

5 secrets to curing 'supervisoritis'

By Monica Wofford

Are you guilty of "supervisoritis" — acting as though you (the boss) are the most important person in the office, the only one who knows all the answers, and the one who takes credit for the practice's success?

It's fine to take pride in what you have accomplished, but the truth is you didn't do it all by yourself. Building your practice to its current level required a team effort.

To cure — or avoid — any symptoms of supervisoritis, try using the following methods. I think you will be pleased with the sense of teamwork these methods create.

1. Treat each teammate as unique. Employees are unique individuals who have lives, minds, and beliefs of

their own. And although they work in your practice, they really don't work for you. They work for *themselves* — for their own reasons.

Tip: Instead of calling them "my team," think about calling them "the team I have the privilege of leading."

2. Communicate clearly. Clear communication sounds easy, but it can be a challenge. Communication is achieved when those who are communicating have no differences concerning three things — what was said, heard, and interpreted from the received message.

What is clear to you may not be clear to others because each person's understanding in a communication process is built on the individual's beliefs, experiences, perceptions, and background. Because no two people have the same beliefs, experiences, perceptions, and background, differences arise. (Those differences become magnified if your team

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comes from different cultures.)

Tip: To assure clear communication, check for understanding. Instead of asking, "Do you understand?" ask questions such as, "Can you share with me your version of those instructions?" or "What did you understand me to say or mean?"

3. Share expectations. Adults typically like to know what is expected of them. They don't like to guess about if they are doing what you would like them to do.

Tip: Tell those who support you exactly what is expected in performance, treatment of patients, delivery of service, or offer of up-sells. Don't put your staff into the position of having to read your mind to succeed.

4. Maintain balance. You know balance is important, but do you live a balanced life? Do you work 10, 12, or 16 hours each day and expect everyone in the office to do the same? Overwork leads to burnout, irritability, and high employee turnover.

Tip: It isn't necessary to have perfect balance. Instead, occasionally explore the options life has to offer.

Spend time with your family. Encourage your staff to

do the same. And recognize that a work day has a beginning and an end. Honor both.

5. Ask for help. It's a big ego trip to have everyone come to you for all the answers. Being a "know-it-all" contributes heavily to supervisoritis.

Tip: It is OK to "not know." And even more OK to ask for help. When you ask for help from those you lead, you give them a chance to shine. You make them

'Supervisoritis' kills staff motivation. Check your behavior for signs of this malady.

feel valued and give them an opportunity to contribute.

Supervisoritis is a curable condition. Follow these five tips and you'll see a change in your leadership and in the staff you have the privilege of leading. ☺



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