

10 Tips to Creating Rock Star Employees Who Will Become More Than One Hit Wonders



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Do you want to know the little known secrets to keeping your employees happy *and* motivated at the office? Is finding and growing the best possible employees important to your practice?

In this resource guide, you'll discover **the best (and easiest) ways to make your employees rock stars** who will take your practice to the next level.

Hiring good employees can be tough. Keeping good employees can be even tougher. It can be a devastating blow to lose a member of the team whom you have invested in and whom you count on day to day to help run your practice.

Let's get started



1. Training

Does your office conduct training for new hires? Not just the “here’s what you’ll be doing and how to do it” training; but the “here’s how we expect you to act and thrive in our culture” training.

Nothing can be harder than getting thrown into a new role without fully understanding expectations. Properly training employees helps:

- Manage expectations
- Increase efficiency
- Improve outcomes

Training shouldn’t be reserved for new hires exclusively. The doctor and clinical staff are often pursuing additional training like CME credits throughout the year, but your administrative and support staff are sometimes overlooked.

A few examples of low-cost trainings that can pay off big:

Customer Service Training

Overall patient experience is one of the most critical factors contributing to your practice’s bottom line. More than 75% of your patient interactions are with support staff and not one-on-one with a clinician or physician.

Establishing regular customer service training for your staff can be the difference between satisfied patients and dissatisfied ones. And, properly training your staff as to why and how the patient experience effects your practice will help lead to necessary buy-in by employees.

Training doesn’t need to be formal and boring.

- Make it fun.
- Intertwine it with day-to-day operations.
- Create a contest.
- Recognize exceptional customer service.



Social Media Training

Although most practices don't allow employees to have access to social media on their computers (heck, some don't even provide email to employees), more often than not, your employees are still looking at their social accounts on their mobile phone (we know, this could *never* be the case in your office).

Rather than fight it, consider embracing it.

A few years back, we had an orthopaedic client who decided to enter a local social media contest. It was called 'Social Media Madness'. And yes, it was madness. Our client won the local contest (they're in a major local media market so it was no small feat) and we went on to place 8th nationally. We learned a ton about social engagement including what worked and what didn't.

During the heat of the contest when it was neck to neck with some big players, one thing was extremely clear: Employee engagement was our differentiator. The practice has over 150 employees and their reach on social media and their buy-in and highly competitive enthusiasm for winning this contest gave us the extra momentum we needed to win.

Every day, we would encourage employees to:

- Check-in on their smart phone (boom, that gave us huge reach socially)
- Like and share photos (another boom, that gave us tons of brand reach)
- Share ideas (ideas can be hard to come by, so this was very helpful)

The point is, employee engagement was the game changer. Plus, it created a positive energy throughout the practice and engaged everybody in the process. Our teams were engaged and the result was:

- Contagious enthusiasm,
- Increased social media reach and
- Branding that resulted in more than a million new impressions for the practice (most of which didn't cost a penny)



Sales Training

Your employees don't sell anything, so why offer them sales training?

Because training employees in sales will help you become profitable.

Sure, we'd all like to think that our practice doesn't 'sell' anything but with the squeeze on healthcare profitability, that's just not the case.

Ancillary services and products are now a part of every smart practice and your employees need to fully understand how to sell them.

- An orthopaedic practice might offer in-house MRI and physical therapy, DME products and even items like orthopaedic flip-flops.
- We work with a board certified ophthalmologist who also offers laser hair removal, injectables, medical grade skin peels and full spa services.
- Chiropractors sometimes offer monthly wellness plans, spa services and even skin care products.
- An ENT practice might offer adult and pediatric services and even facial cosmetic and reconstruction.

The fact is, everybody is selling something and it's important that your staff understand this and have the necessary training (not just how to sell, but you should train them on what you offer and how the products work as well).

In fact, when it comes to cosmetics, fillables, facials, laser hair removal, etc. we encourage you to offer these services to your employees free of charge once in a while so that they fully appreciate how the products work and what the patient is going to experience.

2. Engagement

You pay them, so what more is there?



We already shared with you how employee engagement was the big differentiator in our social madness obsession a few years back. However, we just can't stress it enough, because it was.

Employees are your rock stars! They are your greatest asset. When they love coming to work, they are your biggest cheerleaders. When they feel they are part of your family, they want you to succeed.

If you can engage your employees, it *will* affect your bottom line. Here are just a few ideas:

- **Share what you have going on.** Sounds simple, yes. But it doesn't always happen. Tell your employees how your marketing team is focusing on improving your online reputation when patients leave a positive or negative review.

Explain (as in train them) how these reviews spread and how social media works. Once an employee understands and can see for themselves, then they are much more likely to become engaged. And if they don't become engaged, then you'll see for yourself which employees are in it for the long-haul and who is there just collecting a paycheck.

- **Ask for feedback (and, implement suggestions when applicable).** Another simple idea but one that is often overlooked. Asking for employee feedback doesn't need to be a gripe session, although sometimes it is good to blow off a little steam.

Feedback doesn't have to be face to face either. We'll show you how to put together a nicely packaged employee email survey later (we're working on it now).

3. Reward & 4. Recognition

By this point you've asked your employees to participate in social media, upsell your ancillary services and provide honest feedback for improving the practice,



right? So what do you do next for all their hard work? You find a unique way to reward them.

Now, some of you might be thinking, “we give them a job and a paycheck – that should be good enough.” And if that’s what you’re thinking, then you should just save yourself another few minutes and stop reading now.

Rewarding your employees isn’t necessarily about money. More often than not, it’s about recognition and making people feel like they matter. And guess what? Employees do matter. Big time!

Here are a couple of ideas for rewarding and recognizing your employees for a job well done:

Recognition

- **Establish a monthly employee recognition program.** Let your employees recognize each other for helping one another or for delivering outrageous customer service.

