

6 MOST COMMON HIRING MISTAKES IN DENTISTRY



INTRODUCTION

The most common sentence I've heard in conversations with clinic owners in the last three years is: "We can't find quality people anymore!"

Yes. The labor market has undergone drastic changes as a result of two years of the pandemic, working from home and the lack of connection between employees and the practices where they worked until recently.

The strategies we have used so far in recruitment are no longer good enough. The publication of a job advertisement will result in a smaller number of candidates than before, which will narrow our choice.

This article answers the question of what we are doing wrong and what we can do to correct those mistakes, because having quality people in the team has never been more important.

An old saying goes: "If you want to get somewhere fast, go alone. If you want to go far, take someone with you." The fact is that we can't do anything by ourselves and the biggest leverage we have as owners is the time and knowledge of other people in our team.

The worst "trade" a practice owner can make is to exchange his time for money - then she doesn't have a company, but has a well-paid job. Therefore, we have to overcome the obstacle called employment if we want to grow.

If you recognise yourself in any of the situations described here and you want to improve your hiring skills, join us at the 5h annual edition of "D Business Leadership Summit" - one of a kind event focusing on the business side of dentistry, which will take place on November 21-23, 2024. in Zagreb.

Get your ticket to change at www.dbusinessleadershipgroup.com

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You do not have a defined organizational chart

The organizational chart is a fundamental tool for running a practice and hiring people.

Without a well-defined organizational chart, you don't know which people you need and in which positions.

Every company, including a dental practice, has three key processes:

- you must purchase a product/service (operative)
- you have to sell the product/service (sales/marketing)
- you must charge for the product/service (finance/administration)

Start from these three "departments" and define what this means in your business environment - you might think they won't be procuring a product, but you'll need to provide a service that contains a product, such as implant placement.

Without an organisational chart, you cannot hire well. You can take someone by recommendation, who will do everything he can, but such a story usually ends after a couple of months when the person leaves and leaves behind unfinished work and bad energy in the team.



Investors will rather invest in practices that have organised processes and an organisational chart. All of the above increases the value of your business when assessed by investors.



You carry out the entire recruitment process yourself

Every practice owner who wants to develop his business will find himself in a situation where he has to hire the first member of his team.

But a mistake we often see in practice are beliefs like "nothing is done well until I do it or I always have to do everything myself".

Hiring new employees is a stressful and time-consuming process that has many "moving" parts, such as:

- Defining your needs, why you need a new employee
- Writing ads - if you're going on that adventure on your own
- Positioning of ads on appropriate recruitment platforms
- Processing of received applications and responding to possible inquiries
- Reviewing candidate resumes
- Arranging appointments for interviews
- Interviewing the first round of potential candidates
- Selection of the best candidates
- Selecting a new employee with the hope that you didn't make a cardinal mistake and choose the wrong person

You understand - each of these stages can go wrong, and even if you do everything properly, you still won't be 100% sure of the final choice.

The consequences of the wrong selection of employees have a great negative effect on both the team and the business, so it is crucial to choose well and establish realistic expectations for the new employee from the very beginning.

However, it is wise to leave parts of the recruitment process to someone else who does it professionally - and get involved at the very end when the final decision on the selection of candidates needs to be made.



Weak onboarding process

Often a mistake we see in hiring is that the new employee is left to fend for himself.

There is no procedure or process that we follow when bringing a new person to our team, instead we rely on "learning on the fly", where we expect the person to master everything that is required in a short period of time.

Such an approach usually ends with a bad integration of the new employee into our team, which has long-term bad consequences for our business.

However, there are several ways to check whether we have made the right choice - one of the possibilities is to check the level of responsibility for carrying out seemingly small tasks.

Upon arrival at your office, a new employee should be given a seemingly simple task - write a short e-mail at the end of the day and send it to the owner.

Why the owner? The new employee should feel like an essential part of the practice from the very beginning - by sending an e-mail every day, he establishes contact with the owner, who may or may not respond back to the received information.

