

Take Your Staff To The Movies !



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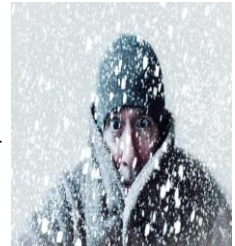
You and Your Staff

I have nine lead technicians.
We meet once a month to
discuss clinic flow, staff
issues and how to be a
better lead...and regarding *me*...
how to be a better Manager!
These meetings are early in the
morning before clinics start
often on a cold, Minnesota
winter's morning, they can
become a little "heated" and
vocal.



One morning, as the snow was
gently falling outside, the folks
were venting about some recent
antics that had been occurring
in one of the clinics.

I often try and let them work
through these issues
together, but I was becoming increasing frustrated
with the direction of the conversation.... which was
basically to tar & feather any technician at fault! I
began to interject with a number of ways we could
help this technician see the error of their ways!



The more wound up I became on the problem at hand,
the more movie quotes I used to get the point across to
the Leads of what needed to be done to rectify the
issue. After the meeting, I sat down and counted how
many movie references I had actually used. I called
one of the Leads and asked if the movie quotes helped,
or hindered, my message and she stated... "We
understand those quite well...
sometimes we don't get you- but we
get them!"
So here are some quotes that may
be happening in *your* office !



"Toto, I've got a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

Wizard of Oz

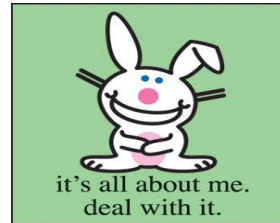


Smart people don't necessarily have a "brain".

Managers avoid conflict and unpleasant conversations as much as the person that has to hear it! Instead, a group e-mail gets sent to all staff, even if it really



only pertains to two or three people in the office. This is called a "group spunk" and your staff not only hates it - they resent being lumped in the group. The people that really need to hear the message NEVER get the point.



It's not that they don't get it. They are usually the smarter, or higher trained technicians, in the office, but they don't see *their* behavior, or care, because they are often protected/ entitled, and therefore, they ignore the message.



When a Doctor comes in to discuss a given technician that is straying, they speak in generalities. They want a "group message" to be sent to get everyone back in the same step. When I try and discuss the potential backlash that this leads to, they do not see it and won't give me the name of the offender as they "do not want them mangled".

Well - every once in a while, they need to be "mangled" to get them to wake up and fly right!



The message they wish sent is usually random, and deals with ills that occurred to their clinic, not the clinic as a whole. Very often it pertains to a specific way they want something done and because it is not "standard", the technician forgot.

A group spunk will cause confusion and dissent all the way down the line. **THINK TWICE and don't do it.** There are ways to find out who the offender is without turning the rest of the group into a confused, angry crew.

**"So now I am having no job to speak about.
I will have to smack the sidewalk"**

Short Circuit

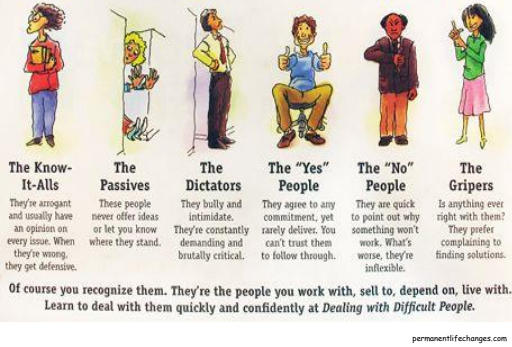
There are times that a staff member just does not work out. They either are technically unable to perform the job, socially unable to work with other technicians or with patients, or they have no inclination to adapt their ways to fit in. Or they are aware of the problem but it's *YOUR* problem not theirs. These employees are toxic and become "serial killers" to your clinic!



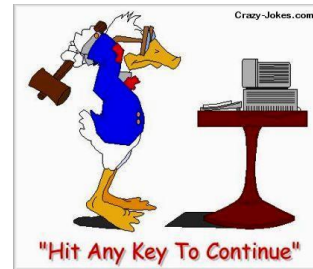
As managers, we usually go out of our way to avoid having to fire someone. We get the "guilts", are allowed to be given the "should ons", and buy the "I'll do better - give me another chance line".

