



# Finding your passion

Missing that spark in your team? In the first of a three-part series, **Michael Bentley** looks at 10 ways to understand passion

**In my experience, most practices go through periods where they have unhappy team members.**

If you are currently experiencing this situation in your practice, then I firstly want to reassure you that you are not on your own. I want to share with you one of my tools for a healthy team, which is passion. If you understand passion it can allow you to really understand your team and create a fantastic energy that you, your team and patients can enjoy.

Spotting passion is a skill; leaders are

normally passionate about what they do, but how do you energise your passion into transforming each member of your dental team?

## 1. What is passion?

Passion is defined as a powerful emotion. When someone has it, it will result in more work being done and more work-life satisfaction. Find out what your team members are passionate about and let passion play a part in their working day – the rewards will come.

## 2. Doing what you love

The 'dualistic model' of passion is defined as a strong inclination or desire towards a self-defining activity that one likes or even loves.

## 3. Choice

When people engage in activities and pursuits that are inherently enjoyable or aligned to their identity, they feel they have chosen these endeavours. This sense of choice, coupled with enjoyment or alignment, underpins harmonious passion.

## GET INTO GEAR

- Understand what your team members are passionate about, and let them use what they love at work
- Delegate activities or duties to employees that they enjoy – they will be far more productive
- Stick to what you're passionate about – your team members will take notice and thrive off your positive energy
- Recognise that some people's passions will be different to yours, but every person's enjoyment can be utilised within a team.

The sense of choice in harmonious passion is key here and is extremely positive (Vallerand, 2012).

## 4. Obsession

When people undertake an activity to attract some reward, the activity may not be enjoyable or integrated with their identity. If they do not complete this activity, these individuals may feel guilty or be punished. When people feel compelled to take on these activities, they experience obsessive passion, and this can be extremely negative (Vallerand, 2012).

### Michael Bentley



Michael has been a practice manager both within optics and dentistry since 1999. He has a business diploma in distribution management and is a qualified and General Dental Council (GDC) registered dental care professional. Michael has been a business development consultant with Horton Consulting since August 2012. He is also a semi-professional actor and singer and can often be seen treading the boards or presenting on his Sunday theatre show with Balsall radio.

## 5. Leadership

Passion has to come from leaders: practice owners and managers must have the autonomy with their own passions and be working on these on a day-to-day basis. Passion should feel exciting and has to be stimulated to keep it this way. Delegation of old passions, whilst developing and renewing newness in passions, is key.

## 6. Discovery

Avoid delegating your old passions to someone who will not apply the same excitement as you. This will only be a negative experience and lower the work level of the team member. Take time to discover the passion in each and every person and be rewarded by what you hear.

## 7. Recognition

Once a team member's passion has been recognised, plan how it can best be used. Remember that it is different for everyone, and each contribution needs to be given equal recognition. Passion can also be used to perform day-to-day tasks, such as answering a telephone, managing an audit or gaining a new skill or qualification.

## PASSION IS DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE, AND EACH CONTRIBUTION NEEDS TO BE GIVEN EQUAL RECOGNITION

## 8. Dilution

Dilution of passions is heartbreaking. There are too many people who have passions and are unable to use them, as they are diluted before they can even start. Vision making, taking on new ideas, learning to delegate and not to micro-manage, are all valid skills in not diluting passion. Once water is poured onto passion, it is hard to reignite that fire.

## 9. Health

Harmonious passion is healthy. Good passion is what makes us feel alive and can be clearly seen by others. The positivity it generates shows in everything you will do. Remember, working on your passion is the only way you will feel completely satisfied, and this increases your psychological health.


## 10. Pathway

The following steps will help you discover how to gauge passion.

1. Discovery – what are your job passions? What is your career pathway?
2. Recognition – recognising current responsibilities, skills, qualifications and tasked job roles
3. Time – vision planning of projects or delegation of tasks with the appropriate time given to achieve them
4. Health – assessment of whether a current team member is demonstrating harmonious or obsessive passion.

## Creating energy

A passionate team can create an exciting and energised atmosphere. Don't underestimate passion, because without it, day-to-day life can be mundane and unfocused.

In my next article in March, I will look at the key areas needed in HR for a strong team. 

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