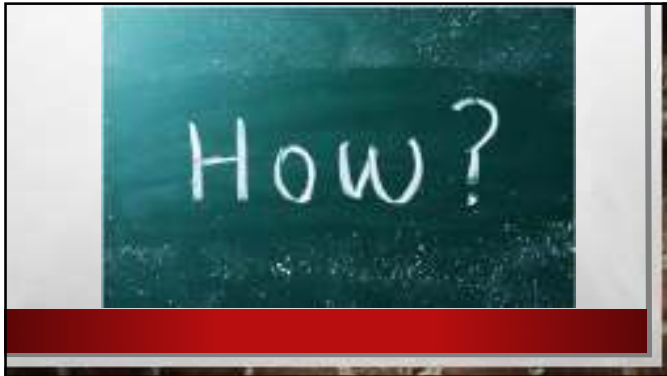
- Examples: Feelings of being overlooked for a promotion, team conflicts due to personality clashes.
- Approach: Validate emotions while steering the conversation back to objective criteria and solutions.

## Strategies for Distinguishing Between the Two

- Active Listening:
  - Pay attention to the language used; emotional narratives often include personal feelings, while substantive discussions focus on facts.
- Questioning:
  - Ask clarifying questions to unearth the factual basis of the issue or to understand the emotional context.
- Empathy:
  - Recognize and acknowledge emotions without letting them derail the focus from the substantive issue at hand.

## Navigating Emotion-Driven Perspectives

- Validation:
  - Acknowledge the emotions present without necessarily agreeing with the perspective. This can help de-escalate tension.
- Reframing:
  - Help shift the focus from emotions to facts by reframing statements or questions in a way that highlights the substantive issue.
- Support Systems:
  - Encourage the use of support mechanisms (e.g., peer support, HR mediation) for emotional grievances.



## Enhancing Communication

Crucial Conversations enhance communication across all levels of the practice.



## What Constitutes a Crucial Conversation?

Crucial conversations are dialogues that occur when:

- Stakes are high - situations where the outcome significantly impacts personal, team, or patient outcomes
- Opinions vary - when individuals have contrasting views on a particular subject, requiring dialogue to reach a consensus
- Emotions run strong - conversations that evoke significant emotional responses, which can complicate communication and resolution

## The Importance of Crucial Conversations

- Understanding and navigating these conversations effectively is critical for maintaining a healthy work environment, ensuring patient satisfaction, and making informed decisions.
- Goal: The aim of crucial conversations is not to win an argument but to reach the best possible outcome through open, respectful, and productive dialogue.

## Reflect: A Crucial Moment

- Consider a time you had a crucial/difficult conversation.
- Do you think you handled it well?
- What was the outcome?
- Did it go the way you wanted?
- My example.

## Before the Conversation

- Preparing for a crucial/difficult conversation with purpose and heart
- Clear, supportive purpose

**To get the outcome you want, you must enter a conversation with a clear, supportive purpose.**

<p>Supportive Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Share</li> <li>• To Understand</li> <li>• To Learn</li> </ul>	<p>Unsupportive Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get them to admit they're wrong</li> <li>• To point fingers</li> <li>• To solve short-term problems without addressing long-term issues</li> </ul>
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**Be clear about what you REALLY want for (a) yourself, (b) others, and (c) the relationship.**

## Identifying Your Purpose

What is my purpose for the conversation?

What do I hope to accomplish?

What would be an ideal outcome?

## Identifying Your Purpose

**Ask Yourself:**

- What assumptions am I making about this person's intentions?
- What "buttons" of mine are being pushed?
- How have I contributed to the problem?
- How should I behave if I really want these results?
- How do I include my "culture" in the conversations?

## What It Looks Like - Preparing

Miriam Alex

Miriam overhears Alex spreading gossip about another coworker. Not only is Alex telling obviously untrue stories, but they're also using Not Safe for Work language for those NSFW lies.

How should Miriam prepare for this Crucial Conversation?

## Consider the Following

- Q: Why do most difficult conversations fail?
- A: People begin by describing the problem from their own perspective, which implies judgement and provokes a defensive response.
- Q: What's the best way to set up the conversation for success?
- A: Start conversations by describing what happened in a way that includes the other side.

## What It Looks Like - Preparing

Miriam Alex

Build a "Pool of Shared Meaning" to create safety and a path forward

## Creating Safety – STATE Your Path



- Share the facts rather than the story
- Tell your story using contrasting & looking for safety cues
- Ask for others' path and encourage them to share their side
- Talk tentatively and avoid absolutes
- Encourage testing by inviting others to disprove your story

## Crucial Conversations Model



## Crucial Conversations Model



"Alex, earlier I heard some harsh language while you were talking about your coworker. Can we discuss your concerns?"

"Yes, I've been frustrated by their behavior. I probably shouldn't have said those things, but we continue to have conflicts and problems."



## Move to Action – Now What?



- Focus on your culture and expectations.