I learned along time ago that if I sit down and talk with a staff member, go over their infractions and what needs to be done to correct them, and the issues *still* continues ...there is NOT going to be a correction. Time to go!

Do you recognize these people?



Computer Illiterate



You can't have a smart phone if you are a complete idiot regarding technology!

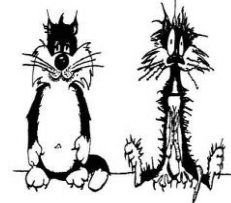
Staff and their ability to adapt to the "new world" is critical to ensuring that your clinic flow does not come to a grinding halt. You need to ensure that training, updates, additions to the system are taught and explained in a consistent, calm and non-threatening way. They will need time to LEARN a new system.



"Go ahead, make my day."

Dirty Harry

In order for you to get the most, and the best, from your staff - you need to know your staff. You need to know their tolerances for change, and how to make those changes: can you do it on the fly in an e-mail or do you need to do it face to face?



Before Work After Work

Are they amenable to new ideas and practice flows or do they implode if you change the ink in the pens from black to blue?!

Staff, and doctors, HATE change and will do anything they can to avoid it. When you institute a change, make it orderly, explain why the change is occurring and give a few scenarios of what to do if they run into trouble during the enactment of the new system.



Your staff doesn't like change "dropped" on them in the middle of a busy day. You may think that it will only take five minutes to show them something new - but they are **not** paying attention to you and will not listen fully to what you need done. **This goes doubly for the doctors.**



"With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility"

I am a New Englander - born in Massachusetts. Therefore, I am a Red Sox fan....and by nature, a Yankees *non* - fan. For my entire life, I have disliked the Yankees for the simple reason that it is in my blood. I was born this way!

Spider Man's Father



Yet there are a few times that I have shed tears regarding the Yankees. Once when Mariano Rivera was removed from his final game of his career by his two closest team mates...and the other was Derek Jeter's retirement. Jeter was given a rousing standing ovation by Red Sox fans in his last game at Fenway, even after he hit a game winning hit. Boston acknowledged that he was a great player, no matter who he played for, and that he played the game "right"!



While "bitter" rivals in the sports arena - you can never question that those two men played the game the *right* way - and never dishonored the game of baseball. There was never ever scuttlebutt about them, no rumors, and no reason to dislike them except for the team they played on. Your technicians need to be reminded continually that in the field of medicine, it is a TEAM sport. It is NOT about YOU!

Getting your more knowledgeable techs to share information with new techs, or new techs to a skill, is a daunting task.

You need to help them understand that with their great skill and expertise, it is their **duty**, and **responsibility**, to ensure that the next person in line is as equally trained to the task if for some reason they weren't there. In essence, they are part of grooming the staff below them to ensure that the knowledge is passed along correctly.



Levels of Respect

Responsibility and the passing along of knowledge is a foreign concept to many technicians. They view their knowledge as "theirs" and do not want to share with anyone. Reminding your staff that respect is earned, and can not be demanded or expected, is a hard lesson for them to learn. Respect does not come because of years of service or rank. It comes from a mutual admiration of someone for their skills, knowledge and compassion



"Fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy night."

No matter how great your staff is, there are going to be dust-ups! Your "role" during these spats is to ensure that the "fight" stays fair - and others don't jump in that don't belong there. It's important to ensure that you are aware of simmering issues and staff pairings. Make sure each person in the dust up is aware **you** are aware of the issue - and are watching for a quick resolution before you need to jump in and mediate. Also make sure they realize, if you do need to intercede...it will be painful for both parties!

All About Eve 1950



"Love Means Never Having To Say You're Sorry"

(Love Story)

Wrong ! In most cases when staff members get into a dust up, they are usually shocked by the uproar, hurt because they were "misunderstood, misquoted, and are looking for a quick out of the problem because of the attention it is getting. **Their biggest problem is that they do not know how to save face and say they are sorry.** We spend a lot of time working on staff working out their problems *before the issues even begin.*



When E-mails Get A Little Out of Hand

("You've Got Mail")

Joe Fox: It wasn't... personal.

