

# Why Team Training is One of the Best Investments

Outperforming your competition boils down to several factors, but according to our marketing expert, your staff is one of the most crucial. From receptionists to hygienists, the quality of the people who keep your practice running is as important as the quality of your equipment and professional training. Continue below to find out how to build an exceptional employee base.

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*Effective team training can increase your conversion rate, improve patient satisfaction and save time.*

You are likely well aware of the value of your own training and that of other dentists in your office. You attend lectures, participate in workshops and complete continuing education courses to stay on top of the latest trends in dentistry – and it makes a difference to your patients. However, you might not give much thought to training for your team.

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People are not likely to research the credentials of an office receptionist or hygienist before they choose a dental practice. How important can team training be? The answer is more than you may realize. Here's why:

**Increase your conversion rate.** Most new patient relationships begin with a phone call or email to your practice. The person will communicate with your office staff, probably many times, before he or she ever meets

you. Knowledgeable, professional, efficient and helpful office personnel will convert leads into patients. The opposite is also true. Delays in returning messages, inefficiency, rudeness, or an unprofessional attitude can ensure that a person's first call is also his or her last.

**Improve your patient satisfaction rating.** Have you ever seen a patient who complains throughout the visit no matter how well it is going, or one who receives top quality treatment and then gives you a horrible review online? Why does this happen? In many cases, the patient did have a bad experience, but not in the dental chair. Although the dentist is usually the target of complaints, people who are unhappy before the appointment begins are much more likely to complain. For example, one [study](#) found that patients who complain about long wait times are more likely to say the doctor was rude or that the diagnosis was incorrect. According to another [study](#), the most common patient complaints are about the front desk staff.

**Use your time more effectively.** Two factors limit the role of hygienists, dental assistants and other supportive clinicians in your practice. First is the law, which specifies restrictions on procedures performed according to a person's licensure. However, chances are the scope of your team's duties is much more limited than the law requires. That is because they are also limited by their skillset. Additional training for these team members can reduce the amount of time that you spend on preparation and other mundane aspects of treatment.

**Make your office more efficient.** The more knowledgeable your staff is, the better they will be able to perform their duties. However, training does not have to be limited to a person's regular position. Cross-training employees can add flexibility to your scheduling, which improves employee morale and helps avoid problems when someone is unexpectedly unavailable. It also challenges staff members to grow and makes them feel more valuable, which improves engagement. [According to research](#), employee engagement can increase productivity and profitability, as well as improve the standard of care that patients receive.

**Protect your investment.** Team training may be as extensive as lengthy courses, or it may be as simple as a few seminars or educational videos. Still, the cost may seem high, especially if your practice has a large staff. However, you may be surprised to learn that the cost of replacing an underperforming employee can be [even higher](#). The United States Department of Labor estimates that a "bad hire" costs about 30 percent of that person's salary, while Career Builder reports an average cost of about \$50,000.

If you are hesitant to train your team, you could be missing one of the best opportunities to increase your profits, keep patients happy, and make your office run smoother. When it comes to your dental staff, the more they know, the more they can help your practice grow.

*Naren Arulrajah is President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dentists. With a team of 140+ full time marketers, [www.ekwa.com](http://www.ekwa.com) helps dentists who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year. If you have questions about marketing your practice online, call 855-598-3320 to speak one-on-one with Naren.*

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