



TOP TEN INEXPENSIVE WAYS TO INCENT EMPLOYEES TO HIGHER LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

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Imagine the energy in your dental practice if every employee felt that what they accomplished was important and that someone noticed. Successful dental CEO's have learned that people will only act in the best interest of their employer when this kind of environment exists. Bob Nelson, author of the best-selling 1001 Ways to Reward Employees, teaches us that exceptional organizations create exceptional employees. The key to dental team motivation is encouragement, support and recognition.

Unfortunately, many dental employers report a total absence of even the simplest of acknowledgements. The doctor gets "busy" and overlooks opportunities to celebrate the successes and accomplishments of his/her team. The impact on the practice is two-fold: First, low staff morale and high turnover and second, a decrease in productivity and practice profitability.

The long-term success of a dental practice is based on the ability to encourage and support the success of each employee. Unfortunately, motivating people is far from an exact science. There's no secret formula, no set calculation, no worksheet to fill out. In fact, incentives can be as individual as the employees who work for you.

A dental team incentive program is like a jigsaw puzzle. Miss a piece and you don't get the picture. Put all the right pieces in place and you create success. Incentives need not cost an arm and a leg. Consider the following ten inexpensive incentives to motivate your team to higher levels of performance.

1. **Write hand-written letters** to employee's families telling about recent accomplishments and how much they mean to the practice.
2. **Throw a party** for employee's children or grandchildren.
3. **Hire high school students** to wash employee's cars in the parking lot.
4. **Give a pleasure call** by calling an employee into your office just to thank him or her; don't discuss any other issues during the visit.
5. **Give a blast of pride** whenever employees achieve a major success, encourage them to blow whistles or clang bells. Let the entire team celebrate the employee's success.
6. **Write five or more Post-It notes** thanking the employee for a job well done and hide them among the treatment rooms.
7. **Create a "yearbook"** that is displayed in the reception room that contains everybody's photograph along with their best achievement of the year.
8. **Give that special employee** a two-hour lunch—and pay for dessert.
9. **Personalize a book** with an inscription to acknowledge an occasion or achievement.
10. **Hide a \$20 bill** in their work area with a note saying, "Have a little extra fun this weekend."

Dentists often fail to realize that some of the most effective things they can do to develop and sustain motivated, committed employees cost very little or nothing at all. What are you prepared to do to encourage and motivate your employees to higher levels of performance? Do they know how much you appreciate their efforts?

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Dr. Arndt is the Dental Coach®. He works with dentists and dental teams to be highly profitable and completely fulfilled in their personal and professional life. What that means for them is less stress, more time, more money and a healthier business. As a businessman and entrepreneur, he blends 20 years of clinical dental practice, five years of executive corporate experience in the financial planning and investment management industry with his graduate business training and hands-on experience. He delivers his highly personalized Coaching to doctors throughout the United States utilizing scheduled telephone calls, e-mail and fax. To learn more about his telephone coaching techniques, his group teleclasses or to subscribe to his newsletter, contact Coach Ron at

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