

Practice Management: How to Make Sure Your Staff is Motivated and Invested

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Do You and Your Staff Share the Same Vision?

Staff management is relatively easy compared to **managing your relationships with staff**. But it is those relationships that directly impact your practice's efficiency and success.

Why?

Poor relationships lead to a disconnect around the office. Your staff members may show up for work, but they may not be invested in the firm's goals nor motivated to perform.

Gain a better sense of how solid your **staff relationships** are by asking yourself the following questions.

1. Do you share a vision?

Do you have a mission statement for your firm? How does your staff figure into this mission statement?

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Don't just have your mission statement hanging in the reception area. Make it the focus of your team meetings. Share stories that illustrate how your firm is living its mission statement.

A good leader inspires goal achievement!

2. Is working for your firm a career or job?

Don't overlook that your staffers may feel that they have invested great expenses of time, effort and tuition to become a paralegal or legal secretary. Look at your firm from your staff's perspective and **become aware of what your staff hopes to accomplish professionally.**

3. Are you approachable?

When things are tough or not going well, can staff talk to you?

Be sure to carve out time when you can be available to take questions from staff, or when they can simply deliver phone messages or documents to be reviewed.

4. How well do you delegate?

If you are prone to being a perfectionist and controlling, you likely have a difficult time delegating.

Leverage your staff!

Delegate according to your staff's strengths. When delegating, give clear directions—including what your expectations are for the finished product, the interim and final deadlines, and the budgeted time allotment.

5. Do you give constructive feedback?

If you are unhappy with how something has been done, you need to let your staff know in a respectful manner. Do not criticize or correct staff in public. **Praise publicly, correct privately.** If you don't address negative factors, you will find yourself growing resentful.

Motivation comes from being challenged and respected by our peers. It also comes from having the opportunity to be creative and the sense that, yes, we are making a difference!

And, guess what? Your staff is motivated the same way!

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Consider their lives, the work they do for you, and your relationships with them. Once you do, you'll find that your firm is a lot happier -and more efficient- place to work.

Article adapted from [Managing Your Relationships with Your Staff: Pointers for Getting it Right](#) by Sheila M. Blackford.

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