

Dr. Angela Mulrooney - CE Showcase: Applying Smarter Work Strategies

Dr. O'Keefe: Today, I welcome Dr. Angela Mulrooney, she's a college of Dentistry, university of Saskatchewan graduate and who's now launched herself as a coach and she helps dental offices across the country with some of those knotty problems that we all experience and hate to have to deal with: stuff like how can I do my marketing better? How can I work in a less stressful way? And, just how can I handle interpersonal communications within the office and with patients? And, today I'm going to ask her a specific question that comes up regularly in her coaching sessions. Angela, I would like to work smarter rather than harder. I'm just tearing my hair out because I just keep on running, running, running, and I seem to be getting nowhere fast. How can I change things around?

Dr. Mulrooney: Well, there's usually three things that I really recommend doing. The first is eliminate anything that's not necessary in the practice. The second is starting to look at booking your production to where you want it to be instead of hoping that it's going to get there. And the third way is to actually take more vacation.

Dr. O'Keefe: So, what are the unnecessary things I should be getting rid of?

Dr. Mulrooney: Anything that doesn't fulfill three criteria. The first one is, is it required by law? For example, sterilization. We have to sterilize. So, that's something that's required by law. The second thing is whether it adds to your production. If it's not helping you to do more care in a day or do care in a day period, then it's probably not necessary. And the third one is it adding to progressing in the practice? So, sometimes we have to take some time away from working on patients to be able to invest in our skills and up the level of care that we're providing. So, that's where we're adding to the progress of the practice.

Dr. O'Keefe: So, that would be like CE stuff for going off and...

Dr. Mulrooney: For sure. Or even just working on what you guys want to do in the practice. Like if you're setting goals and you set them once a year and you never touched them again, that's useless. But if you set those goals and revisit them every month to make sure that you're on track, that's adding to your progress.

Dr. O'Keefe: So, there's time spent away from focusing on the patient's mouth.

Dr. Mulrooney: For sure.

Dr. O'Keefe: The second point really does get back to production. Is that correct?

Dr. Mulrooney: For sure. So, actually making a plan of how you're going to get your production to where you want to go. If you don't set a bar and you just hope that you're going to get there, hope is not a very good plan at all. So, if you're wanting to be

billing \$100,000 a month or more and you're working a certain number of days a week, that means you have to be hitting a certain production level each of those days to try and get to where you want to go. And if you let your team know about that and you actually look at the schedule and look at what procedures are being booked in, then you know that you're likely going to hit that goal or you're not. And it's actually surprising when you start assigning those values to each appointment. You'll quickly see where the problems are in your practice that are preventing you from being able to hit those production goals.

Dr. O'Keefe: Yes, and I think your third point is that all work and no play makes John a dull boy?

Dr. Mulrooney: Well, it makes you a burned out boy for sure. So, when people take more vacation time, like when I was in practice, I was taking 10 weeks vacation and it actually increased our production per hour hugely. And when people are doing this, it allows you to work harder during the hours that you're there and if you're producing more dentistry per hour because you're not dragging your butt, it's going to allow you to get to your production goals much faster. And honestly, if you're not tired, you're more likely to try and get that patient in the same day rather than going, Oh, put them in two weeks out. We don't have time for them today. It changes the attitude of everyone in the practice.

Dr. O'Keefe: So, what I think I take away from all of this is you got to be focused and you got to work hard and play hard and you've got a plan.

Dr. Mulrooney: Absolutely.

Dr. O'Keefe: Angela, I believe that you're going to be speaking at the PDC.

Dr. Mulrooney: Yes, I am. I'm so excited about it.

Dr. O'Keefe: Tell us a little bit about your talk and what's the framework for it.

Dr. Mulrooney: So, they have this component called the So You Think You Can Speak competition. So, it allows us to speak for 15 minutes and you have to apply to be part of the competition. And last year, I applied and I didn't get it and so I applied this year thinking that I probably wouldn't get it again, but lo and behold, a couple of weeks ago I found out that I am going to be part of it. So, I have to start planning for that.

Dr. O'Keefe: Well, I wish you the very best of luck. I hope to be there to cheer you on and I hope that lots of our viewers will be there to cheer you on too.

Dr. Mulrooney: Thank you.