*"Team Loyalty & Respect means that we don't gossip, and we look for the good in each other - and by working together, we accomplish more. My expectations are that we address issues professionally and not talk about each other negatively to others as that only spreads bad feelings and doesn't bring solutions. Everyone is an integral part of the team and 1+1 = 1000 when it comes to teamwork."*



## Explore and Make Specific Decisions



- Make decisions via command, consultation, voting or consensus and make sure to involve the right people.
- **Ensure Follow Up**
- Clearly specify who does what by when and establish clear follow-up and accountability.



## Conclusion and Reflection



"Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me, Alex. I'll arrange some time and facilitate communication next week to help resolve these issues. In the meantime, please remember to use appropriate language in the office."

"I'll remember to do that. Thanks for listening to my side of the story and trying to help solve this."



## ~ Activity ~

### Difficult Conversation Planning Template

### All team members need to learn how to have difficult conversations and how to handle conflict at work productively. The results will:

- Help make more intelligent budget adjustments
- Reduce injury and death due to unsafe conditions
- Substantially increase trust and reduce transaction costs in virtual work teams
- Influence change in colleagues who are bullying, dishonest, or incompetent
- Save over \$1500 and an 8-hr workday for **every** Crucial Conversation an employee holds rather than avoids

## Summary and Take-Aways

### The Challenges

- Where has everyone gone?! Dental assistants, hygienists, doctors!
- Recruiting and retention
- Social media impact
- Focusing on careers and not chasing the highest dollar
- Dual role of compensation & benefits
- How to have crucial conversations
- Partners in the business
- Focusing on your culture in how you talk, walk, communicate

### Recruiting & Retention

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Implement cross-functional brainstorming sessions involving employees from various levels and departments to generate fresh retention and recruitment ideas.
  - Collaborative recruitment strategies, involving team members in the hiring process.
  - Everyone is part of the onboarding process.
  - Develop mentorship programs that pair senior leaders/team members with new hires to foster a sense of belonging and accelerate skill development.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Leverage partnerships with educational institutions and professional associations to develop talent pipelines aligned with future trends.
  - Continue to re-evaluate your avatar.
  - Career paths are clear and people feel ownership in next steps.

### Social Media Influence

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Form a committee of team members to develop a social media strategy for staffing that maximizes outreach.
  - Professional network and showcasing how amazing your practice is.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Use social media platforms to showcase company culture and employee success stories, enhancing employer branding and attracting talent.
  - Targeted advertising focused on areas of highest need.

## Focusing on Careers

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Everyone owns retention!
  - Team check in and feedback sessions so that people feel part of the why and how.
  - People want to be seen and heard.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Build out career paths so that everyone has access.
  - Communicate areas of growth as the organization grows.

## Dual Role of Comp & Benefits

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Conduct focus groups with employees to gather input on desired benefits and compensation structures, ensuring they meet the diverse needs of the workforce.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Introduce flexible benefits programs that can be customized by employees to suit their changing life stages and needs, promoting long-term retention.

## Substantive Issues & Emotion-driven Perspectives

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Train management and team members in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution, equipping them to navigate discussions objectively while acknowledging emotional undercurrents.
  - With Crucial Conversations, employees can learn through role-playing and workshops to conduct effective conversations, emphasizing active listening and empathy.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Implement regular feedback mechanisms and open forums where employees can discuss workplace issues transparently, fostering a culture of trust and mutual respect.
  - Create a peer support network that offers a safe space for employees to share challenges and solutions, enhancing interpersonal understanding and collaboration.

## Crucial Conversations

- Collaborative Approach:
  - With Crucial Conversations, employees can learn through role-playing and workshops to conduct effective conversations, emphasizing active listening and empathy.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Build the strategies into your onboarding sessions so that as there is turnover and growth, everyone is equipped with the tools/knowledge to have professional crucial conversations focused on a collaborative work environment.

## Partners in the Business

- Collaborative Approach:
  - Build in strategies for involving employees in decision-making processes to boost engagement and buy-in.
  - Formation of cross-functional teams to tackle projects and initiatives, breaking down silos.
  - Foster a culture that values teamwork and open communication.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Utilize the varied expertise within cross-functional teams to identify new opportunities and drive innovation, leading to sustainable growth.
  - Invest in ongoing training and development program to enhance employee skills and adaptability, aligning individual growth with organizational objectives.
  - Enhance engagement and loyalty by consistently delivering exceptional customer service and building meaningful relationships, which can lead to increased referrals and business expansion.

## Culture, Culture, Culture

- Collaborative Approach:
  - It's so much more than just a job, it's about relationships and treating people as people.
  - Make it part of your daily huddle.
  - Team members are part of the culture building and creating an amazing work environment.
- Strategies for Growth:
  - Involve everyone in recruiting efforts – referrals, use your social media, how you treat your patients.
  - Onboarding new employees and then maintain the 'honeymoon' every day.