Practice Management

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 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 hour of chatting she continued to talk to a supportive, knowledgeable friend. They met up in a coffee shop at 1pm. After their initial greetings, when they sat down Kate said to Pia: “You look worn out” Pia agreed and said that she felt worn out. Kate went on to say: “Can I offer you some advice and demonstrations of the latest dental products, technology and services.

More than 350 UK and international suppliers (including 100 new for 2013) will offer advice and demonstrations of the latest dental products, technology and services.

More free education Learn from inspirational speakers including Maurice Salama, Ron Jackson, Sylvie Sturrock, Gary Takacs, Paulo Malo who will cover key subjects such as implant aesthetics, direct composites, total rehabilitation with the ‘All-on-4 Concept’ and a blueprint for team building.

More CPD Full-day conference programmes for every member of the dental team, plus mini-theatres presented by the Association of Dental Implantology (ADI) and the British Society of Periodontology (BSP). A bigger Live Surgery and a full range of hands-on, clinical and business workshops.

More networking With over 6,000 dental professionals expected, longer conference break times will mean plenty of networking with colleagues, peers and friends throughout the day, and at Friday’s delegate reception.

Don’t miss!

Friday 1st March – Maurice Salama
Saturday 2nd March – Paulo Malo

Visit www.thedentistryshow.co.uk/DentalTribune or call 01635 588 482.

More for dentists

More for the whole team

All this, and it’s for FREE!

Please note, places for certain sessions are limited for 2013, so please register TODAY for your FREE place!

Visit www.thedentistryshow.co.uk/DentalTribune or call 01635 588 482.
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.”

“Yes”, said Kate, “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 to 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. He agreed and entered her office (which was also the staff room). “I won’t enter her office (which was before he left. He agreed and could have a word with him could get a copy of the practice business plan”, said Pia.

“Well”, he replied, “The thing is that although Jon-Luke and I have discussed business plan type stuff, we have never actually gone so far as to commit it to paper. In short, I guess the plan is to survive.”

What do you think Pia should do?

Pia was disappointed, yet hopeful. She was beginning to see how she could improve the practice. Her next project would be to get the practice’s business plan up and running as the basis for making sweeping improvements.

At home that night she searched the Internet and found a range of proformas. But how could she create a business plan without the required skills and knowledge? She decided to call Kate, to ask her how she had produced 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.

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

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.1,4

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.4,5

* Based on % hydraulic conductance reduction

References

Contact info
Specialist: Nationally recognised qualifications for dental professionals are available from centres around Britain and its home learning formats from MINT Nationwide.
See www.mintnationwide.co.uk.

Recommended for expert care when you’re not there.