

Combat Employee Turnover

With unemployment at historically low rates, retaining employees is harder than ever. Here are some tips to help your dental practice maintain a thriving workforce:

- **Invest in current employees.** One of the key opportunities for dental practice success is continual investment in your current workforce. If you have employees with potential to grow, offer training and continuing education to help them realize that potential. With online courses, this is now easy to do without a major disruption in day-to-day activities. These courses can be as general as teaching supervisory skills or obtaining accreditation in a chosen field. Then when there is a need to be filled, often times it can be filled internally with a committed employee.
- **Convert contractors to employees.** Utilizing contractors is a great strategy to handle overflow work. You can then have current employees manage the consultant's work to develop their supervisory skills. At the same time you can vet contractors to see if they could take an expanded role as a full-time employee. Many contractors prefer to be independent, but that is not always the case. Circumstances change and the security of being an employee might be intriguing.
- **Review compensation and benefits packages.** Conduct an annual review to ensure that your practice is offering competitive salaries and benefits. This will help protect your practice against current employees seeking greener pastures. Consider giving impromptu pay increases and spot awards to top employees to show your appreciation. Also look at being creative with benefits and vacation packages.
- **Explore the benefits of internships.** An internship program can not only help you identify your next employees, it can help develop your current employees. While it can be seen as a hardship by your current workforce, it can be a rewarding way to cement your employee's knowledge and value to the practice as they are seen as a teacher. Plus you may find your next group of potential hires.
- **Assess your practice culture.** Employees want to enjoy going to work every day. Consider conducting an anonymous survey of your current employees to see what they like and get ideas for possible improvements.

With some planning and a little creativity, keeping your dental practice running efficiently can be achieved even in times when employee retention can be challenging.