

## Ten Falsehoods Your staff Will Tell You

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I do not intend to make staff out to be non caring, in fact most dental staff are very good at identifying your office problems. The problem is they do not always have the best solutions. Their solutions are based more on “feeling” rather than “fact”. In over twenty seven years of serving as accountant and consultant, these are some of the most common falsehoods we have heard:

**1. Our patients cannot afford our fees now, so it is a mistake to raise them.**

In these tough times, making the decision to raise fees is certainly a tough decision. It is important to note that patients always think your fees are too high whether you are in the highest or the lowest percentile. If the Staff creates value for the service provided they will except the dentistry needed.

**2. That will never work in this office.**

This objection is one of the most frequently used any time a change is proposed in the office. Most things will work if you implement the right plan.

**3. Staff meetings and morning huddles are a waste of time.**

The truth is, successful staff meetings and morning huddles are hard work and getting a good result takes a lot of effort. They are worth the time and effort.

**4. Asking for referrals doesn't work and it is not worth the time.**

Patient referrals are still the top source of new patients in most practices. The average patient still believes that many dentists are not accepting new patients. It is key to remind our patients that we are accepting new patients and to ask them to send their friends and family to us.

**5. We have too much work for staff we have and we need to hire another.**

The dentist cannot afford to have even one extra staff person, nor can they afford the luxury of working inefficiently. This may be a good time for the doctor and staff to review the way they do things and streamline operations if need be. The number of staff needed is based on activity. Decrease activity and your staff will be able to get the job done.

**6. Staffs at other offices make more than we do.**

Surveys tell us this just isn't so. The Michigan Dental Association publishes an excellent survey on salaries. If you do not already have it, order it right away.

**7. Compared to the doctor I used to work for, you are over or under treating patients.**

However, this type of comment brings home the importance of you sharing with your staff your philosophy, how you came to develop it and why it makes sense.

**8. The practice management consultant you hired is rude, doesn't know what they are doing, and is killing the practice and besides we can accomplish this on our own.**

It is relatively common for the staff to resent the consultant and make an effort to get the doctor to end the consultation. A good consultant, like a good golf instructor, will make you uncomfortable because they force change and none of us like change. Getting past that discomfort is essential to moving your practice forward.

**9. I didn't realize that was part of my job.**

This one may have the greatest truth in it. We see many offices that do not take the time to prepare written job descriptions or to update them as technology changes.

**10. I need 60 minutes for every prophylaxis.**

A well trained hygienist can make good use of 60 minutes in an adult prophylaxis exam. They can use that time for education, assisting the doctor with the diagnosis and rapport building. However, if the patient has few teeth, is a child or has excellent dental hygiene, a full 60 minutes may not be necessary.