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Practicing above the Treetops

Running a Christian Practice - Staffing
(Part 4 of 5 in a series)

So, how are we doing? Check yourself - how far above the level of just a "mere mortal" (1 Corinthians 3:3) are you living? If the top of your 'tree' is the same height as every other chiropractor in your city, what is it that sets you apart from them? Where is the salt and light that makes you appealing to those watching your life? There are many nice, honest, happy chiropractors. What makes your life more attractive than theirs?

In exploring this idea, we've already discussed the atmosphere of your office, and the integrity of your business and professional actions, but we still haven't even mentioned overt witnessing in the office. Before we get to what many would think is the very first segment of a Christian's life that would set them apart from any other professional office, we will complete the setting of the stage for that, admittedly key, item.

So let's spend a few moments discussing our staff. If an office is to stand out as a Christian witness in a secular world, we must be very careful about who represents us in the front office. The staff is, after all, the first and last contact each patient has with our office. It is their friendly greeting, clear instructions, and skillful handling of accounts that will leave an impression in patients' minds. I know we chiropractors want to believe that patients all come to our office because of our skill and wisdom, but the truth is, many patients return to our office just because of our kind-hearted staff. And unfortunately, many of them refuse to return because of a bad interaction with a staff member.

In hiring staff, we must be completely intentional. There are only two reasons to decide who to hire: either the person is a Christian who will represent us in as Christ-like a manner as we do ourselves, or they are unsaved, and therefore, another person to whom we are representing Christ - hopefully leading to salvation.

So, not every staff person must be a Christian. But there is no question that every person employed by the office does represent us to patients and to anyone else with whom our office comes into contact. Therefore, they must live at the level of integrity and lifestyle that we want the office to express - saved or not. In addition, if we want to have our office impact patients for Christ, it is very helpful if each team member is on the same page with that mission. At the very least, each staff member must present a positive, encouraging personality, bringing joy and edification with every patient encounter.

As far as staff meetings, they are an important tool in forging a cohesive unit and common vision among your team. Use regular staff meetings for honing skills, fine-tuning team interaction, and for reminding each member of your goals, vision, and mission. Staff meetings can be a fun, uplifting time for all, and therefore should not be the place for correction, discipline or chastising for mistakes. Save those for one on one moments. Remember, praise in public,

continued on next page,

Treetops, concluded,

and correct in private.

If you are convinced your staff is tracking with your desire to impact patients spiritually, you may feel comfortable in giving them the latitude to take advantage of moments in patient flow to encourage them or to pray with them. We keep a small box in the adjusting rooms into which patients can deposit prayer requests or suggestions. Of course, staff should be careful to keep such interactions private, and yet keep the doctor apprised of what is going on in this area of patient relationships.

Staff is a key component in any successful office. In operating at a level above the treetops, they serve a unique purpose. Choose prayerfully and carefully, and train regularly and thoroughly.

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