Kathleen Kelly: What is that supposed to mean? I am so sick of that. All that means is that it wasn't personal to you. But it was personal to me. It's "personal" to a lot of people. And what's so wrong with being personal, anyway?



You need to have a strong, written e-mail policy in place. This needs to be re-visited over and over to ensure staff realizes that their work e-mail is not their personal e-mail. Political cartoons, religious tidings, discussions that you might not want everyone to know - keep it OFF the e-mail. Chances are very good - it will come back around to bite you ! I had a staff send an E-mail that by mistake she hit : "Send All". Not a ripple a TSUNAMI.



"You Can't Handle The Truth!"

(A Few Good Men)



Staff often feel that their managers are not forthright with them regarding their future advancement, how they are really doing, what needs to be improved, and where they are going in the organization. They will tell people that they "don't know" their standing, even after you have informed them of this, they have signed their review sheet, and have agreed to work on a plan to improve in the future !



Staff do NOT want the truth ! You have got to find a way to get your message across in a way that they will listen to and that they do not feel attacked or intimidated. But, the message has got to be said. Dancing around bad behavior or habits only will continue to cause those habits to escalate until you reach a point of no return with them. If they need to be exited, they will then tell everyone, they had no!



"Round up the usual suspects." Casablanca

When clinic dust-ups occur, you can usually name the people that are going to be in the middle of the action before you even know for sure!

This why it is so very important to know the "characters" in your clinics and the dynamics of your team. I know that every time I add someone new to the ASCAN team, the same two people that are not on the team are going to become surly for at least three or four days. Make sure the new trainee doesn't get caught in the cross-fire!



"If you build it, he will come"

(Field of Dreams)

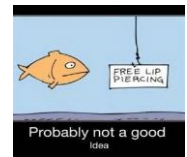
Your "message" needs to be presented to the team in a clear, concise way. It needs to make sense to them - not just you. Awhile back, "mission statements" were the mantra of multiple organizations. At the hospital, the mission statement was printed on the back of our ID badges that we hung around our necks.



Managers and Vice

Presidents would prowls the halls and ask what our mission statement for the organization was.. on demand. We would flip our ID badge over, read it from the card and the Manager would go along their way with a big smile because we knew the mission statement.

No we didn't - we just knew how to read.



"Houston, we have a problem"

(Apollo 13)

When the Supervisors brought this information to Management meetings, to discuss that the staff *didn't know* the mission statement, didn't believe it, and when asked to think about it - often didn't agree with it... management was very disappointed in the corporate effort that was being displayed.



What was even more disappointing was that management couldn't understand where the disconnect was with the staff! So... in retrospectwho really was out of touch ?!

A solution was worked on to have various team members from the wards, outpatient, ER, OR work together in teams to devise a mission statement that management and staff agreed upon. And it went better ☺

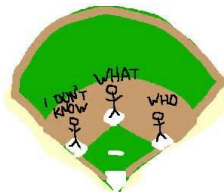


"Who's on First ?!"

(Abbott and Costello)

Your staff intensely dislikes the "disconnect". When your staff feels that you are out of touch with them, either mentally or philosophically wise, they will begin to tune you out. Simply asking your staff "How are you doing ?" is not keeping in touch with them.

You need to make sure that the "message" from you to the Leads to the staff is consistent, and clear. And then, LISTEN to their response.



Office chatter is inevitable. It can be of a great benefit - or it can begin the wear away the foundation of the group.

The only way to prevent this is to be present in the clinic areas so that when someone has a question or idea, they can address it *to you*. Fortify your "open door policy" so they can drop in when they are around and say hello. Surprisingly, they will begin to share more ideas. They will tell you they want to be able to share ideas and issues - but if you are not "available" they will not seek you out. They will start telling someone else!



And then they will tell others that *you* are "not in tune" with the clinic and the ideas of the staff.

It is a very precarious balance when staff tell others that you are out of touch with them. But what do you do when they won't share their thoughts with you? They don't share their thoughts with you.

ACCESSABILITY is the answer. You need to be in their view and then be *viewable* when they want to talk.



