Do you dream about success or have nightmares about failure?

asks Seema Sharma

Are you feeling FAB? Are you one of these eternally positive people who knows that as long as people have teeth, you know you have a product people need or want? Even when you think about those who don’t have teeth, you may be upbeat if you are unique, special and different and one of your many niches is dentures and implants? If you use a FAB marketing campaign (less about the Features, more about the Advantages and Benefits of coming to your practice) you are already ahead of the game. If you have to make some tweaks to prepare for the changing environment, perhaps you see this as simply adding to your repertoire of benefits to promote to your patients.

Or are you feeling SAD? Are you worrying about the future of your practice? Is the economic downturn starting to bite? Are you fretting about CQC? Does it feel like the PCT is on a different page to you, your patients are on a different page to you – worse still all three? Does reading the white paper make feel like you will soon die of change fatigue? Are you at the bare bones of costs already, and struggling with how else to cut spiralling costs? Could you do with a PEP talk or better still with pep up your practice? Soldiering on and hoping it will all go away could be a formula for failure whereas a little forward thinking will get there. One size does not fit all, so flexibility is key. For your practice to succeed in a changing environment, and in difficult financial times, a number of strategies are a good idea but don’t give in to indecision – the wait and see approach will result in no action. Vision without action is a daydream.

Action without vision is a nightmare

Clinicians in well run practices are often able to give the practice manager freedom to run the practice whilst they concentrate on dentistry, self-development or something else. (In my case my charity and my practice management courses). This is a huge compliment to managers who have the training, vision and leadership skills themselves to be able to take on this responsibility.

What about the converse – the team do what they think is best but have never understood the overarching vision? When the diary is full of new patients to meet an NHS access target is on a different page to you, your team is on a different page to the management committee. Are you a leader, or a follower or an ostrich? The decision is yours.

About the author

Seema Sharma (qualified as a dent-ist but gave up clinical work after 10 years in practice to go into full time practice manage-ment. Today she runs three prac-tices, including one which is a multi-disciplinary specialist centre. Seema established Dentabyte Ltd to provide affordable “real-world” practice management programmes to help practice managers and practice owners keep pace with the changing clinical and commercial environment facing them today. Visit www.Denta-byte.co.uk to register for updates on practice management or email Seema at seema.sharma@dentabyte.co.uk to find out more.)