The Missing Business Plan
The second in our series about Pia Mint

Having started her new job at the Endeavour and Hope dental practice with enthusiasm, by the end of her first week there Pia Mint was feeling anxious. She wondered how she could ever settle in and make this practice run as well as her previous practice had done.

When she was appointed the partners convinced her that their practice was well organised and compliant. They had certainly ‘talked the talk’ about how their practice ran but now she had discovered that they were most definitely not ‘walking the walk.’

On Monday she kept thinking, “I can’t be looking at this correctly, I must be missing something, I’ll look again!”

By Tuesday she was angry because what she was discovering was not what she was promised about how the practice operates.

By Wednesday Pia was worried. Her spirits were at rock bottom. She kept thinking about conversations she had heard between practice managers at the local practice managers’ group. They had said on more than one occasion that they felt like they were just used as scapegoats when things went wrong. Pia had come to realise that a great deal ‘went wrong’ in this practice. In fact, it is would be more surprising if things ever went right, based on the lack of structure and low team morale she had discovered.

By Thursday she was starting to think about how she could reconcile herself and just keep going in her new job role. The thought, “I could just fit in and do my best, at least I will get paid at the end of the month. I just need to be able to show that I have done my job. Just as the practice has staggered on in the past, I am sure it can continue move forward in the same way. However, this is not what I wanted from this work role, but perhaps it’s what I will need to settle for!

Pia did not sleep well on Thursday night and was tired when she arrived for work on Friday morning. When she arrived she found the front door was unlocked, because the last person to leave on Thursday night had forgotten to lock up.

Then when she opened her email she discovered that she had received a strongly worded complaint from a patient who had attended a review on Monday. The patient had settled her account before leaving. Then on Wednesday she had received a letter from the practice saying she had been undercharged and needed to pay an additional £25.00.

Heavy hearted she continued to scan down her emails and saw one from Kate, a practice manager with whom she had become friendly at the local managers’ group. The subject bar read ‘Congratulations on your new job!’ Pia opened the mail.

Kate ran a large local practice with an excellent reputation. She was always very upbeat and knowledgeable friend. They met in a coffee shop at 1pm. After an additional £25.00.

Heavy hearted she continued to scan down her emails and saw one from Kate, a practice manager with whom she had become friendly at the local managers’ group. The subject bar read ‘Congratulations on your new job!’ Pia opened the mail.

Kate ran a large local practice with an excellent reputation. She was always very upbeat and knowledgeable friend. They met in a coffee shop at 1pm. After an additional £25.00.

Heavy hearted she continued to scan down her emails and saw one from Kate, a practice manager with whom she had become friendly at the local managers’ group. The subject bar read ‘Congratulations on your new job!’ Pia opened the mail.

Kate ran a large local practice with an excellent reputation. She was always very upbeat and knowledgeable friend. They met in a coffee shop at 1pm. After an additional £25.00.

Heavy hearted she continued to scan down her emails and saw one from Kate, a practice manager with whom she had become friendly at the local managers’ group. The subject bar read ‘Congratulations on your new job!’ Pia opened the mail.

Kate ran a large local practice with an excellent reputation. She was always very upbeat and knowledgeable friend. They met in a coffee shop at 1pm. After an additional £25.00.
Pia nodded her head and Kate went on to say, “Don’t tell me anything about the problems you are having. Just let’s accept that there are problems and rather than getting bogged down in them, I strongly advise you to direct that time and energy toward creating solutions.

In my experience it’s always a case of cause and effect. One cause will result in multiple effects; so when the single cause is managed so too are the multiple effects.”

Pia sipped at her cappuccino and looked at Kate who continued: “Effective businesses management begins with a definition of the purpose of the business. You need to be clear about what the practice wants to achieve. This definition will be the practice’s objectives. Then based upon this definition, you can determine the most effective ways to bring those objectives to fruition. This will involve creating clear, agreed policies and procedures.”

Pia thought for a while and said: “It sounds like a plan”.

“Well”, he replied, “It’s a business plan, does the practice have a business plan?”

“They said they have one, but I have not seen it”, replied Pia.

Kate continued: “In my mind the business plan is the most essential document for practice management. The role of a practice manager is to progress the practice smoothly and effectively to secure the objectives set out for the next one, three, and five years”.

Pia decided that when she got back to work she would ask the partners for a copy of the business plan and see what they came up with.

By 2pm Pia was back at her desk. Following her chat with Kate she felt much more positive and was beginning to see the way forward. When she had the business plan to work from she would be able to get grips with what she needed to do.

At the end of the afternoon session she asked one of the partners, Hugo Hope, if she could have a word with him before he left. He agreed and entered her office (which was also the staff room). “I won’t tell you anything about the problems you are having. Just let’s accept that there are problems and rather than getting bogged down in them, I strongly advise you to direct that time and energy toward creating solutions. In my experience it’s always a case of cause and effect. One cause will result in multiple effects; so when the single cause is managed so too are the multiple effects.”

Pia told her first business plan and Kate explained that she had professional help from a company who came into the practice and in a practice meeting to help them to produce the initial plan, from then on they were able to keep up-to-date by conducting regular reviews. Pia now needs to convince her employers that the cost of engaging a dental consultant, to help them to develop their first business plan would be an excellent investment which would see an excellent return.

On Monday morning Pia spoke to the partners, who gave her the green light to research the market and seek out the most appropriate service provider to work with them to develop their business plan. The one provider that stood out to her was MINT Nationwide, who would spend the morning with the management team and the afternoon engaging the team to play their individual roles in the success of their practice.

Contact info
Specifically chosen qualifications for dental professionals are available from centres around Britain and in home learning formats from MINT Nationwide.

See www.mintnationwide.co.uk

Advanced Defence Sensitive blocks 92% of dentine tubules in just 6 rinses in vitro

Introducing the first in a new expert range from LISTERINE® – a twice-daily mouthwash built on potassium oxalate crystal technology that blocks dentine tubules deeply for lasting protection from sensitivity.1,2

In just six rinses Advanced Defence Sensitive blocks 92% of dentine tubules; twice as many as the leading recommended pastes.3,4

It can be used alone for lasting protection,2 or in combination with the most recommended paste from the leading sensitivity brand, to significantly increase the number of tubules the paste blocks in vitro.3,4

References
2. Relief of Hypersensitivity, DOF 4 – 2012.

* Based on % hydraulic conductance reduction

Recommend Advanced Defence Sensitive for expert care when you’re not there

Do not recommend this product if patients have a history of kidney disease, hyperoxaluria, kidney stones or malabsorption syndrome, or take high doses of vitamin C (1000mg or more per day).