Pulling together to reach your goals
Lil Niddrie discusses how improving your coaching skills can help to increase both business performance and team motivation at your practice

Life coaching and business coaching have increased steadily in popularity over the last decade, but for many smaller businesses, such as dental practices, professional business coaching is simply too costly. However, by understanding the basic principles you can not only help your business, but also help yourself and other members of your team achieve their goals.

Coaching can play an important part in improving your team’s performance and motivation. By setting goals and supporting your colleagues as they work to achieve them, your practice will move forward and function much better. The idea is that ultimately, team members can learn to support each other, as they can all make the most of their individual skills.

If you have ever wondered how to really fulfil your potential, not just at work, but in all areas of your life, then coaching could be the answer. You may even be a natural coach already. Do you often find yourself listening to other people’s problems and giving advice? Or do you enjoy training others in new knowledge and skills? You may be implementing coaching principles in your day-to-day life without even realising it.

Even if the thought of coaching and teamwork makes your blood run cold, the tips below can help you learn how to improve your skills and make them an integral part of your practice’s development.

Steps to success
A useful place to start is by looking at how happy you are with the different areas of your life, such as work, finance, career, relationships and so on.

Once you have identified the main obstacles to achieving your goals, then you can work through each one to identify your values. This can be values such as honesty and caring or they can be work specific, for example, teamwork and attention to detail. Once you are aware of your key values, you can plan to set their goals. For example, if someone has put “socialising with friends” as a value in their personal life, then they can be going to struggle to achieve their goal.

**Skills and limitations**
The main obstacles to achieving goals are the limits of our skills and resources and the limitations of our minds. The issue of skills and resources can often be addressed by appropriate training or by asking for advice and support.

Some companies offer tailor-made training days, which are specific to your practice’s needs and can even incorporate a module focused on the Principles of Coaching. Some of these courses can also count towards verifiable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) when undertaken in accordance with GDC requirements. This type of event provides an ideal opportunity for staff in similar roles to meet and learn together, and will benefit both your employees and your practice.

**Limitations of the mind**
Many people have a natural hesitation when considering the types of event mentioned above. However, constraint and the limits we place on ourselves to achieve our goals are the limits of our skills and we can often overcome these with the right advice and support.