

Utilizing Your Most Valuable Resource



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Utilizing Your Most Valuable Resource

At Disney, three factors drive their business and affect their success. These are cast (our staff), setting (our offices) and process (our policies, systems and procedures). Our ability to produce income has several limitations including things such as the number of treatment rooms, the effectiveness of our communication skills and our physical environments. Many factors are outside our realm of control including reimbursement rates and patient expectations.

One area we do have total control is the number of staff in our office and their productivity. This is one area that many practices fall short including both new practitioner and the seasoned veteran. Our most valuable asset with the most potential to increase production is too often not utilized effectively.

Increased income of utilizing an additional assistant to shadow the doctor is not the only significant benefit. In addition you will likely experience:

- Improved patient flow with significant reduction in patient waiting time.
- Employee retention and increased staff satisfaction.
- Reduced physician and staff stress.

In our office before we hired the second back office assistant when an employee called in sick it through us into a tail spin. Now with the additional employee we are covered. This employee can also reduce the workload of the other two employees by 10 % resulting in less stress and staff turnover. Patient satisfaction, our offices principal goal, has significantly decreased with reduced waiting time and more face-to-face assistant communication with the patients.

The role of the two assistants is essential to an efficient system to maximize the benefits.

We designate one assistant as my personal assistant and the other as the floater. My personal assistant stays by my side ready to perform such duties as getting an injection without delay, answering patient questions relating to such things as dressings changes and shoe gear and answering questions about a patient's condition. This list is only a small part of her duties and saves me a significant amount of time with the 50% of questions my assistants can answer effectively because of her training in both podiatry and communication skills. By having my assistant by my side at most times in the treatment room they can then learn how I communicate conditions and treatments with my patients. It's the repetitive nature of this inherent training that allows the assistant to mirror my protocols.

I no longer have to look for my assistant while they're cleaning another room to get an injection or supply for me. The days of spending three minutes explaining to Mrs. Jones what type of shoes she should be wearing or answering other simple questions are gone. I now save approximately 10 - 15 minutes per hour utilizing my personal assistant with patients allowing me to easily see an extra patient per hour. Am I short changing my patients? Just the opposite. My assistant will reinforce what I've told the patient and spend the time and to effectively communicate with caring. Patients surveyed continue reinforce that the system works.

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Speak with the doctor(s) in your practice about utilizing your most valuable resource to produce income, increase efficiency and making the day of the staff and doctor(s) in your practice less stressful.