

Development of Practice Managers & Staff

By

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The Development of Practice Managers

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The Practice Manager

- Must be defined to meet the **definition of the practice**
 - The practice sets the pace based upon the willingness of the owner to give up control.
 - **Control** is the determining factor, accompanied with the other buzzword roles of **accountability** and **empowerment**.

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The Practice Manager

- A practice manager may function by title as a manager but, in reality, may be a handmaiden or groom for the dictates of the practice owner
- There are varying degrees of application within practices

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Levels of Practice Management

- Three basic levels:
 - Office Manager
 - Practice Manager
 - Hospital Administrator
 - May be a layperson or may be a veterinarian surgeon

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The Hospital Administrator

- The senior-most doctor
- Responsibilities:
 - Medical
 - Surgical
 - Financial
- Takes on the role of some of the administration

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The Hospital Director & The Practice Manager

Continued...

- Contingent on the hospital director's ability to give up the reins, the practice manager may function with substantial authority, burdening accountability, and with unquestionable empowerment.

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The Hospital Director & The Practice Manager

Continued...

- This blurring of responsibility title and accountability causes great trouble within practices.
- Practice managers may have a hard time in giving control to a person whose own paycheck is not affected in the same manner as their own.

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An Example

- A mistake by an employee may be met with an articulated contrition for the error.
- However, the employee is still standing in line every two weeks with hands outstretched for payment.
- The mistake is not sustained by the perpetrator, but rather the practice owner.
- The owner may be doling out paychecks for all employees, yet not have enough capital at the moment to pay his/her own check.

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Background of the Practice Manager

- The practice manager may have better background in the academic disciplines of business than the practice owner.
- However, the application of that knowledge may not have the same intensity as multiple decades of experience that the practice owner has endured from the school of hard knocks.

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Development

- The primary stumbling block in the development of the practice manager centers in the willingness of the hospital director and the practice owner to relinquish the range of authority.

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Entry level educational requirements
- Continuing education costs
- Employment-based responsibilities
- Liaison activities with the practice's chartered accountant
- Interpersonal skills

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Development of practice diplomacy in dealing with clients, staff, and practice owners
- Collection competencies
- Computer literacy
- Cross-training abilities

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Respect for documentation and required detailing exacted by governmental entities
- Enforcement of compliance requirements for employment issues
- Anticipation, vision, and planning in the budgeting process

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Competencies in facility management and expansion
- Wizardry of scheduling
- Balancing of alternate agendas by practice owners
- Development of contingency planning

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Willingness to maintain current status through multiple professional journals and publications
- Marketing and practice furtherance activities
- Promotion and public relations
- Competency in the accounting model

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Development of a Practice Manager: *Further Considerations*

- Development of staff through staff training and continuing education
- Establishment, monitoring, and enforcement of internal control procedures

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