Double your productivity by cutting your to-do list in half

By Jay Geier

As the dentist, you are the top revenue producer in your practice, but as much as you try, you can’t wear all the hats. Your practice wouldn’t survive if you tried to do it all yourself. This means that you need to be the leader and put together a team that supports you and the overall growth of the practice.

Let’s face it, doing everything yourself is not an option. You need a solid support system that will allow you to concentrate on what the practice really needs for exponential growth.

Consider this: When U2 has a sold-out concert in New York City, at $400 a seat, do you think that the band members are the ones setting up the microphones and coordinating the smoke machines and lights? They can’t be bogged down by the preparation of the event. They hire an entire stage crew to do that work for them.

When it gets down to it, they do what they are best at. They let other capable people handle everything related to running a tour and only participate where their talent is most fully leveraged. You should run your practice the same way.

Just like a rock star’s stage crew, your team has to be engineered around your unique ability, your genius. You’re the one who is setting the vision for the practice. You’re the one getting out on stage to perform. It’s your team’s job to set the stage so that when it’s show time you’re confident that everything is taken care of.

As an entrepreneur, you started out doing everything on your own. You took out the trash, changed light bulbs and probably even took some new patient phone calls. You have to break free of that pattern or your practice won’t grow to meet its potential. With this genius model, not only will you be better at what you do, but your practice’s productivity will increase significantly.

Finding your area of genius

Every dentist’s area of genius is not necessarily directly linked to treating patients. Your biggest strength could be a number of different things. What you really excel in could be speaking to groups of people or creating marketing initiatives. Another way of putting it would be: your area of genius is the one in which you are able to produce the biggest result for the biggest return.

In order to find your genius you have to analyze everything you are already doing. Look at both your personal life and professional life because your personal life will always collide with your professional life. Next, work on eliminating all of the things that aren’t a part of your area of genius or any activity where you are not getting your highest payback.

If you’re having trouble figuring out what’s not in your area of genius, it’s usually what you’re not comfortable doing. These tasks are hindering you from reaching higher profits for your practice.

Think of it in terms of the 80/20 rule. Twenty percent of your activities produce 80 percent of your results. However, if you eliminated that other 80 percent or even 50 percent of those minimally producing activities, you would be able to exponentially improve the production rate of yourself and of your practice.

Remember though, if you get rid of something that’s not in your area of genius — for example you might not have the skills to create effective marketing — you have to find someone to fill that void.

Forming your dream team

You need to be able to delegate tasks to someone else in your practice who can do them better than you can. This is where your rock star stage crew comes into play, or your dream team.

The No. 1 quality of a dream team member is someone who views himself/herself as a real contributor and sees the big picture. Most importantly, you want people who will figure out what your genius is and help you free up your time for it to do.

If you have a staff member that is more focused on what’s for lunch or his/her weekend plans than making your new patient goals for the month, then you have a huge problem. That staff member is not a part of your dream team. Each of your staff members has his/her own genius and you need to help him/her find it.

In some cases, it may be that unproductive team members are actually good employees but are not being used to their fullest potential in their area of genius. Once everyone is where they need to be, your staff will be happier and more willing to work harder toward your ultimate vision.
the growth of your practice.

Transforming your team into a profit-making machine

This transition starts with you. You need to be the leader in your practice, hold people accountable to stay focused on their area of genius and reward them for it.

When team members have something to work toward on the job, they feel like they are making a real contribution and they tend to be happier. By putting an incentive plan in place, this helps everyone feel like they are all an integral part of the machine.

You also need to make sure that you’ve delegated the responsibilities according to your team’s genius areas. Each person should be concentrating on the thing that he or she is the best at.

If U2 held a concert at Madison Square Garden, they wouldn’t put the sound crew in charge of marketing the event. The results would cost them money in the same way mismatching a staff member to a position in your office would affect the productivity of your practice.

Most dentists have a barrier set up where they say they cannot afford to hire one person to handle new patient calls and another to greet patients at the front desk. You need to get rid of that blockage. You’re investment in these staff members will make you more money.

You have to look at the math. In the long run, if you have a focused and genius-driven team, your productivity and profit will grow, your dream team will be happier on the job and you’ll be well on your way to reaching your highest potential as a practice.

Jay M. Geier is the founder and president of the Scheduling Institute. He is a well-known dental speaker and has helped more than 10,000 dentists nationwide grow their practices. Geier offers free practice analysis on his website. If you’d like him to do this for your practice, please visit www.schedulinginstitute.com and click on “Take the 5 Star Challenge” at the top. Geier can also be contacted at jaygeier@schedulinginstitute.com.