

Turn the Daily Grind into a Successful and Satisfying Future

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Managing a medical practice is an experience that can't be meaningfully compared to anything else. Daily operations often border on chaotic: Effective deployment of people, space and supplies is essential to success, but it can also be overwhelming. Most importantly, your patients' lives depend on your effectiveness.

This daily grind, however, is often just that – a daily grind. You can produce a fruitful and productive day, but are you also creating an effective practice and a path to a successful future? If you're not sure how to answer that question, it might be time to step back and determine a solid framework for your practice, your goals and your future.

The following tips can help you move from uncertainty into opportunity:

- **Use an internal communication tool.** Engage with an online team tool like Slack, Yammer or Jive to enhance communications within your practice. Create a collaboration platform for your practice to track projects, issue HR updates or announce a new employee; develop communication channels for each function so that nursing, lab and the front desk can each have their own network; and use the direct messaging function for one-on-one or small group contact. Instead of initiating calendar invites, printing meeting documents or forwarding emails, the tool can house and organize it all. This solution offers countless other functions, but even the basics can provide an exceptional enhancement for your practice. Like any online solution, vet the security level with an expert.
- **Gather feedback.** Medical practices are making significant strides at garnering patient feedback, but are not always as effective at engaging with employees. Paper surveys can serve a valuable purpose, but a modern (and cost-effective) tool like TinyPulse can be a great addition to your performance improvement initiatives. Gather quick feedback – and then use it to move your practice forward. Employees who feel they are listened to and respected become loyal and long-term members of your team.
- **Commence a work-from-home program.** While not all employee types can work from home, a variety of medical practice staff can easily function out of a home office. It's not uncommon for positions like billers and coders to work from home, and

increasingly telephone operators can do this as well. Remote staff can benefit your practice during weather challenges, and often experience much higher levels of productivity and satisfaction than their colleagues. However, they must be managed. I recently visited a medical practice that had five team members working from home. They were all employees who had been at the practice for at least a year, had little to no absences, and enjoyed high productivity and quality. Each of them had a webcam on during all work hours, enabling the manager to visualize and connect them whenever she wanted.

- **Establish or enhance your social media presence.** While some practices are reluctant to wade into the world of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social platforms, this presents an effective and even fun way to connect with patients and build your reputation. Granted, you should never communicate anything that is sensitive or protected via social media, but, when appropriate, you can share special events, good news, positive reviews, and patient stories. This takes a lot of time, but can make an impact. If you do choose to utilize social media, ensure all employees sign a workforce confidentiality agreement (download a sample [here](#)) and instill policies regarding who is allowed to write posts. Typically this is only the administrator.
- **Connect and celebrate.** When did your team last volunteer together in your community? When did you last celebrate a significant milestone? Community engagement can be a positive experience for staff and a way to build camaraderie while making an impact. And beyond the company holiday party, take some time to note anniversaries, birthdays, successes, and other special occasions to give your staff something to look forward to.

Creating a growth-minded culture that celebrates communication, opportunities, and individuals can lead to a practice where people want to work and where patients clamor to visit.

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