

## Do a Better Job at Interviewing & Training New Employees

Building a great team is one of the biggest challenges doctors face. Jim Collins' quote from *Good to Great* is famous and powerful in its logic "Get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats." Successful entrepreneurs find the right people by following an organized systematic approach for hiring. Many wrong hires occur because important steps are left out. Statistics show that it costs a business a minimum of one and a half times an employee's annual salary to replace them. Hire right the first time!

### First: Be People Smart

After extensive research, Professional DynaMetric Programs (PDP), [www.pdpglobal.com](http://www.pdpglobal.com), a worldwide leader in top-of-the-line behavioral assessment solutions for businesses, has defined the four basic behavior traits as: **dominance (take charge)**, **extroversion (people)**, **pace (patience)** and **conformity (systems)**. Each trait has high and low behavioral intensities. One of these four high traits will be a person's strongest and dictate 50-70 percent of their natural behavior and responses. It is almost like people come from four different planets where each planet has its own natural way of behaving and communicating which will impact the success or failure of that person in a particular job.

#### Take Charge Trait

##### High Dominance

- Can take charge, likes to accomplish goals and is comfortable with risks
- Communication style is short and to the point, can often be interpreted as blunt

##### Low Dominance

- Does not want to be in charge, looks for strong leadership
- Agreeable

#### People Trait

##### High Extroversion

- Outgoing, enthusiastic, motivating. Prefers to interact with people, and make others feel welcomed and comfortable
- Communication style is persuasive and they enjoy talking

##### Low Extroversion

- Does not mind working alone
- Quiet with people they do not know

#### Patience Trait

##### High Pace

- Focuses on work output. Prefers routines and working on one thing at a time, does not like change
- Communication style is warm, friendly and careful to avoid confrontation

##### Low Pace

- Likes change and fast pace
- Can easily multi-task

#### Systems Trait

##### High Conformity

- Prefers structured and standard operating procedures, concerned with accuracy
- Communication style is guarded, cautious and exacting

##### Low Conformity

- Can see the big picture and does not need a pre-set structure to work in
- Independent, wants to live by their own rules

### Work Style Approaches

Many times doctors do not understand why their employees wait to be told what to do. This can easily be explained by understanding the three work style approaches. It is wise to hire a person with a Thrust or Ste-Nacity work style for any leadership position in the office.

#### Thrust

- Initiates and completes a project or task with rocket launch energy and a persistent manner

#### Ste-Nacity

- A coined word of PDP from steadfast and tenacious
- Initiates and completes a project or task in a steady and persistent manner

#### Allegiance

- Looks to an outer directed source (supervisor) to be told what needs to be done
- Supports completing a project or task, rarely initiates

### Second: Follow a System

#### Create a Job Description

Identify the specific job duties and traits/strengths needed to perform the job effectively. Behavioral assessment surveys help put the right person in the right job by picking the candidate with the right strengths.

#### Write an Effective Ad

Realize that the best workers are already working for someone else, however, they may not be satisfied and would like to change jobs. Rather than placing the standard ad that is worded like everyone else's, write an ad that includes motivators for the type of person you would like to hire.

#### How to Find Applicants

- Word of mouth
- Practice's Facebook page
- Craig's List
- Ziprecruiter
- *Indeed.com*
- *DentalPost.net*
- Millennials sometimes seek out employers. Large practices can have a section on their website, "Join our growing team," with information about applying for employment.
- Post ad at the local college career center

#### Have Applicants Email Resumes to the Office

- This allows applicants to be prescreened and an indication of their ability to follow directions.

#### Interviews

First do a telephone interview to save time. A good match can quickly be determined before spending time on an in office interview.

- Applicants can look good on paper, but they can have poor grammar, manners, interpersonal and verbal skills.

- Review job requirements and the applicants' skills and experiences.
- Discuss salary range, benefit requirements, geographic location and available work hours to see if they are compatible.

### Initial In-Office Interview

- To maximize efficiency, a well-trained staff member, preferably the office manager may conduct the initial interview.
  - › Have the applicant complete the following forms:
    - » Employment application;
    - » Release to do a criminal background check;
    - » Release to check references.
  - › Show the applicant a written job description and discuss the duties.
  - › Prepare a list of interviewing questions that explore the following traits: initiative, organization, meticulous, effective communication, teamwork, previous training and experience that will apply to the job.
  - › Ask open-ended questions. Do not ask questions that can be answered with yes or no. If the interviewee begins answering yes or no, ask him or her to explain or expound on the answer.
  - › The interviewer should talk less than 25 percent of the time. The purpose of the interview is let the applicant tell about their personal abilities and experiences.
- If the applicant is promising, have them take a tour of the office, meet staff members and have a brief conversation with the doctor.
- If the team feels the applicant is motivated and shows promise, continue with the next steps.

### Hire Based on Behavioral Strengths and Traits

- Have applicants take a behavioral assessment survey to determine if they have the strengths and traits needed to be successful in the job. This is one of the most important steps when hiring a new employee. An employee can be trained on specific job skills, but it is very difficult to change someone's natural strengths or personality if it is not the right match for the position.
- If the applicant's trait survey shows they have the right strengths for the job, proceed to the next steps.

