



Do the Right Thing!

Unfortunately, the right thing is too often challenged by a cheaper, faster, easier, or slightly dishonest approach.

BY LYNN HOMISAK, PRT

Do you think you know right from wrong? These days it seems like everyone makes their own rules. Escaping consequence with ‘what aboutism’. Don’t back down or admit wrong-doing... ever! Challenge every criticism! Is the right thing too often challenged by a cheaper, faster, easier, or slightly dishonest approach? After all, if no one really knows or is personally hurt by your decision, is it really even considered wrong?

There are so many worthwhile quotes to reference that could easily be thought of as ethical life guides. It’s hard to just pick one. One that comes to mind is from Steven Covey, who said, “Before you wonder am I doing things right, wonder am I doing the right things?” Along these lines, management guru Peter Drucker’s perspective is “Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things.” And, finally, Martin Luther King: “The time is always right to do the right thing.” All words to live by.

When you do the right thing, you become the beneficiary of that action. And that is a good thing. In this regard, what are some examples of ways we can apply the above references ideologies to our everyday situations and ‘just do it’ *right*?

cause I have an infected toenail. Why all the questions (on the initial visit paperwork) about my health? What do my medications, my smoking, or my medical conditions have to do with my feet?” Instead of what might be a cursory response such as, “It’s

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For Your Patients

Avoid shoving policy down your patients’ throats because it is too time-consuming or requires too much effort to explain why you have that policy. Do the right thing and outline WHY certain policies exist in your practice. In the end, you will see less confrontation, and more understanding and patient acceptance.

Example: Think of the patient who complains “I’m only here be-

just our policy” or, “Insurance companies make us do that,” show concern and offer a more meaningful explanation. “That’s a great question, Mrs. Jones. This information helps us assess your overall health. You see, it’s not just your feet that walk into our office. Your whole body arrives with them. So, by your providing a full and complete health narrative, we have a clearer overall picture of

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your health history and as a result can deliver more personalized, comprehensive care to you.”

For Your Practice

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Example: You've just been given notice that Donna, one of your most valuable staffers, has given her notice. She and her husband are relocating and the arduous process to replace her must begin. You want a smooth transition, for your sake, for the sake of the practice, and for the sake of your current staff. DO NOT go through

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this process of selecting the “right” person to fill Donna’s shoes without actively involving her in the hiring process. After all, no one more than Donna knows the intricate details of her work; specifically, those things that may not be documented in her job description, yet have been highly effective in her performing day-to-day activities. Not just anyone can assume the duties her position requires. You want someone that Donna can personally interview and offer her opinion for a capable replacement, and most importantly, assist in her training. In other words, if you want this new employee to succeed in her job and follow in Donna’s very productive footsteps, do **not** underestimate what your experienced staffer can bring to the table in the selection process. Donna would likely evaluate applicants as if she would be personally working with them. She would want someone to step in with a similar work ethic and effectually carry on the work she started.

Proactively, take this opportunity to have other team members meet interviewees and offer input as well. If a personality clash is noted at the onset with potential co-workers, take it as a sign that conflict might occur.

For Your Staff

Staff satisfaction: Employees who feel worthwhile, important, and part of the practice are higher producers than those who come to work for a paycheck. Do the right thing and provide them with ways to develop and take their work to a higher level.

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What are some things that can help staff look at their jobs as a career or a calling rather than just financial gratification? Of course, every individual is different and should be treated as such. Get to know who they are, not just as employees. Understand them as people by having conversations about things they feel would boost job satisfaction. By doing this, you create a more productive employee.

Example: One consideration is setting new challenges for them that will motivate and expand their work duties and responsibilities. Believe it or not, people tend to get more stressed when they are bored than when they are busy. Offer them ways to improve their skills. Maybe that involves more hands-on learning, expanded podiatry knowledge, advanced training through in-service options, certification, literary or webinar or zoom resources, etc.

Cross-training is another way to reduce any feelings of boredom. Suggest that clinical staff experience front desk work and receptionists reach beyond their day-to-

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day tasks and learn more about what happens in the treatment rooms. What a great way for the practice to maintain adequate coverage for times when key staff are absent due to

because “everyone is doing it.” It’s not okay to excuse unprofessional conduct as long as “it’s not hurting anyone.” Neither is it okay to treat patients based solely on their insurance coverage and not on their actual medical needs. And certainly,

It never feels good. Doing the right thing ultimately does.

These are not hard decisions; don’t make them hard! Don’t let excuses or rationalizations distract you. Don’t complicate or confuse right from wrong. Take the road that guides your high ethical standards and defines who you are... for your staff, your patients, your practice, and for you. **PM**

Doing the right thing means never having to say you’re sorry.

sickness or vacation. It also encourages co-workers to appreciate one another’s jobs, removing common grievances of who is more important. **THEY ALL ARE!**

For YOU!

Be ethically responsible. Doing the right thing means never having to say you’re sorry.

Example: Generally speaking, it’s not okay to do something dishonest

rationalizing to yourself and others that subverting or ‘gaming’ insurance rules is acceptable should never be considered ethical behavior. Whatever it’s called: ploy, scam, deception, con, scheme, loophole, it is likely fraud. Understand that if someone gains a financial, personal, or professional benefit using these tactics, another person will be disadvantaged. Think about times you may have been manipulated or cheated.



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