The task is simple, so that every new employee can master it without any problems and thus achieve a "small" result every day.

For the same reason, the army "forces" new recruits that the first thing every morning is a perfectly made bed. A soldier who achieved a small victory right at the beginning of the day, even if the day was a total disaster, will return at the end of the day to his "small" victory.

The e-mail must have answers to 3 questions:

- What result did I achieve?
- What obstacles did I encounter?
- What questions don't I have an answer to?

Here, the story with a "simple" task can go in many different directions.

For example if consistency is a fundamental value in your practice, what will you conclude about the employee who sent an e-mail regularly at the end of each day the first week, and only on Monday the following week?

I'm not saying this means the person isn't consistent, but it's an early warning of a possible problem - and "monsters" are killed when they're small.

In the beginning, the new employee will most likely describe his activities, which is absolutely not bad at the beginning. But, after a certain time you need to clarify the difference between activity and achievement.

Or as the famous motivational speaker Tony Robbins would say - activity is not achievement.

Quality structured feedback in the daily e-mails of your new employee can lead to positive changes in your business.

In the first 90 days, you will undoubtedly see what kind of person you are dealing with and whether you are compatible.

After that, you can keep the same practice or switch to a weekly rhythm, provided that in the meantime you set up a system of key input and output indicators, i.e. business metrics, based on which you will be able to quantify the performance and outcomes of the new employee.

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You do not have a well-defined job description

The most common mistake in business is unverified assumptions.

"I expected the new front desk clerk to understand that right from the start..."

"Well, I guess she understands that this is also part of her job..."

"Everyone comes to me with problems and expects me to solve them..."

"You have free time - in addition to your duties, you could also take care of advertising on social networks..."

These are just some of the sentences that indicate that you do not have a well-defined job description.

If a person does not know exactly what is expected of him, what outcomes he must achieve and within what time frame, how and when these outcomes will be measured, there is a high probability that sooner or later there will be dissatisfaction on the one hand.

People want to work in organized systems and it is our duty as owners to enable them to do so.

Therefore, take the time to define for each position in your practice exactly what you expect from that position - do not make the mistake of adapting the job to the person.

The message we need to send to our employees is that by working in our practice, they will become more than they were when they came to work for us.

Each of our employees wants to be successful - it is the owner's task to create the conditions for that, and clearly communicating expectations is key here.



You have the wrong people in the wrong positions

It is often difficult for us to thank an employee who we know does not achieve what we need, or we have an employee who is so important that without him the office could not function, but who does not accept changes and keeps us in a "deadlock" position.

Both situations are the result of the wrong person in the wrong place.

Three things are key for every position in our office:

- 1) Does the person want to work in that position?
- 2) Does she understand what is expected of her in that workplace?
- 3) Does she have the capacity and ability to successfully perform his job in that workplace?

If you don't have an affirmative answer to all three questions, you probably don't have the ideal person for the position.

If you have an affirmative answer to only one of the three questions, then you certainly do not have an ideal employee, and if you have two affirmative answers, it is possible to help the person succeed in that position through training.

Nothing is as counterproductive as the wrong person in the wrong place.

It is the owner's responsibility to find a realistic answer to these questions for each team member and accordingly change, train or bring the right person to the right place.



The values of the employees are not aligned with the values of the office

A key part of the culture and what constitutes the "DNA" of each practice are its values.

Examples of some values are:

- teamwork
- consistency
- integrity
- progress
- responsibility
- proactivity
- simplicity

You must have your own values defined, because everything that is essential for your practice starts from them. Quality values determine how "things are done here".

Values are what we communicate to patients - so that it is not just a "free first examination", which is an all too common example on social networks.

Values define the culture of your practice, that is, how we treat each other.

Values are something that every member of your team should live by and that is reflected in their actions.

When hiring people, it's important to find out what their core values are and what drives them.

If you don't have enough overlap between shared values, that person won't be your employee for long.