

Tips for Motivating Employees



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Employees are the best marketing tools that any medical practice or hospital can have. Motivating employees to do their jobs well and help organizations achieve goals and priorities requires an ongoing commitment. If employees like where they work and are happy, they'll tell everyone they know and the word-of-mouth will spread. Successful motivation of employees—physicians, nurses, administrators, and other staff alike—can help organizations exceed performance expectations and work as a cohesive unit. Here are several tips for motivating employees in healthcare settings:

Clarify reporting relationships and job responsibilities. Casual structures and informal delegation of responsibilities are common in many healthcare organizations. This approach can result in disorganized or fractured employee expectations. Without formal reporting relationships and clarity of expectations, the provision of ongoing feedback is usually suboptimal. A more effective way for organizations to motivate each employee

to excel in their job is to clarify reporting relationships and prioritize tasks. The prioritization may require a shift in roles and responsibilities. If so, this is acceptable as long as the changes are clear to all. There may also be times when it's appropriate to outsource some of the work rather than to expect employees to accomplish each and every task.

Establish a formal performance evaluation system. Every employee likes to know where he or she stands. Make sure you have a standard performance evaluation system that contains both common expectations for the entire workforce and specific expectations for each position. The focus should be on employee goals, measurable assessments of accomplishments, and peer feedback. Smaller practices should pay particular attention to these considerations, especially if there is no dedicated human resource employee on staff. Conducting reviews regularly and providing a forum for questions and/or issues are essential.

Hold regular staff meetings. In many practices, regular staff meetings are often perceived as laborious and unproductive. However, these meetings can help employees feel as though they're truly a part of a team. Stick to an agenda, and keep your meetings brief. Meet regularly, and encourage employees to play an active role in the meeting. You can even rotate the responsibility for determining the agenda or run-

ning the meeting. Keeping employees updated on what the organization is doing and focusing on goals can go a long way towards improved employee job satisfaction. Staff meetings can also provide opportunities for employees to share their concerns with others in the organization.

Recognize and reward initiative. It's important to remember that all employees are human beings; they like to receive thanks and praise for jobs well done. Efforts should be made to recognize and reward resourcefulness in meaningful ways. Offering employees preferred parking spots, prizes, and other incentives are examples of methods that celebrate the efforts of staff members. These enhancements can make staff feel as though their efforts are appreciated.

Other methods of encouraging employees to be happy in their occupation include fostering teaching approaches and incorporating volunteerism in the community. Supporting continuing education is important for both physicians and other clinical and administrative staff members. These type of efforts can make employees happier at work, which can have a profound impact on the long-term success of the organization. **RW**

Margie Satinsky, MBA has indicated to Physician's Weekly that she has or has had no financial interests to report.

References

Satinsky Consulting, LLC, is committed to helping medical practices achieve balance. Strong financial management, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, efficient operations, and high quality patient care contribute to each practice's long-term viability. For more information on their services, go to www.satinskyconsulting.com.

Radcliffe Publishing has published a book by Margie Satinsky titled "Medical Practice Management in the 21st Century:

The Handbook." To order online, go to www.radcliffe-oxford.com/books/book_detail.aspx?ISBN=1+84619+023+1.

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