

The Most Successful Denturist in Canada

-2006 Spring Denturism Canada Magazine

Is there a reason why some denturists are more successful than others? I have had the privilege of working with hundreds of denturists across Canada, and in my experience I can answer a resounding 'Yes' to that question -- there are definitely things that successful denturists have in common.

Now, before I share those commonalities with you I should first clarify how I am defining success. Success is anything that accomplishes an intended goal. For some individuals it could mean a level of satisfaction, being content, happy or even elated with your current status -- if you are, then congratulations, you are successful based on that definition. However, I am not using that definition. In this article I am talking about two simple criteria. The first is money, a lot of money. The second is the intangible air of comfortable confidence in the office.

So without further adieu, the number one thing I have noticed that ALL, successful denturists have in common is... Help. Not just any help, great help, fantastic help! Some denturists believe they don't need help or tell me they will hire help when they can afford it. Hiring help is an investment like any other asset necessary for a successful denturist practice. It has been proven time and time again that an outstanding office manager will more than pay for themselves. Yes, I know what you are thinking "It's so hard to find an outstanding office manager! Someone who will treat all my patients with friendly professionalism & tactfulness, a self starter who can organize my office without constant direction, someone who is fantastic with computers, numbers and great at collecting receivables and recalling patients!!" <phew, that was a long thought>

Most denturists think it's next to impossible to find such a person or impossibly expensive. It may very well take some effort, but it has been done. Here are some tips that I have been authorized to share with you to find super people!

Number 1: Tell people you are looking. But don't just tell anyone. If you tell a turkey you're likely to have a turkey waddle up to your office door and ask for a job. However, if you know an eagle, and if you ask them if they know of any other eagles who might want to work for the most progressive office in town... well, someone may just fly in and see things you that you don't.

Number 2: Advertise. But not just anywhere, if you want an office manager who can use computers, then advertise online. I know one guy who advertised for free on <http://vancouver.craigslist.org/> for an "office manager/receptionist" and received over 130 replies with resumes attached in one week. There are many job listing sites. The best thing to do is call your local chamber of commerce and get a list of sites relevant for your town. Some sites are free and some you may have to pay a little to post your job. Another tip, get that eagle friend of yours to help you write the job description to attract the right people! Personally, I would not recommend using the word "receptionist" I would stick

with “office manager” and use words like a “dynamic”, “self starter looking to help grow a business” etc.

Number 3: Actually call references before short listing for an interview.

Number 4: Do a “working interview”. Sitting down and chatting with someone will only go so far. Inform them that you are interested in their abilities and would like to arrange an interview where they can demonstrate their office skills. Spend 20 minutes and teach them about your current office procedures. Then walk in the next room and call them from your cell phone posing as a patient. The job candidate will have to book you an appointment. You then walk into the reception area for your appointment and the candidate continues through the whole flow of business including payment, receipt, and even recalling you “a couple years later” for a reline.

Number 5: Ask yourself: “Is this person an energy giver or an energy zapper?” Smart, motivated, productive people are like a jolt of positive energy. Not only do they give you the comfort to rely on them to get things done but they also just plain make you feel and perform better.

Number 6: Always hire with clearly defined expectations. And those expectations should include the ability to be productive independently. If it is necessary to “watch” over employees to get the best out of them, then the employee is flawed and so is the system that got them there.

I elaborated a lot on the “Great Help” bit because without a doubt, it is the most common feature of the successful dentist. All successful people seem to echo the same thing. Thomas Golisano was rated the No. 1 CEO by *Forbes* Magazine in 2002. He attributes his success to “hiring people with great attitudes.” He is not alone...

“Surround yourself with excellence”

– Bill Gates.

“Hire people smarter than you”

– Warren Buffet.

“Invest in your people and they’ll take you to the top”

– James Morgan, CEO of “Applied Materials Inc”. James increased the company’s value from \$5.4 million to \$24.2 BILLION.

The successful dentist is not afraid to invest. They not only invest in human capital they invest in a pleasant office space. They invest in equipment and they invest in advertising (sometimes they invest A LOT in advertising!) And when they advertise, successful dentists market themselves as specialists. Everyone loves a specialist. Given the choice, why would anyone not go to a specialist in whatever it is they are looking for.

The successful dentist recalls patients. I find it amazing just how many dentists did not follow a consistent recall schedule. Sometimes it's because they feel they are busy enough without it. It's true they are busy. Busy running around, busy stressing, busy trying... but they are not nearly as productive as the top clinics in Canada. The top clinics recall, period. If a dentist feels they are too busy to recall then that just brings us back to point number one...get help.

Finally, the successful dentist sets clearly defined goals. They have a system in place to constantly measure these goals and then re-evaluate those goals. These dentists are constantly looking for ways to improve. Each time I talk to them they are doing something different and excited to talk about it.

In a nutshell, the most successful dentist procures great help, is not afraid to invest, recalls patients, and sets clear goals.

I know, it sounds too good to be true doesn't it... making a lot of money and working in an environment of comfortable confidence? It's tempting to rationalize that "dentists with clinics like that don't have the same problems I have." The reality that I have observed is that everyone has problems. Really, the only people without problems are those in cemeteries. The difference is how problems are perceived and what attitude and actions are taken.