

EP. 8 Culture and Communication

- What is Culture?
- Evaluate the Culture of Your Office
- What are things you can do to change your culture?
- How do your patients perceive your culture

- What is Culture?

Hard to define, but you know it when you have it... or don't.

Cultural Group: a Cultural group is defined simply as a collection of individuals who share a core set of beliefs, patterns of behavior and values. The groups may be large or small, but they are identified by their ways of thinking and behaving.

- Evaluate the Culture of your office. Is it great? Does everyone come into the office everyday with a positive attitude and ready to work? Do you start your day in a fun way? If not, why not? Does your office need to have a culture funeral?

What can you do—YOU do, to change it. It's easy to say that "I'd like it to be better, but I work in a group with 10, 20, 50 other people. I can't change them."

You can change yourself and often your attitude and change of thinking can sway others to see how nice a better atmosphere (culture in your office can be.)

- What are things that you can do to change your culture?

Start the day positively. I have a fortune cookie that I saved years ago on my fridge that says "Enthusiasm is contagious. Not having enthusiasm is also contagious." Are you the one who is enthusiastic and engaged, or are you the one who is "not a morning person" and think that's okay? Give yourself an honest assessment and if you need to be the one to change, do it! This could be giving a compliment or shout-out, bringing homemade cookies to the team, saying a special thank you to someone who might not expect it.

Do you celebrate big and little things in your office? This could be birthdays, just-because days, goals reached, projects completed, new technology learned—whatever, but just celebrate. Many of our offices need help with this and we recommend they calendar time for this. Perhaps even select a celebration team to make sure this doesn't fall by the wayside.

- How do you think your patients perceive your culture?

Ultimately, that's who we're trying to make see that we are different. How is going to Chic Fil A different than some other fast food chains? Do you feel different? If you do things exactly the way as any other dental office, do you think the patient will be impressed and say "wow, that was a totally different experience than I've ever had at a medical/dental practice—I can't wait to tell my friends and family"? Are there times that you skip showing the patient around the office, or the four minute rule because you are trying to catch up? You've just eliminated the things that make you different and allow you to give a different experience. And you have to be good at this every, single time. It can't be a "we're pretty good most of the time" kind of thing. Consistency is key--- to getting return patients, referred patients, to good social media reviews.