

ASSISTANT: WHAT THE DOCTOR LOOKS FOR

Good Traits versus Bad Traits

GOOD TRAITS

Be lively and positive:

You are the first face patients see and you have the ability to help make them feel comfortable and at ease. Figure out what they like to talk about, what is important to them and help take their mind off of what is going on.

Jump in and help where needed:

Always look for what needs to be done, if you see people moving and working around you, you should ask what you can do.

Talkative:

While in the procedures a talkative assistant can be beneficial to help keep the patient's mind off what is going on while the dentist focuses.

Knowing when to talk:

On the flip side, knowing when it is appropriate to talk is also very important. Talking excessively between patients is not appropriate.

Attention to detail:

Dentistry is a detail-oriented field and an assistant that has this trait is beneficial because they will focus on making sure everything is done exactly how it should be done.

Know all procedures:

Fully understanding each procedure you do and in what pattern it needs to be done is a necessity. This ensures that if the procedure needs to change for whatever reason, you will be able to keep up and adjust. This also ensures that if the doctor asks for something wrong or mis-speaks you are able to make suggestions for a smooth and successful procedure.

Allow yourself three weeks:

When starting at your new office allow yourself three weeks to learn everything. During this time, it is vital to do your best to soak up as much as you can. After procedures, approach your doctor and discuss with them everything that happened so you can continue to learn even after the appointment is over.

Be compassionate:

A great trait needed for assistants is that they are compassionate toward patients. This is important because you are the patient's eyes and ears during procedures. If you see something is wrong it is important for you to speak up and make sure they are doing okay at all times.

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TRAITS

GOOD TRAITS

Be a team player:

Beyond being a team with your whole office it is important to value being a team with your doctor as well. You should be proud of what the two of you do every day and make sure you always look out for not only the patient but also the doctor.

Take care of the patient:

During all appointments the patients are always your main concern. Make sure they are calm and collected at all times. If you suspect they are fearful or anxious, do your best to help them get back to a calm place.

Get connected with your doctor:

Feedback is vital to making sure that you are always getting better and progressing. If you know that something could have gone better, make sure to check in with your doctor.

BAD TRAITS

Rolling eyes:

This, along with any sort of attitude, is unacceptable. You are there for the patients and you must resist any urges to roll your eyes, sigh or mutter under your breath.

Not smile enough:

Smiling in the office is necessary to make people feel comfortable as well as making sure you are approachable. It is important to smile when you see patients/coworkers/doctors etc.

Standing around:

During the work day there is always something dental assistants can do, standing around is not a desired trait, have a strong work ethic and look for work to get done when you are without a patient, during breaks in appointments, etc.

Talking during post op instructions:

This is a very important time for the patient and doctor. It requires full attention from the patient to the doctor and the assistant must respect this.