The same orthopaedic client referenced earlier has a clever program they put together a few years back where they recognize employees for a job well done. They call it the ‘Bones’ program. It isn’t so much the program that makes it fun (it’s your standard employee incentive program), but rather the delivery of the recognition that makes it memorable.

Each month they deliver little plastic ‘bones’ on the back of a remote control car to the employee being recognized. In the back office, you’ll hear the car revving up and driving up and down the aisle of cubicles until it reaches its destination (usually with a big crash) to deliver the bone. Employees collect bones for prizes but more than that, the delivery of the monthly program provides a few moments of levity to the often stressful and tedious grind of back office operations.

- **Employee recognition days.** Every year there’s a holiday (usually in April) set aside to recognize your employees. Make a big deal of it (this means putting a few dollars in your marketing budget to make this happen).



This doesn't have to be fancy or difficult. It just has to be meaningful. Our suggestion is simple: Order lunch and give your employees something from the practice:

- A lunchbox with your logo on it
- A water bottle with your logo on it
- A tote bag with your logo on it

Get the picture here (and don't forget to take pictures, btw)? Feed them *and* give them something. But give them something that's going to give back to the practice. Your gift should be a utility item that everybody needs and will use.

Invest in a quality item that people will use and your employees will help market your practice to the general public day in, day out.

- **Money.** Everybody loves an end of year bonus – enough said.

5. Promotion

There's no greater way to reward an employee than by offering them a promotion – more pay and more responsibilities. The fact is, promoting employees from within is less expensive and easier than finding somebody new (and finding somebody who blends well with your work family).

When you do promote an employee:

- Change their title or put them into a new role.
- Use it as an opportunity to recognize that employee.
- A quick email or memo to the rest of the team letting them know of the change goes a long way.
- Share with the rest of your employees why this person was promoted and what their new role will be. This gives other employees who may have ambitions to take on more responsibility themselves, and to double down on their efforts because there is hope for them as well.



6. Team Work

We all have our individual roles, but these roles also contribute to the success or failure of the entire team (i.e., the practice itself). Encouraging teamwork improves overall operations and ultimately, overall patient satisfaction.

Be mindful that not everybody grew up playing on a 'team'. Some kids played individual sports and aren't necessarily comfortable working in a team environment.

A fun, and often productive, exercise is to try to better understand the personality types who make up your team. Big companies use assessments as part of the hiring process, but there's no reason that your smaller practice can't use them as well.

Understanding personalities of your team members may help in the hiring and promotion process. You want to build a strong team with complimentary traits vs. fill your office with a bunch of like-minded drones.

Here are a few websites who offer rather inexpensive personality tests you might find helpful:

GallupStrengthsCenter.com

MyersBriggs.org

7. Branding

We touched on this just a little with employee appreciation gifts but we need to drive the point home.

Your employees are your brand and if you train and reward them properly, they will become your biggest brand advocates. They literally will go out into the world (after work of course) and market your practice for you.

Make sure your employees understand what your practice is all about – your philosophy if you will. Employees should understand:



- The history of the practice including why these doctors came together in the first place;
- Why your doctors originally chose to pursue medicine including their specialty (usually because they wanted to help people or because of something personal in their upbringing);
- The story you want told in the community (it should be the same story you're your telling and living in the office. 'Walk the talk' type of thing)

Equip your employees with silent tools to help them be your brand advocates.

Do your employees wear scrubs on a daily basis in your office? Do you require a uniform? If you answered yes, then put your logo on everything.

Why? Because your employees are only at work 8 hours each day. And, before work they are dropping their kids off at school and maybe running into the convenient store for coffee. At lunch, they are running errands and going out to restaurants. After work, they're hitting the grocery store and probably running more errands.

Every errand or appointment they go to is an opportunity for somebody out there to see your practice name and interact with your best brand advocate.

8. Investment

Once you have employees who are worth keeping, it's time to invest in their development.

We're not suggesting that you pay for them to go out there and get a college degree, but incentivizing and rewarding them to improve themselves will pay off for you as much as it will for them.

Encourage employees to become experts in their role and to seek out continuing education. Then, recognize and reward them when they do.



Invest in good employees and in good behavior. Investments can be made in time and in money. Investing an hour or two in mentoring an employee can go a long way toward employee morale and toward employees investing their energy back into the success of the practice.

Investing a few dollars to help offset the cost of continuing education can help build employee loyalty that will pay off for years to come.

9. Work Space

We've all seen what happens to employee morale when a new, comfortable work chair is introduced. In fact, we get a chuckle when we walk into a back office and see signs on chairs indicating whom they belong to and what will happen if they disappear.

New computers have the same effect (and mouse pads, new hands free head sets, free branded polo shirts, special parking spaces, new desks, etc.). The fact is, your office is your second home.

Investing in some home improvements once in a while goes a very, very long way in improving and heightening employee morale.

10. Philanthropy

Chances are, your practice gives money or time to specific charities. Usually it's something that the doctors are passionate about. Or, it's something that the person who controls the purse strings is passionate about.

Consider making your practice's charitable efforts also about what your employees are passionate about. Engaging and supporting your employee's passions will go a very long way towards establishing your employees as:

- Raving brand advocates and enthusiastic fans
- Loyal soldiers who will go into battle if need be
- Contagious story tellers
- Rock stars who will sing your praises for years to come



When you find a way to tap into employee passion, great things can happen as a result.

Now What?

Understandably, some of these tips are easier to implement than others. So, take one of the easy ones, come up with a plan and talk it over with a colleague. See what they think and if they have any ideas to make it better. Then, implement it.

Start small and work your way up to creating a culture that appreciates and rewards employees on a regular basis. The results will be like music to your ears from your new favorite rock stars.