

Step By Step - How to Conduct an Open Book Meeting

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High-performance Open Book Management organizations operate on a different set of assumptions than traditional organizations.

If you operate with traditional assumptions, be aware that you might be part of the problem!

Comparison of Assumptions by Peter Drucker

Traditional Model

- Control
- Management
- Employees
- Creativity is at the top
- Knowledge is at the top
- Specialization and division of labor
- Information is guarded
- People must be supervised
- Ultimate goal is profit

(Open Book) * High-Performance Model

Order
Leadership
Partners
Creativity at all levels
Knowledge at all levels
Generalization/Owner Mentality
Information is distributed
Teams become self supervised
Profit supports the focus

“As we advance deeper into the information and knowledge economy, the basic assumptions taught and practiced in the name of management are hopelessly out of date...Get the assumptions wrong, and everything that follows is wrong.” Peter Drucker

* The term “open book” is added to Peter Drucker’s “Comparisons of Assumptions” chart by Ross Clark for this presentation.

Open book meetings

In order for Open Book Management to work, it is vitally important to have regular meetings with the staff. They should eventually be reduced to a half hour or 45 minutes in length. Since more time is needed initially to discuss and understand the Scorecard, you should allow an hour to an hour and a half for those first few meetings.

Meetings must start on time. It sends a negative message to those who come on time if the beginning of the meeting is delayed for stragglers. Meetings should be mandatory for those who are scheduled to work during meeting times. These meetings should be as important as anything else that is done; therefore, there should be a commitment from everyone to attend. Those who are not scheduled to work should be encouraged to attend. Hourly staff people who are not working during meeting times should receive compensation for the time to attend these meetings.

Every employee needs to understand that it is everyone’s duty to participate in the discussions and keep the facilitator neutral.

There should also be a time keeper to be sure the meeting is kept on schedule, a recorder to take notes and a communicator who can summarize the meeting who were not able to attend.

Each meeting covers more than a dozen reports and topics. It is important that the entire staff participates in the meeting. Often, the only voices heard are those of the owners and managers. Try to have each staff member present a weekly report. If your staff out numbers reports, then use a team approach with groups of team members alternating weeks that they prepare and present the report.

Recommended Protocol for Meetings and Huddles Open the meeting with a review of last weeks meeting minutes (These minutes need to be detailed enough so that someone that missed the meeting would understand decisions that were made.) In fact, you need to broadcast an e-mail copy of the minutes to all staff including both those who attended and those who did not.

Have a written agenda (Staff members are encouraged to submit agenda items to the Hospital Manager during the week for discussion.) (See sample Agenda)

Mission statement in large letters should be shown by overhead projector, projector or smart board. Ask some one to read or quote it from memory!

The meeting should last 30-45 minutes and be divided into four sections, based upon the four stakeholders: Keep this long list on hand and include a few items on your agenda for each of the 4 stakeholders as time allows

Pet care

The most common complaint of staff members is that no one ever tells anything or enough and thus pets do not receive the best possible treatment. Discuss the Global Update of things going on in Veterinary Medicine, pet care, the city, and the practice plus other Items that your Hospital Director and Hospital Manager want your hospital team to be aware of.

- Discuss issues or communication gaps at your hospital and possible solutions.
- Discuss issues or communication gaps with clients and possible solutions;
- Ask for input from the staff on patient care or medical concerns.
- Ask for Client Care (Ideas or programs to WOW your clients)
- Ask staff members for examples of exceptional client service during the past week. Pat those team members on the back.
- A client service tip provided by a member of your staff.
- Occasionally discuss tour procedure and how to give a great tour.
- Telephone, e-mail and Facebook response: How are we doing; how can we do better.
- Review upcoming holiday ideas bandanas, cards, contests.
- Visit ways your hospital can develop a customer service niche.
- Brainstorm client convenience ideas.

