Managerial Skills for The Physician

How to Be an Effective Manager and a Leader

Mohamed Yassin, MD, FAAAAI, FACAAI

Allergy, Asthma, & Pulmonary Associates
Saint Cloud, MN
(320) 654-8266
Disclosure

Nothing to disclose

Why Is It Important to Be an Effective Manager?

• “People don’t leave businesses, they leave managers”
• Employee turn over is expensive, emotionally draining for the physician and staff, and results in less than perfect patient care
• The employee long longevity under an effective manager results in a feeling of ownership and promotes the “proud family” work ethic
• If effective management is lacking, the staff will lose motivation, enthusiasm, and productivity
Why Is It Important to Be an Effective Manager?

• Work becomes fun and your best days will be Mondays (it is the best feeling 😊)
• The office will run efficiently
• Staff will help each other, and the manager does not have to say a word
• Financially rewarding

Responsibilities of an Effective Manager

• Staff productivity
• Support each staff and bring out the best in each one
• Understand staff individual strength
• Motivate and encourage “appropriate” individual growth
What takes to be an Effective Manager

• You can’t be what you don’t know
• Continuous learning is essential
• Constant refining of your communication skills to achieve the best relationship within your staff (they should function like a soccer team)
• Invest your time in the personal staff development, but remember not all staff needs are the same

What takes to be an Effective Manager

• You can’t be an effective manager without building a team
• No place for the energy suckers among your staff (too much drama, constantly complaining, or are an emotional wreck)
• Don’t tolerate working with a “toxic” staff member, will make it impossible to build a team
• Move away from the thinking “I just need a body”
• Retain the best employees and “selectively” build the team around them
What takes to be an Effective Manager

• **Listen**
  • DEVELOP the ability to listen and understand the wants, needs, and concerns of your staff
  • Listening to your staff empowers them to feel they have a voice and their opinion counts
  • Listening is important but don’t turn your office to become “New York Penn station,” you set the time to listen

What takes to be an Effective Manager

• **Communicate clearly**
  • Good communication is very essential quality of an effective manager
  • Learn how to communicate clearly before you start delegating
  • Being a strong communicator will make your job easier to motivate and build up your staff
  • Strong communication is not just the ability to speak to your staff, but it is to empower the staff to speak to each other
What takes to be an Effective Manager

• Make decisions
  • Being decisive is a fundamental quality of an effective manager
  • Effective managers give clear directions and make key decisions
  • Take the time to think before you speak and have clear vision to guide your decisions
  • Inability to make key decisions results in poor management and the lack of staff trust

What takes to be an Effective Manager

• Learn, teach your staff, then empower and trust
  • If you are micromanaging, you are going the wrong direction
  • You need to educate your staff, empower them, delegate and trust
  • Trusting your staff doesn’t mean you don’t check on their work
  • In larger groups and multispecialty clinics, it is essential to foster respect and trust among all assistant managers and leaders of the different sections
What takes to be an Effective Manager

• Protect your staff
• Take responsibilities of the successes and failures of the entire staff
• Mention the successes before the failures
• Remember, leading from the front when things get tough is highly effective and your staff will feel protected

What takes to be an Effective Manager

• Be a good example
• The staff need to respect you professionally
• Always better yourself and prove skills and knowledge
• Never speak down about a patient otherwise your staff will do the same
• Don’t say anything bad about an employee if he/she is not present
• Compliment in the open and correct/educate behind doors
Thank you
Managerial Skills for the Physician: Setting Priorities

Christina E. Ciaccio MD MSc
cciaccio@bsd.uchicago.edu

Understanding Daily Tasks
Organizing Tasks

• Bullet Journal
• Smart phone notes
• Desktop notes
• Software
  • Microsoft OneNote
  • Trello
  • Google Docs
  • Evernote
  • Asana
  • Many more…

Schedule Tasks

• Types
  • Personal schedule/calendar
  • Family schedule/calendar
  • Patient schedule/calendar
  • Office schedule/calendar
• Solutions
  • Smart phone
  • Desktop
  • Paper
  • Tablet
Types of Tasks

- Incidentals or Reactionary
- Routines
- Projects
- Problems

Routines

- Sets of recurring tasks
- Bulk of our day-to-day activities
- Examples
  - Seeing patients
  - Daily huddle
  - Calibrating spirometer
- May have a checklist; maybe automatic (but not on a to-do list)
Routines

