Three Characteristics of Ideal Medical Practice Staff

When hiring for your medical practice, you want staff to treat patients as if they were the patient themselves. Here are three traits to look for.

Source: Physicians Practice

Recently, I went to two medical appointments. Both practices were inside a local hospital. I am fine. Thank you for wondering. But I thought I would write and give you my impressions of my visits.

My first visit was to a specialist’s office, I had visited once previously. My appointment was for 2:20 p.m. and I arrived about five minutes early. I walked up to the receptionist and she asked me if she could help me, without a smile, in a totally unfriendly, sarcastic voice. Trying to be very pleasant, I told her my name and said I had a 2:20 p.m. appointment with so and so. The next thing out of her mouth was a question about my insurance in the same grumpy tone. Then I was told I could have a seat in the waiting room.

Well, the more I thought about what had transpired the greater the effect she had on me. I went from being in a very good mood to a semi-bad one. I thought it might of been me but then noticed she treated everyone she came into contact with the same way: technicians, the janitor, someone in a lab coat who may have been a resident.

Around 3 p.m., I was finally informed that the physician I was scheduled to see was in emergency surgery. With another appointment at 3:30 p.m., I could not wait and was told to come back afterward. If I couldn’t be seen then, the practice would reschedule my visit. Can anyone see where I am going with this story?

If you do not like people or do not care about others, do not take a job working at a physician’s office. If you have personal problems, leave them at home. If you don’t want to be around sick people, find another type of work. If you have a personality disorder, don’t go into a job where you have to work with others. I’m sorry; I am not trying just to vent here.

Your practice doesn’t need someone like this office’s receptionist on its payroll. Nor does any business. She will cost this doctor or practice lots of money before she leaves her job unless she is supervised and trained correctly. And if she does not change her performance then corrective action needs to be implemented using progressive steps of discipline. That is what human resources people call covering yourself in order to fire someone. But maybe, she should never have been hired. This was the second time I had been to this physician’s office and she had the same attitude both times. You really need to hire the right people to represent yourself and your company to the public; or you will lose patients and money.

Let’s talk about some key things you want to look for in a person when hiring them for a position like this. You need to hire someone who is:

• **Empathetic.** You can talk with your employees and help them see that their role is important to the health and welfare of other people. Make them understand how they would feel if they were sick and went somewhere for care and were treated badly. Ask them to empathize with the people they come into contact with. Make sure they understand that it is an important part of the job.

• **A good listener.** Empathy requires listening. Empathetic people listen attentively to what you’re telling them, putting their complete focus on the person in front of them and not getting easily distracted by what’s on their monitor or telephone. They spend more time listening than talking because they want to understand the difficulties others face, all of which helps to give those around them the feeling of being heard and recognized.

• **A happy person.** When you hire people for positions where they will be interacting with patient, hire those people who genuinely seem happy and have good personalities. This may be hard since most people you interview will be trying to say and do whatever it takes to land the job, but with some experience you will be able to judge who is truly a happy person. And there are psychological questionnaires that can be used to help you ascertain what people’s personalities are like and what motivates them.

Next week, I will finish telling you about what happen at my second appointment and why I think
people act badly in customer service positions.

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