



If your dental chair could talk: How your equipment plays a role in staff recruitment and retention

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What does your dental practice say about you? If a patient or staff member walks into your reception area or sits in a treatment room, what would they say about your practice? When was the last time you pretended you were a new patient and looked at everything with a fresh perspective?

What would your staff say about their day-to-day routine working in your clinic? Are they in a clean, comfortable, quiet environment with equipment that functions well and helps them do their job? Or, are things getting dated, continually “on the fritz,” downright scary or impossible to keep clean?



Having serviced equipment for over 27 years, we’ve had the privilege of serving dentists all over Wisconsin and have been in hundreds of clinics servicing and maintaining equipment that varies in condition with an age range spanning the last 50 years.

Just when we think we’ve “seen it all,” we still get some surprises. The one thing that has remained consistent is feedback from office staff regarding the desire to have equipment that functions as it should and presents itself well to patients. Staff who are reticent to complain to you, the boss, often express their frustration with us about how difficult or embarrassing it is to try and do their job with equipment that is continually broken or not maintained. Some have shared they are often asked to do repairs on equipment they know little about!

This doesn’t mean you have to purchase the latest and greatest in dental chairs, but everything – including all controls and features – should work. Scotch tape and duct tape are NOT long-term repair solutions.

At WDA Equipment and Service Solutions, we often talk with dentists about the impression their equipment makes upon patients. With the WDA’s current focus on helping their members find and keep quality staff, we encourage you to pause and consider your staff’s experience with the equipment in their work environment.

In a market of staff shortages and a difficult hiring environment, perspective employees have more options and job offers than ever. They are interviewing you and your practice as much as you are interviewing them. What do they see?

Take a walk through your practice and look at it through the eyes of your patients and staff. Talk to your staff about equipment issues that need attention and try to address things that affect their daily tasks or visibly leave a poor impression on patients.

WDA Equipment and Service Solutions is a valuable resource to help you make the best impression you can on your staff and patients. Schedule a no-obligation evaluation with one of our team members. It’s informative, free and could make all the difference in keeping or hiring a great employee! Call 888-213-7300.

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Inspection Checklist

When looking at your practice through the eyes of a patient, remember to inspect the following:

- Check for discolored, cracked, torn upholstery on patient chairs, dental stools and reception room furniture.
- Check equipment for loose parts, cracks and chipped paint, or items that appears sagging or out of level.
- Ask your staff about equipment that drifts. Do the lights, x-rays and delivery systems stay put when you position them, or do they drift out of position?
- Check for stiff or discolored hand-piece tubings and vacuum line tubings.
- Do the air/water syringes and vacuum valves work as they should?
- Are upholstery or plastic covers discolored or stained from age or disinfectant buildup?
- Does the equipment have exposed wiring or tubings hanging out of place?
- Check cabinets for loose drawers, doors and handles. Are countertops stained or chipped?
- Examine the lens shields on the lights. Are they stained, discolored or melted? What about your ceilings? Your patients stare at these during their appointment!
- Are your treatment rooms clean and dust-free? Areas around seat cushions, bases of the patient chair or dental stools, or ceiling lights get overlooked and can be dusty or dirty.