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Making the decision to use a practice management program can be a big one for any practice, but for us there was an additional factor that held us back. We had worked with a consulting firm in the past, but it was a total failure, so I was hesitant to try anything new. However, when I received a call from Silkin offering a free practice evaluation, it was just at a time when my office was struggling with its productivity. We had three consecutive months of down numbers and we weren't sure what was causing the change or what we needed to do to turn things around.

During the evaluation, the Silkin analyst asked us many questions, which led to our understanding about how things had fallen out of place. The analyst was thorough and careful and he was able to see what made us tick and why we weren't doing as well as we had in the past. We hadn't realized the cumulative effect, because things changed so gradually, but with the Silkin analyst asking all the right questions, we were able to get a clearer perspective about our situation. It was obvious that the analyst knew what he was talking about, so rather than delay, we decided to move forward.

Just by getting ourselves in gear and rediscovering things we had forgotten, we started looking at things in a new way and things began to change. Then our consultant set about asking us questions we never asked ourselves. Even though we weren't sure about what was at the root of our problems, we could see that our consultant knew how to get to the bottom of our issues. He came up with a detailed plan for us and once we saw it, we knew it would make the difference.

One of the first steps was getting our staff on board. We thought that would be very difficult because staff can be resistant to change. To the contrary, the employees who wanted to do a good job and see the practice improve really took to the program. The process was gradual, and as we took baby steps during the training phase, our practice continued to improve. With easy to follow steps we couldn't go too far off course. But even if we missed a beat, the consultant knew immediately where we went wrong and what prevented us from following through. Getting things done in the proper sequence was the strategy that helped us change. We tackled our issues one by one and eventually it all came together.

In all honesty, I thought I was a good manager when I started the program. Although I tried to delegate well, I simply couldn't do the best job of managing because of everything I had on my plate. I was making more individual decisions about issues than I wanted to and I was spending more time on management than I realized. Once I got the responsibility level distributed, my stress level went down and I got to do more of what I wanted to do – practice dentistry!. Today, I no longer have to pay attention to typical bumps in the road as our office manager now has the tools to handle the details. As a result of our using the Silkin program our numbers are up all around and things are back on track. Personally, I was concerned about recovering the cost of a management program, but I recouped the investment in 6-8 weeks. Just getting back up to our previous level of production paid for the program many times over.

Basically it comes down to organizing a practice correctly. Each of us has our own ability to do certain things well, but there is a finite level to that and you can't do everything yourself. Once we implemented the Silkin principles, the practice became so much more fun. Today, our staff is happy, I'm happy, we're more productive, and in the end we're able to help our patients in a way we never could before. Just increasing income isn't the point of a practice, but it opened the way for me to do other things, such as supporting the causes I believe, taking a more active leadership role within the community and creating a better life for those around me. Without question, the Silkin system gave me the freedom to achieve all that and much more.

If you'd like to make the most of your practice and improve your professional and personal quality of life, find out more about the Silkin free practice evaluation and the solutions they have to offer. You'll be glad you did!

Sincerely,

Lee Sheldon, D.M.D.