

# Sidekick Magazine

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## Why you're more motivated than your team.

*Fire 'em up today with the Triple-Win Approach.*

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PRACTICE

Does it feel like most days that you come to the office dragging a few, or maybe all of your team members up a mountain? They are loyal, nice and caring people but have you ever asked why they do not have the same drive that you do. I have researched and talked directly with thousands of team members and have learned one very important distinction between you and your team.

The difference is simple. The answer is that when your feet touch the ground every morning you wake to a risk/reward world and your team lives in a trading time for money world. Let me explain. You have your tail on the line for the never ending supply, lab, payroll and mortgage at work and a whole other slew of responsibility at home. Your team has bills too but they are capped as to how much money they can make. You see the only way for them to make more is to work more hours or have more seniority. They can never get ahead like you, as an entrepreneur can.

Also trading time for money has the team focus on filling time versus focusing on outcomes. This type of exchange creates a natural emphasis on activity rather than results. Allow me to introduce to you a new way of thinking - a way to turn your payroll into a profit center.

Does your team have a bonus system? Does it create a *daily*, individual risk/reward?

In the discovery phase with new clients, I often hear...

"my team is not motivated by my bonus system" ...

"they take my bonus system for granted" ...

"why should I pay them more because my practice still runs the same with it or without it"

"some months are good some months are not, their morale is not any better"

"...not everyone is motivated by money"

"they should be doing this anyway, it is their job" ...

"only some team members really participate but everyone gets rewarded."

After years of hearing these statements I got on a mission to design a bonus system that truly drives business AND can be customized to meet the specific needs of each type of office.

First, I determined what results dentists wanted from their bonus/incentive system. Then I learned what team members desired so that a bonus system would truly get them moving.

My goal: to make the system work and have everyone—the doctors, the team members, and the patients--all win.

I interviewed dentists and asked them what outcomes they wanted from your bonus systems. Here is what they reported:

- Enhance morale
- Build team effectiveness
- Motivate the team
- Attract and retain team members
- Have a full hygiene and doctor schedule
- Meet and exceed financial goals
- Eliminate gossip
- Have team members follow through
- Have team members implement change and stick to it
- Eliminate accounts receivables
- Eliminate failed appointments

Here are the five primary motivators that team members told me *they* wanted in a bonus system:

1. Being appreciated by the doctor, team leader and fellow team members
2. Being acknowledged/recognized for a job well done
3. Being respected
4. Having fair pay and sharing in the practice growth
5. Having satisfaction in themselves knowing that they are fulfilling on their own accountabilities and are winning their game.

After ten years of research and refinement, I have created a system that achieves all of these goals...and more.

I call it The Triple-Win Approach. **This is where the doctor, team member and patient all benefit from the incentive/bonus plan.**

In The Triple-Win, each team member takes ownership of his or her area of accountability. Doctors find the Triple-Win astonishingly easy to implement. Once they see improvement in productivity, morale, accomplishment and income, they love the new system. This bonus methodology can be tailored to fit any practice because it is based upon addressing the *contextual flaws* that traditional bonus plans don't address.

These contextual flaws are the following:

- The typical bonus is based on a measurement that is unattainable and if it is attained, the doctor often increases the baseline without prior agreements to the conditions of change, which actually is *non-motivational* to the team.
- The typical bonus is based on a measurement that can not be affected by that team member's area of accountability (i.e. it is very difficult for an assistant to effect collection)

- The bonus is focused on too long a time period. Usually, a bonus kicks in monthly, which means that most people only start thinking about making their quota as the deadline approaches. Every hour of everyday matters beginning on the first day of the month

### Here's how to implement the NextLevel Triple-Win Bonus Plan:

Step 1: Privately interview each team member and ask them this question:

“Has there been anything that I have promised you that I have not delivered on?”

Listen, take notes, and restore the integrity by creating a solution to any broken agreements. This is the starting point for your new relationship with each team member going forward. You cannot motivate anyone who is holding onto passed breaks in expectation.

Step 2: Establish a collection baseline that includes all expenses, doctor's salary plus 10% cushion. This measure must be met or no bonus is paid. This creates a true profit sharing plan. Remember once you reach this baseline point and your fixed costs are taken care of your profit on the next level is the total minus supplies, lab, bonus, associate commission. Please let the team know up front that the baseline increases as do fixed costs. That way when your team wants a base pay increase or a new piece of equipment you have the right to raise the baseline number without repercussion.

Step 3: Set up accountability *by position* and tie bonus pay to the person accountable to that position.

- Scheduling coordinator sets daily goals in computer based upon target goal by provider and pays them \$5 to \$10 per provider per day based upon goal attainment.
- Hygienist is responsible for patient education and co-discovery of treatment needed. Intra-oral camera and hygiene protocol used on every recare visit. He or she gets paid 1% on treatment accepted and *completed*.
- Treatment Coordinator is responsible for having the patient understand the treatment, reinforcing the urgency for care, handling concerns and barriers to treatment and getting agreement to time and money. He/She gets paid 1% on treatment presented, accepted and *paid for*.
- Assistants get paid by impacting production through keeping the team on time, reducing the doctor's treatment time, comforting the patient and educating the patient as needed. Pay assistants a dollar amount, usually starting at \$100 for each \$10,000 *production* over baseline increment for each assistant. Also, offer a flat dollar amount for each whitening and Invisalign resulting from their interaction with the patient. Pay close attention on having friendly competition among assistants. Knock out any unfair play.

Step 4: Each team member is responsible for tracking their results on a daily basis and at month end submits them to the team leader for cross checking.

Step 5: The bonus is paid in the first pay period following the last day of the month.

Please note to reserve the right to tweak the system with one month notice to insure that the system always offers the Triple-Win benefit. You will find the only time you may need to adjust is when your expenses increase and now the team shares in financial decision making. One client I have is described as spending “like a drunken sailor” so he chooses not to increase the baseline due to his abundant spending philosophy.

The end result of a bonus is to have the doctor max out efficiency, profitability and team morale while reducing the stress of everyday practice. You will be able to pay yourself more and reinvest in your best asset – your practice. Your team will be automatically compensated for their ability to produce results. This shifts their attention on exchanging time and seniority for money to producing results for money. Finally and most importantly patients win because they are taken care of on a whole new level of patient service and get all the care they need and want.

Our doctors cannot wait to cut the bonus checks every month because they know how it positively impacts them and their patients. Get out your pen!

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Gary Kadi transforms successful dentists into highly successful dentists. His innovative practice development firm, NextLevel Practice implements customized methodology that he writes about in his highly acclaimed book/audio Million Dollar Dentistry. Gary’s tailored programs range from new scratch practices generating a million dollars to doctors who are looking for a successful exit strategy to max out income and equity. Visit [nextlevelpractice.com](http://nextlevelpractice.com)