- **Problem**
  - Exploits our insecurities
  - Tasks become routine that do not need to be
  - Micromanaging
  - Can become not enjoyable (burnout)

- **Solutions**
  - Can someone else can do a routine task
  - Should this task be routine
  - If it is very unenjoyable, should you make a major change

Problems

- Issues that stop us in our tracks
- Take precedence over everything
- (Hopefully) relatively small number
- **Examples:**
  - COVID!
  - Ran out of skin testing supplies
  - Too many call offs in one day
Problems

• Problems
  • Can become all consuming
  • Can lead to burnout

• Solutions
  • Anticipate problems
  • Have back up plans (plan B, plan C)
  • Empower others to handle problems
  • Phone a friend/Don't reinvent the wheel

Incidental or Reactionary

• One-time tasks
• Short time to complete
• Easy to do
• Examples
  • Respond to voicemail, email, text
  • Replace a lightbulb in otoscope
  • Communicate an update to the clinic team
• Perfect for a running “to-do” list!
• Often get done quickly even if they are low priority
Incidental or Reactionary

- Problems
  - All-consuming
  - Eat away time
  - Are not fun
  - Minimally productive
  - Get in the way of more important and more fun tasks

Projects

- Big, one-time jobs
- Often **high priority** to improve day-to-day life
- Requires focused efforts over a sustained period of time
- Examples:
  - Implementing (new) EMR
  - Office renovation
- **Are frequently postponed because time has been eaten up by incidentals and routines**
- If projects are neglected, they can become problems
Reducing Incidentals

- Create algorithms for email inbox
- Remove email from smart phone or limit hours that you check
- Be strategic with social media
- Do not default all incidentals to yourself! (Delegate, delegate, delegate)
- Outsource what you can
- Consider a technology free day
- Set a timer when on the internet (Avoid rabbit holes!)

Prioritizing Projects

- Create a “wish list” of projects
- Engage your team in prioritizing
- Understand value of each project (not all monetary)
- Monitor progress of projects; dismiss projects that are not progressing
Implementing Projects

• Block time on your calendar; or time on someone’s calendar
• Compile your tools
  • Schedule
  • File sharing/communication
  • Data collection
• Turn off (almost) all forms of communication
• Engage a team
• Keep it enjoyable (marathon; not a sprint)
• Consider a weekly tech holiday
• Treat yourself
Cultivating a Positive Work Environment

Priya Bansal, MD, FAAAI

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Disclosures

• Nothing related to this discussion to disclose.
“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don’t play together, the club won’t be worth a dime.”

Babe Ruth
Why do we care about a positive work culture?

• Positive work cultures encourage happier employees.
  • Happier employees are in general more productive and encourage a more productive atmosphere in the office.
  • Happier employees are more likely to stick around. This means less interviewing/hiring and more continuity of care.

• Positive work cultures encourage collaboration.
  • Collaborative employees get to know their coworkers, share ideas, solve problems together and are more efficient

• Positive work cultures encourage creativity.
  • Creativity allows individuals of all levels to express their opinion and contribute to positive change.
Negative Behaviors

• Taking credit for someone else’s work
• Being late consistently
• Coming in sick and calling in sick when you are not
• Martyr behavior
• Biting the hand that feeds you
• Burning bridges
• Boasting
• Not communicating clearly
• Lying
Building a Positive Culture

• Set and promote your company’s goals
  • Consider starting with a mission statement.

• Promote diversity and inclusivity

• Allow for humor-Look on the bright side of things

• Prioritize respect and have a zero tolerance policy
  • Every employee should feel like they can be and are heard.

• Use your employees feedback
  • Some of the most important ideas we have had came from employees that were vested in the practice.
Creating a Positive Culture

• Be flexible
  • Flexible work schedules offer greater happiness and keep employees vested in the company

• Be transparent
  • Transparency promotes open communication and helps employees feel vested.

• Plan social outings
  • These foster meaningful relationships throughout the company.
Cultivating a Positive Culture

• Give positive reinforcement and celebrate wins
  • Fabulous jar
  • I appreciate....

• Encourage random acts of kindness
  • Helping others outside of work
  • Gathering for a coworker

• Change how you respond
  • Watch defensiveness

• Moods are contagious!
References

- https://www.claritywave.com/the-12-worst-things-you-can-do-at-work/
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