

Drama Policy for the Dental Office

Maintaining a harmonious and drama-free office environment is crucial for the success and well-being of both staff members and patients. As a manager or dentist, it is essential to address and effectively manage any conflicts or drama that may arise. This training document aims to provide strategies and best practices to help you cultivate a positive workplace atmosphere and minimize drama in your dental office.

To effectively combat drama, it is important to recognize its negative impact on the office environment. Drama can lead to decreased productivity, low morale, increased stress, and compromised patient care. Understanding the consequences of drama will motivate you to address and resolve conflicts promptly.

Foster Clear and Open Communication:

- a. Encourage open dialogue: Create an environment where staff members feel comfortable expressing their concerns, ideas, and feedback. Regular team meetings or one-on-one sessions can provide a platform for open communication.
- b. Active listening: Pay attention to staff members' concerns and validate their feelings. Actively listening demonstrates empathy and promotes a culture of trust and respect.

Lead by Example:

- a. Professionalism: Model professional behavior and etiquette in all interactions. Your actions and demeanor set the tone for the office environment.
- b. Conflict resolution: Demonstrate effective conflict resolution skills when addressing conflicts between staff members. Encourage problem-solving and compromise rather than allowing conflicts to escalate.

Implement Clear Policies and Procedures:

- a. Establish office policies: Clearly define expectations, acceptable behavior, and consequences for any breaches of conduct. Communicate these policies to all staff members and ensure they are readily accessible.
- b. Standard operating procedures (SOPs): Develop and implement SOPs for various office processes. SOPs provide clarity, minimize misunderstandings, and reduce potential sources of conflict.

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Promote Team Building and Positive Relationships:

- a. Team-building activities: Organize team-building exercises, workshops, or outings to foster camaraderie and trust among staff members.
- b. Encourage collaboration: Emphasize the importance of teamwork and encourage staff members to work together towards common goals. Foster a sense of belonging and unity within the office.

Conflict Resolution Strategies:

- a. Early intervention: Address conflicts promptly to prevent them from escalating further. Identify the root cause of the conflict and involve the concerned parties in finding a resolution.
- b. Mediation: If conflicts persist, consider using a neutral mediator to facilitate discussions and find common ground. Mediation can help resolve conflicts more objectively and peacefully.

Provide Resources for Personal Development:

- a. Training and development opportunities: Offer workshops, seminars, or training programs focused on improving communication, conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills.
- b. Emotional intelligence: Encourage staff members to develop emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication skills. These skills contribute to a more harmonious work environment.

Addressing Specific Drama Types:

- a. Gossip and rumors: Clearly communicate a zero-tolerance policy for gossip. Encourage staff members to address concerns directly with the individuals involved and discourage spreading rumors.
- b. Cliques and exclusivity: Foster an inclusive environment by promoting interactions among staff members and discouraging cliques. Encourage social events that involve the entire team.

Handling Problem Employees Appropriately:

Addressing drama in the office requires a proactive approach, and at times, it may be necessary to assertively address the issue to ensure that all employees take it seriously.

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While it is crucial to maintain a respectful and professional environment, there may be instances where a firmer stance is needed. This involves setting clear expectations, providing warnings when appropriate, and following through with appropriate consequences if the behavior persists. By taking a firm but fair approach, managers and dentists can demonstrate the seriousness of addressing drama while maintaining a productive and harmonious workplace for the benefit of all team members and the quality of patient care.

By promptly and consistently addressing problematic behaviors, managers and dentists can mitigate the risk of legal complications and protect the business. It is important to work closely with an Human Resources (HR) company or person to ensure that all necessary protocols are followed, and to seek their guidance in handling sensitive situations. Collaborating with HR allows for a comprehensive approach in supporting the employee to improve their behavior, while also safeguarding the interests of the business and upholding legal obligations. Through this partnership, managers and dentists can navigate the complexities of addressing drama effectively and ethically.

Example of Employee Understanding Document

In the dental office, gossip is an activity that can distract and affect employee job satisfaction. Most of us say we don't like it but have all participated in it at one time or another. In order to create a more professional and team centered work environment, we ask each team member to make a commitment to change any negative actions and help our office to be gossip and drama free.

goss·ip n. Rumor or talk of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature. A person who habitually spreads intimate or private rumors or facts. Trivial, chatty talk or writing.

You will notice that gossip is a **noun** - which means it is something you DO. That also means that is something you choose to do – and you can choose NOT to do it.

You enter into gossip by choice – you must choose to opt out of this activity/behavior at this office. In order to end gossip, you will have to end particular types of communications & behaviors – and that includes talk, text or email communications;

- ❖ Gossip almost always involves a person who is not present.

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- ❖ Unwelcome and negative gossip involves criticizing another person
- ❖ Gossip is about conjecture and that can injure another person's credibility and reputation.

The Person Signed below agree to the following:

1. Not speak *or insinuate* another person's name when that person is not present unless it is to compliment or reference regarding work matters.
2. Refuse to participate when someone mentions a person who is not present in a negative light. I will change the subject or tell them I have agreed not to talk about another team member.
3. Choose not to respond to negative email or use email to pass on private or derogatory information about any person in the practice.
4. While off the job, speak to another co-worker about people at work in a derogatory manner.
5. If another person in the practice does something unethical, incorrect, against procedures, or disruptive I will use the proper channels to report this to the person in authority to take corrective action.

I will mind my own business, work hard, be a professional team member and expect the same from others.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

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