

The "Shortage" – Solutions Where EVERYONE WINS! February 2007

You may have heard. It is true and it is a reality in our dental community. There is a shortage of qualified dental professionals. Some dental practices are so desperate to fill their staffing needs that they hire a person who is not the ideal fit for the practice. If you have ever lived through the nightmare of hiring the wrong team member you can predict what happens – nobody is happy – not the employee, not the other team members, not the patients and certainly NOT the dentist!!

Dealing with this important issue has occupied more than its fair share of my "think tank" time and I have come up with some ideas that can help us both. I borrowed a phrase from the movie "Jerry McGuire" – "Help me Help You!"

Idea #1– Practice Referral Program

For the short term we can work together on the "Referral Program". The idea came to me from a couple of clients. This is what they did and this is how it works: if you interview/receive a fax from someone to your practice (without the aid of a placement agency) and they are NOT a good fit for you or / not hiring at this time, please send them to Desert Dental Staffing.

How does this help the dental community? With the long needs list that I have to fill, there is a great chance that they will fit well with another team.

How will this help your practice? Desert Dental Staffing will give you a credit of \$50 providing the person is successfully placed.

How else does this help your practice? *You* may be the practice in dire need of a team member and the very team member who wasn't right for another practice or needed at that time, could be the PERFECT FIT for you!!

Idea #2– Friends Referral Program

It is an easy way to put \$50 in your pocket! This is how it works: If you know someone looking for a job in the dental field, refer them to Desert Dental Staffing. When they are successfully placed you will be sent a crisp \$50 bill – now, who would love to have a pair of Ben Franklin's eyes helping you shop!

Idea #3– Sow Some Seeds

I'll bet you know a patient in your practice that has the personality and the aptitude to make a great dental professional - OR a friend – OR a family member – OR someone in your social circle. Ask if they would be interested in working in the dental field. The hours are great, the work environment is enviable and the pay is quite satisfactory. Suggest that he or she attend a quality and affordable dental assisting program. Sowing these seeds of suggestion will put quality dental professionals into your future.

There are hundreds of people who make great dental assistants/office personnel with the proper training – all they need is a gentle push in the right direction. This could work well if your plan is to bring in an associate within the next 10 years. A responsible and hard-working high school student could be the best dental team member you have ever had – wouldn't you agree that would certainly be worth a few minutes of your time!

"Win-win-win" is a phrase that we have all heard. I think you'll agree that these three simple ideas will go a long way to satisfy the short and long term needs of the dental community: Practice Referral Program, Friends Referral Program and Sow Some Seeds. These are easy to do and they take very little time from your productive practice. The best part is: EVERYONE WINS!

