We all know that maintaining high standards is essential for business success. This success largely comes from being able to attract and retain employees. We also know that it’s increasingly hard to source and keep great workers. In my experience the major headache for busy dental practices is staffing issues.

Many practices don’t give staff retention the priority it deserves. You can pay a heavy price if it is ignored. Some of the main impacts of poor staff retention include:

- the costs of recruiting permanent or temporary replacements
- the loss of practice and/or technical knowledge and skills
- additional pressure on the practice manager who is responsible for recruiting to the vacant post and inducting and training the new recruit
- service disruption, lower levels of customer service and loss of new business; and
- a climate of uncertainty and low morale among remaining staff, particularly if several employees within the same section or team leave within a short timescale.

Reasons for staff turnover vary from practice to practice and you will have to investigate the reasons and create a plan to address any common causes of dissatisfaction. There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to reducing turnover, but there are a range of strategies that you can use to boost staff retention.

Start by selecting people who are right for the role and the practice. Commit to recruiting the best possible person for each position and don’t compromise. Be prepared to pay for the right talent. It is far less costly in the long run to pay more for the right employee than it is to keep getting it wrong. Involve existing staff in the recruitment process.

Create a pipeline of suitable candidates. This is more easily said than done, so as well as using the more traditional routes, for example, placing job advertisements in trade journals, think creatively to source candidates.

For example, keep a list of patients who inquire about job possibilities for future reference. Other good sources are local schools, community colleges, or referrals from other staff members. The use of commercial job boards, corporate website and social media platforms are also useful.

Identify the essential job-related selection criteria so

The Future of Orthodontics Fits on Your Desktop

Exclusively designed for smaller labs and clinics, the new Objet30 OrthoDesk is office-friendly, affordable and easy to use. It is the first solution that puts cutting-edge, 3D printing technology on your desktop.

Now you can digitally manufacture stone models, orthodontic appliances, delivery and positioning trays, clear aligners and retainers faster than ever. Transition to a digital workflow and do away with bulky physical model storage.

Take the leap to digital orthodontics today, and:

- Increase your production capacity and accuracy
- Accelerate production times
- Eliminate traditional stone model storage
- Stay ahead of the competition
- Eliminate the inconvenience of physical impressions

Find out how Objet 3D printers from Stratasys can make digital orthodontics a reality for your lab. stratasysdental.com | marketing.emea@stratasys.com | +49 7229 777 2-0
that job requirements can be
matched to the skills and ex-
perience of candidates. Don’t
just take on a pair of hands
because you’re desperate.
It’s tempting but believe me,
you’ll regret it. Make sure you
collect relevant data and only
progress the best candidates.
Your choice of selection tools
should be based on job-relat-
ed criteria. Use testing in con-
junction with a competence
based interview.

Once you have appointed
your employees, take positive
steps to encourage the right
people to stay.

Involves them by creating
a vision for your practice and
let your staff know what it is,
what it means for them and
what they need to do to sup-
port it.

Surveys consistently show
that what employees want
must, even more than money,
is appreciation and recogni-
tion. Look for opportunities
to give regular positive feed-
back. Offer balanced and ob-
jective praise where appropri-
ate and make suggestions for
areas that need improvement.
Provide clear and measure-
able standards of performance
and give examples of what
success looks like. Help em-
ployees achieve optimum per-
formance and give objective
feedback if they don’t meet all
your standards. Where you do
have to give criticism make
sure it’s done in private.

I have already referred to
this but if you want to achieve
high standards of performance
you will need to appoint above-
average performers. It means
you must pay above-average
wages. Consider introducing
performance related bonuses.
If you reward the type of be-
haviour you want to receive,
you will receive more of that
behaviour. It creates a win-
win for you. Employees en-
joy a share of increased prof-
its, and the practice achieves
higher levels of productivity
and profitability.

Create a great employee
workplace. As well as good
pay, make sure there is up-
to-date technology which is
straightforward to use and
works well and ongoing devel-
opment opportunities. Good
staff enjoy working with oth-
er good staff so ask yourself
the following question:
“Would I want to work here? If
I were looking for a job, would
this be an attractive opportu-
nity?”

Communicate effectively.
Have periodic staff meetings
(once a month) to structure
higher level practice feed-
back, plan forthcoming activi-
ties and provide information.
Keep the meeting short (45
minutes), create the agenda
and distribute several days be-
fore the meeting, to give par-
ticipants time to prepare. Stick
to the agenda and don’t allow
yourself to be sidetracked.

Assembling the right team
takes time and effort. So
be rigorous about the re-
cruitment process and when
you have to achieved the
right appointments make sure
you take steps to keep them
happy and wanting to stay
with you.

’Don’t just take on
a pair of hands
because you’re des-
perate. It’s tempt-
ing but believe me,
you’ll regret it’.

Don’t just take on
a pair of hands
because you’re des-
perate. It’s tempt-
ing but believe me,
you’ll regret it’.

practice management