

TEAMWORK!

| BY JUDY KAY MAUSOLF

Teamwork! A phrase so often used loosely with so many different assumptions of its meaning!

According to BusinessDictionary.com, teamwork is “the process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal. Teamwork means that people will try to cooperate, using their individual skills and providing constructive feedback, despite any personal conflict between individuals”.

The team part happens pretty easy. Once we belong to a group or organization we automatically become a part of the team. The WORK part of teamwork is not so easy! It takes work to build happy, healthy and high-performing team relationships.

This article is dedicated to the WORK part of teamwork. By the way, this message works for your personal relationships as well.

I have spent years helping teams create happier, healthier, and higher-performing relationships. Successful team relationships don't just happen by accident. They take work just like every relationship. Yet the assumption is that we should all just naturally get along.

COMMUNICATION IS THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL IN TEAMWORK

It would be very difficult to work together as a team for a common purpose without it! The right hand would never know what the left hand was doing nor what was needed or expected. The team's success would be limited to only what each person could accomplish individually.

It is important for the team to create standards on how they would like to communicate with each other and patients to build successful relationships. The work part is the ongoing focus and commitment to support the standards, even when we may not feel like it.

Successful team communication includes:

- **Communicate Clearly.** Clarify expectations by defining who, what, when, where, why and how.
- **Communicate Positively.** Smile at each other and speak in a warm and friendly tone. Avoid negative sarcasm and gossip. Go directly to the source.



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- *Communicate Respectfully.* Always consider how your words may impact the other person. Ask yourself, how can I say what I need to say and be respectful of how they may feel?
 - *Communicate Professionally.* Use words such as yes, no, please and thank you.
 - *Be mindful* of your energy and filter your response.

- *Communication is 7% words, 55% body language and 38% tone of voice.* Never approach another team member with anger or frustration, or you will shut down communication.

- *Communicate and resolve conflict within 24 hours* if possible to lessen frustration and assumptions from building.

COLLABORATION IS THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL NEEDED TO ENABLE THE TEAM TO SUCCESSFULLY WORK TOGETHER

It is important to remember that there is more than one way (our way) to do things. It is our responsibility as a team member to work well with our coworkers. We can make it easy for others to work with us. Collaboration means:

- Sharing thoughts and ideas about what works and what does not.
- Being open (think outside the box creativity) and willing to listen to new and different ideas from others.
- Agreeing on a solution that serves the best interests of the patients, practice, and team instead of any individual.
- Continuing to be flexible and to adjust until you succeed.
- Not taking things personally.
- Supporting your team members. Ask and offer help.

CELEBRATION IS THE THIRD FUNDAMENTAL TO SUCCESSFUL TEAMWORK

It is important to celebrate daily. Even the little things. If our focus is always on the next patient or task we will miss the good in the present moment, and eventually we will lose our joy for our work.

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Celebrate by:

- Looking for and becoming aware of what is positive in the present moment. Right here, right now, what is good?
- Being grateful for what is instead of complaining about what isn't.
- Showing appreciation to your coworkers and your patients.
- Celebrating in the moment with a physical gesture; for example, a big smile, thumbs up, high five or even a Ta-Dah!

Implementing these three core fundamentals will empower your team to WORK together to build happy, healthy and high-performing team relationships.

Contact Judy Kay today if you would like to learn more about how she can help your team WORK together to build a happier, healthier, and higher-performing culture! ■

MEET THE AUTHOR



ASCA SPEAKER

Judy Kay Mausolf is a speaker, author and dental culture specialist. She coaches dentists and their teams on how to become better leaders, communicate effectively, work together, and deliver service with more focus and passion.

She is Past President of National Speakers Association (Minnesota Chapter), Director of Sponsoring Partners for the Speaking Consulting Network, a member of the National Speakers Association, Academy of Dental Management Consultants, and recognized as a leader in consulting by Dentistry Today. She is author of three books: "Delivering W.O.W. Service!", "TA-DAH! And "Rise & Shine!", as well as a contributing author for many dental magazines. She also publishes a monthly newsletter entitled "Show Your Shine".

Judy Kay lives in MN with her awesome husband Steve, who makes her special coffee every morning!

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