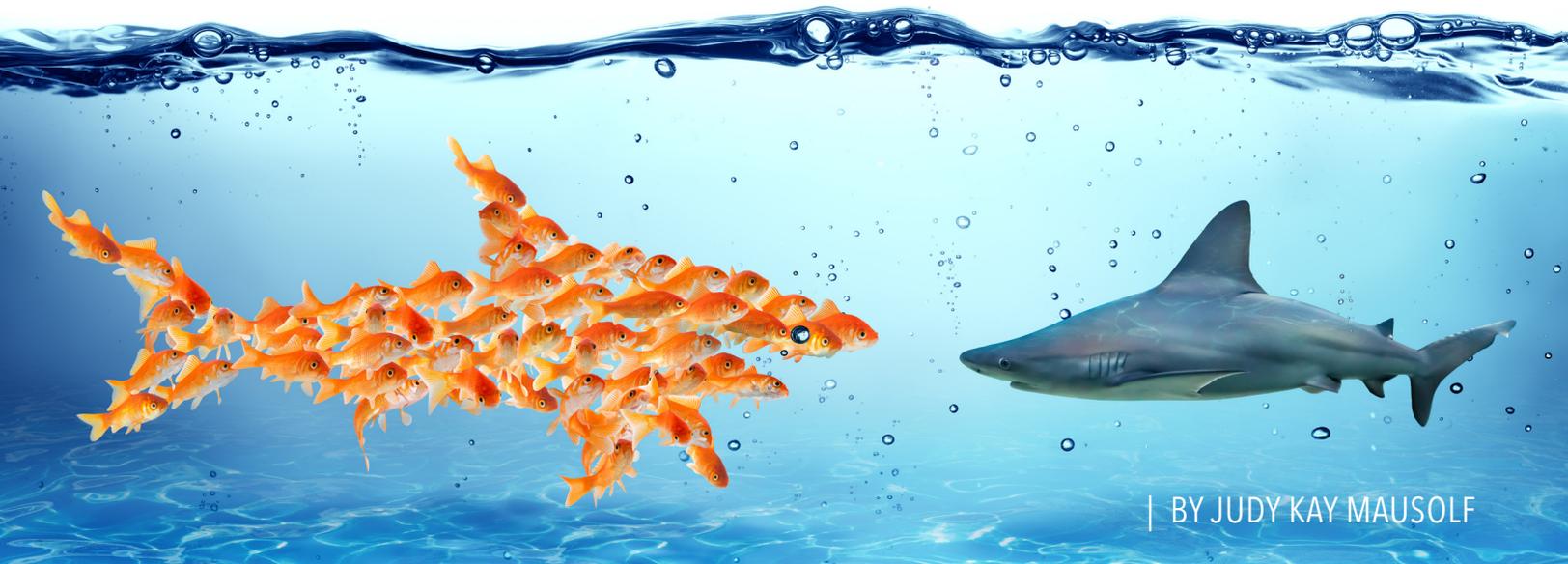


DELEGATION THAT **RAISES** TEAM PERFORMANCE!



| BY JUDY KAY MAUSOLF

I have the awesome privilege of helping dental teams nationwide create a happier, healthier and higher-performing culture. Together we focus on four core competencies, communication, collaboration, celebration and commitment. This message will zero in on delegation, a key aspect of communication that is necessary in developing a high-performing team culture. Positive delegation of performance expectations helps raise team performance.

We want what we want! Yet we often don't ask for what we want and then get upset when we don't receive it. Instead, we stew over it until we reach a level of frustration where we eventually blow up. We can prevent frustration and get what we want by asking for it. However, asking does not mean just blurting out a demand. Asking by using positive delegation is much more effective in getting better results.

Synonyms for delegate are: assign, entrust and transfer. These words do not describe what I usually see happen when I am observing team members. Instead, I often see a lot of telling, ordering and just plain barking commands. The end results are neither

positive nor effective. I teach the following positive delegation process.

THE DELEGATION PROCESS:

- Start out clarifying what you would like to have done. Take the time to explain clearly by defining who, what, when, where, why, and how. We get so busy and in a hurry...we want to dump the information and run. It's what I call a flyby. Avoid flybys! If you don't have time to delegate clearly, wait until you do.
- Ask the receiver of the task what they already have on their plate. It may be necessary to re-prioritize the task list if timing is an issue.
- Ask the receiver of the task if they have any questions about how to complete the task. Answer any questions they may have.
- If it is more than one step, write it down in bullet point objectives.

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- If it is a longer project, schedule check-in times (no, this does not mean you do not trust them... it allows you to assist with feedback if necessary)
- Discuss and agree on a realistic time or date to complete the task. If you don't set a date it will create unclear performance expectations. Without a date it is not a goal; only a dream.

Detailed job descriptions are important, as they create clarity in training and performance expectations. Have you ever asked someone for help only to hear, "it's not my job"? That is a huge pet peeve of mine. You can avoid the phrase "it's not my job" by adding the following statement to all job descriptions. Your job, from the moment you clock in to the moment you clock out, is whatever is *legal, ethical & within your licensure* to help the practice thrive! I suggest reviewing the phrase whenever you are hiring someone new, completing a performance review, or whenever behavior or attitude deems it necessary.

Creating a priority hierarchy also clarifies delegation of performance expectations: when to do what. I utilize the rocks, pebbles and sand analogy. A rock is anything that is important and urgent (needs to be done that day) or else there will be negative consequences for the practice. The biggest rock is always the

patient right in front of us. Everyone helps everyone with their rocks (as long as it is legal, ethical and within their licensure) before going on to their own pebbles and sand. Once all rocks are completed the team member may move on to their pebbles.

Pebbles are also very important but not urgent. Pebbles are never delegated because they can be done another day without affecting the practice negatively. Everyone is responsible for their own pebbles. A pebble can eventually become a rock if left undone based on change in urgency. For example, ordering supplies might become a rock if you must order that day to avoid running out of necessary supplies before they arrive. Even washing uniforms may become a rock if there are none available for the next day and it is close to closing time.

Sand is the filler for open time: cleaning and organizing. Sand is also never delegated. Everyone is responsible for their own. This helps to prevent delegating the things that are less desirable.

Cross-training raises the level of delegation of performance expectations by enabling team members to know how to support each other better. I have found that having clinical and non-clinical team members observe each other goes a long way in raising job awareness. Everyone will feel more empowered to support their co-workers, resulting in a win for the patients, the practice and the team! ■

"If you don't ask for what you want don't be angry when you don't get it!"
~ Judy Kay Mausolf



ASCA SPEAKER

MEET THE AUTHOR

Judy Kay Mausolf, owner and president of Practice Solutions Inc, is a dental prac-

tice management coach, speaker and author. She is a member of the National Speakers Association, Academy of Dental Management Consultants, and Director of Sponsoring Partners for the Speaking Consulting Network and has authored two books: *TA-DAH! Get Happy in 5 Seconds or Less* and *Rise & Shine; An Evolutionary Journey to Get Out of Your Way and On Your Way to Success*.

If you would like to learn more about how Judy Kay Mausolf can help you raise the level of communication in your practice and your life please visit her website at PracticeSolutionsInc.net or email her at JudyKay@PracticeSolutionsInc.net.