### Always Check References

- This is absolutely essential! Many people know how to package themselves to cover up past problems. While employers might only be willing to confirm employment dates, try to determine their overall satisfaction with the employee by their tone of voice and other comments.
- If the applicant has previously worked in a dental office, be sure you dial the office number and speak with the doctor. Applicants have been known to commit fraud by giving a cell phone number of a friend who is posing as the doctor for the reference check.
- Describe your perceptions and observations of the applicant to determine if they are correct. Ask the doctor if there is anything else they would like to share with you. One of the

most effective questions to ask is: "If you had a position open up in your office, would you rehire this person?" This almost always provides a strong indication of the employer's level of satisfaction with the employee.

- Always have a signed permission to call references. Never call an applicant's current employer unless they have given permission. Not only could it cost an applicant their job, it is also illegal.

### Perform a Criminal Background Check

- If the applicant's references are positive, then complete a national criminal background check. Embezzlers move around from office to office.

### Conduct a Working Interview

- Ask the applicant to come in for a half day working interview.
- Observing the applicant in the office will provide an indicator of the applicant's current skills, ability to work with others, ability to follow directions, speed of work and adaptability to your unique work environment.
- Give the applicant a gift card equal to an hourly rate times the number of hours they worked.

### Lunch Out and the Doctor Pays

- If the working interview goes well, suggest the applicant have lunch with team members they will most closely be working with to get to know each other better. The doctor should pay for this lunch, but not attend. Ask the staff to observe and give feedback on the applicant's politeness, manners and personality outside the office. They should also assess the applicant's interest in the job itself, not just the paycheck and benefits.

### Ask the Team's Opinion about Hiring the Applicant

- Is the team comfortable with this person and willing to let them into the dental family? No matter how qualified the applicant is, if the team is unsupportive of him/her, there will be problems and the new hire will eventually leave.

### Proper Certification

- Make certification verification a condition for employment. It is not uncommon to find dentists using assistants who had indicated they were licensed to take X-rays but who actually are not. Or, it has happened that a coronal polishing assistant presented themselves as a hygienist when they moved to a state that did not allow assistants to coronal polish. The unsuspecting dentist hired this person as a hygienist! They obviously did not do a reference check either!

### Hiring

- After the applicant accepts the position being offered, have them complete all required personal records. Employee files should be kept in a locked file.

### Orientation for the New Employee

- Introduce them to all team members.
- They must be made to feel welcome and part of the team.
- Have them read the office manual and sign a statement that they have read and agree with the office policies.



- Review salary and benefit package.
- Share and discuss the practice's patient and team mission statements, what they mean and how to live it in the office.
- Communicate your practice culture; who is in charge of what, who they report to, attitudes and communication that are expected and those that are not as well as your practice philosophy and beliefs.
- Go over the written job description.

### Encourage Team Relationships

- Arrange to have different staff members, who will be working closely with the new employee, go to lunch with them.

### Training the New Employee

- Create a list of duties they must be proficient in. Mark the duties off as the employee demonstrates acceptable ability.
- Assign a well-trained veteran staff member to instruct the new employee, answer questions and check progress.
- Use the method; Tell, Show, Do
- Ask:
  - › What do you know about this?
  - › What are your strengths, weaknesses?
  - › How can I best teach you?
  - › How do you like to learn something new?

- Tell the new hire:
  - › The importance of each function and how it fits into the big picture.
  - › The benchmark of acceptable performance for each job duty they have.
- Have the new hire role play as much as possible. They will not own the new behavior until they have done it themselves a number of times.

### Regularly Coach the New Employee

- Have a five to 10 minute debriefing with the new hire at the end of each day for the first two weeks. Every other day for weeks three and four. The doctor and office manager should conduct a 30, 60 and 90 day review.
- Review daily with the new hire:
  - › What they did well
  - › What and how they need to do something differently
  - › What you want them to focus on the next day
  - › Ask what was their biggest struggle today?
  - › Ask what they would like help with tomorrow?
  - › Ask what they learned today that impacted them the most?

"When I meet successful people I ask 100 questions as to what they attribute their success to. It is usually the same: persistence, hard work and hiring good people."

- Kiana Tom

## Practice Tools to Increase Efficiency

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| • <i>Top 10 Front Desk Verbal Skills Desk Reference</i>                    | \$85  |
| • <i>Team Meetings Kit: Morning, Monthly &amp; Department</i>              | \$85  |
| • <i>Benefits of Pediatric Dental Procedures Verbal Skills Flash Cards</i> | \$65  |
| • <i>Hiring &amp; Training Manual</i>                                      | \$150 |
| • <i>Performance Review System</i>   | \$85  |
| • <i>Overhead Budget Monitoring System</i>                                 | \$85  |
| • <i>Bonus System</i>  | \$85  |
| • <i>Practice Management Forms</i>   | \$85  |
| • <i>Developing Doctor Vision &amp; Mission Statements</i>                 | \$40  |
| • <i>Employee Total Compensation Calculator</i>                            | \$85  |

These systems can be ordered directly from: [www.julieweir.com](http://www.julieweir.com)

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American Academy Of Pediatric Dentistry  
211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1600  
Chicago, Illinois 60611-2637



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