"I feel the need—the need for speed!" (Top Gun)

Your job can be likened to trying to control a dog sled team of huskies running full bore!

Multiple dogs running as hard as they can *simply* because you yelled "MUSH".



If life would be so easy! Technicians vary from person to person in speed, ability, understanding and the want to do better.

In order to get the most out of your staff, you need to be able to have them all following the same beat and working together as a team! Be aware that you have your leaders and followers.



When you try and put a follower in a Lead role, they will fail publicly and resent that you gave them the "opportunity". Be alert for the *non-Leads* that are behind the scenes trying to take over the team. They are not hard to see! In most cases they are **OBVIOUS**....you just aren't paying attention. You can see they are out of step and pulling off beat, thereby dragging the team down and causing them to be unproductive. They need re-training and modification quickly to prevent a collapse of the team.



"I'm not bad. I'm just drawn that way" (Jessica Rabbit)

YES you are!



Technicians, front desk, business office, optician all have one thing in common. People work there! And people can be bad. Even intentionally bad. I call them serial killers.

These are the insidious staff that get into your office, and slowly but surely begin to "kill" the spirit, the team work and whatever happiness you have in the clinic.



Silence of the Lambs



They are behind the scenes constantly causing chaos and making it generally uncomfortable for the other staff to have a good work ethic. And....allowed to continue, others will begin to follow. Bad behavior will beget more bad behavior. These people not only need to be corrected quickly, but they need to be "brought out in the public".



We had a staff meeting once about "mean girls"! I told my staff that we had technicians that were acting as mean girls. I advised them that I would be happy to talk with this group of technicians or anyone that was wondering if they were being classified as a mean girl. Remarkably, (4) of the (5) spoke with me and were shocked when I told them that yes they were strongly considered in this group.

Can you believe that two of the four were shocked that people thought their behavior was mean. Once identified, there is no question. Staff can either change their behavior or leave. Bottom line - I'd rather work short than have the continual uproar these people cause. But beware: after you let one of them go (and make it count - fire the ringleader!), the other staff will speak fondly of them as if they "weren't so bad".



"You are evil, and you must be destroyed" (Steel Magnolias)

Managers will often let someone go that is on the lower level of irritation to avoid firing a technician that is either more skilled or more "feared" by the fellow technicians. When you send a message - make sure there is no question that this behavior will not be allowed by anyone: not the doctor's favorite technician, the smartest technician or the specialty technician. Make sure that you are not continuing the entitled process.



"I'm not crazy, I've just been in a very bad mood 40 years!"

(Steel Magnolias)

The door swings both ways. IF staff are expected to work together, play fairly, and be respectful to each other - then you need to practice what you preach!

Staff should not be fearful of you as a Manager. Respect needs to be earned by how you practice, your fairness to all, and your ability to be friendly but not "friends" with staff members. Sadly, when you are friends, staff will not only use this against you, they will hold it against the friend as well as they feel they have an in with the boss.

**DO YOU
PRACTISE
WHAT YOU
PREACH?**



Everyday Kindness



Everyone deserves respect.
Be kind to one another!

"There's no crying in baseball!" (A League Of Their Own)

Beware the cryers!
You reprimand a technician.
You are being as kind as
you can, there is no yelling,
no threats, no punitive.
You are simply telling them
their behavior needs to
change. And they start to
cry.



Crying is "tactic" staff will use as a "back off" tactic. This is used to disarm the Manager and get them to stop the discussion. In most cases, the Manager becomes immediately flustered and stops the discussion lest we are thought of to be mean.

I have asked them: "Why is it you are crying?"

Some will stop and look at you incredulously as if you have asked them the key to the Universe question ?



That's when they realize
you are buying it.



But, every once in awhile, they will tell you that you have pretty much mortally injured them with your comments. This is when you can back off a little and help them identify that that was not the intention - but changing their behavior was. And go from there. Now you can work together to effect change.

This Too Shall Pass

Whatever the message is, you need to find an affective way to get it to your staff. They are the ones that have to hear it, receive it, and then act on it. Keep it simple, make it clear, no covert hidden meanings....and stand behind it.



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