

Good Intentions...Lack of Follow-through

By Art Deden

In this article, I am going to outline some suggestions for taking action. We will talk about: ***planning ahead, prioritizing, delegating,*** and, finally, ***getting your team involved.***

A good example of where unrealized intentions often show up is when it comes to attending workshops. You attend a fabulous seminar, learn some really great tools to use in your practice and you make a decision to implement them the Monday you get back into the office. But as the weekend stretches into the following week, the level of motivation is gone. Why is that?

Are you somebody that falls into that trap? Do you find yourself setting out with some really good intentions saying, “I’m going to do that in our firm” and then watch that intention lose steam along with your enthusiasm it had in the first place? Do you often wonder what happened? What went wrong? Well, if you do, keep reading.

The first positive step you can take toward change is to **PLAN AHEAD**. Before attending any seminar or workshop, sit down and ask yourself, ***“what do I hope to get out of this workshop? What are the things I hope to learn?”*** If you make a list of your learning goals – the odds of taking away some really valuable information you can use in your organization...and in your life... will increase exponentially.

Once you decided what it is you want to get from the seminar, determine what aspects you want to use. At this point you need to **PRIORITIZE** those action items. Determine which have the highest priority and rank order them. It’s what Steven Covey calls “Do First things First.” By **prioritizing** your list of action items and implementing them in this order, the tasks won’t seem so overwhelming or daunting to you and your team.

The next powerful way to take action is to **DELEGATE**. When you find something you want implemented in your organization, consider assigning someone to “champion” this task. Remember, to explain what you hope to accomplish – what the end result looks like. You also need to make sure you provide them with the support and resources they will need to accomplish the task. In addition, you need to give them a completion date so the project doesn’t fade into ***whenever.*** Lastly, you must require them to provide up-dates on the progress they are making to ensure it all stays on-track. Giving someone the responsibility not only lends credence to the item, it helps you and the rest of your team stay motivated and focused as well.

Another practical suggestion is to **GET YOUR Team INVOLVED**. Many seminars may provide the audio version of the workshop. If they do, buy the program, carve out some time in your schedule to watch/listen to the workshop and discuss the value, not only to the practice and your patients, but to the team as well. They need to know what's in it for them. My experience suggests that Team members will most always follow the dentist's lead if they feel the dentist is behind the effort and is willing to see-it-through.

So, if you have problems in follow-through use these four simple steps: ***plan ahead, prioritize, delegate, and get others involved***, to help keep you on track.

Change your mindset from being an intender to a DOER. Give thoughts to the outcomes you want to achieve, become a better planner, delegate more, implement and measure your results. Involve your team. Leave the "candy bar" crisis behind.

If you'd like to learn more about taking action, I'd be happy to talk to you about your challenges. You can visit my website at www.vista-practice.com or email me at art@vista-practice.com.