

What is more important to your Employees than money?

By Mary Fisher-Day

I've spent countless hours speaking with Dental Office Staff Members about their jobs and job satisfaction. While monetary compensation is very important to all of them, the overwhelming majority place feeling appreciated at the top of their list for job satisfaction. In today's economy, you may not be able to give pay raises but you can say thank you.

Here are some other ways to let your staff members know they are valued:

- * Offer an attainable incentive goal (it works).
- * A "Thank You" lunch from time to time (you don't have to go out, just have it delivered from a local lunch catering company). You can stay for lunch or leave. Either way, you're saying thank you.
- * After a really difficult week, give them a gift certificate for a manicure or pedicure.
- * When you give them their pay checks or pay stubs (in cases of direct deposit), look them in the eye and say Thank You. Do the same when handing out incentive bonus checks. I've had more than one staff member say how demoralizing it is to receive a paycheck or bonus check from an employer who obviously resents giving it.
- * Always pay your Staff on time. Don't make them wait for earned pay and don't make them ask for a paycheck.
- * Performance evaluations are as important to your staff as they are to you. They are expecting to hear what they are doing wrong. Make sure to give as much positive feedback as possible.
- * Hold regular Staff meetings and listen to what they have to say. Try to implement a suggestion by a member of your Staff when possible.
- * Be fair, don't play favorites. You're human and you will have favorites but you never want to make it obvious.
- * Come to work on time. Don't put your staff Members in the position of making excuses for you. The best way to lead is by example. Certainly there will be occasions when you can't be there on time, but this should be the exception rather than the rule. If you want your staff to care about your Practice, you have to show that you care about it. In this case the old saying is true... actions speak louder than words.

Most importantly...surround yourself with people you respect and enjoy working with. You should never dread coming to work because of someone on your payroll. If you do, they shouldn't be there. It's not fair to either of you and it will cause problems in your Practice.