Staff care: Training for new drugs, procedures, pet health alerts

- 5 minute training tips for Kennel, Tech, and CSR staff (schedule additional in depth training for staff as needed throughout the week);
- New products or services offered at your hospital and how they will be handled;
- Any games or contests;

Investor care: Where we are financially and where we want to be

- Here are some of the other categories to consider each week for your scorecard discussion.
- Compensation: Current percentage and action plans if outside of targets.
- Action plans from the strategic plan you develop together.
- Project weekly financial scorecards and discuss focus points and areas of Kudos or concerns;
- Show financial statements weekly if you are on QuickBooks or other in-house bookkeeping system as soon as they arrive.
- Individual DVM Recheck Rates: discuss systems to make sure recheck appointments are being made, kudos to those showing improvement;
- Individual Doctor Production numbers MTD;
- A/R report
- OSHA update
- DVM Average Transaction
- Equipment maintenance reports

A few tips so that you're meeting will be a success

- Alternate the facilitator position between Hospital Director(s), Hospital Manager(s), and Team Leaders as well as other staff members once you have established a regular meeting.
- Moderator should always ask for perceived problems from staff. Listen to concerns; then ask for possible solutions or form a committee to bring back possible solutions to the next meeting. Often taking ownership of a problem will focus the attention back on the real issue and resolve complaining.
- Always hold the meetings at the same time and on the same day of the week. This allows staff members to schedule other activities around this standing meeting and should provide greater attendance.
- Listen to all staff members equally. Do not allow others to make the speaker feel like their idea is "stupid." If you really want to get the incredible synergy that Open Book Staff Meetings can provide, the staff must feel like they can make suggestions without ridicule.
- If time allows, go around the room and ask each person if they want to bring up anything after agenda items are discussed. This is a great way to find out more about your staff and their concerns. It also brings empowerment.

Huddling

From time to time the game plan discussed just last week has encountered a major obstacle or flaw not considered at the Open Book Management staff meeting and a huddle is called by a team member to consider corrective action. David Jackson of the University Animal Hospital in Virginia and one of the most popular and top producing DVMs in all of America holds a huddle first thing every morning that he calls a POD (plan of the day) that goes something like this: "Let's try to do the Anterior Cruciate repair and two ovariohysterectomies before we start appointments. Marci and John will review all hospitalized cases and administer meds. Etc.

Definition

A huddle (POD) is a short structured meeting with a small group of team players designed to keep them focused on and informed about changing needs and revised action plans in their particular area of the hospital. Usually groups would include technician huddles, veterinary assistant huddles, receptionist huddles or team plan of the day huddles.

Huddling rules

Frequency: as needed

Timeframe: 10 minutes tops

Structure:

What is the problem?

What can we do?

Who should do it?

When should we do it?

Format: Democratic, A supervisor or senior staff member probably in charge and may sometimes be very directive since timeframe is short and you're in the trenches.

Sample agenda

Woodland west pet care centers

Staff Meeting Date _____

WWAH Mission Statement: Our mission is to provide the very latest in high-quality veterinary medical care delivered by well-trained professional staff. We will meet the needs of our clients by offering exceptional customer service and convenience. "Work as a Team, Win as a Team!"

Stakeholders

Pet – Patients – understand their fear of being here, remember the pet's comfort, relieve pain when needed

Dr. M – Adult Canine Wellness report MTD & YTD

Kristen – Annual Wellness / HW prevention by DVM

Stacey – parasite screening report

Dr. R – Progress (Recheck) Scorecard

Karen -- Staffing Scorecard

Sarah -- New Client Scorecard

Dr. M – Facility and Equipment Care

Karen – Computer and info. Mgmt schedule

Nita -- Marketing Schedule

Sarah – Deceased report

Client – Superior Client Service – hours of operation, exceeding client expectations, developing "the Bond" Colleague Kudos

Staff - Rewarding careers, continuing education, ability to advance, and professional demeanor at all times

Investor Owners – Controlling expenses and increasing revenues

DR. C -- EBITDA Scorecard

Dr. J -- Doctor Production Scorecard and Average Transaction Scorecard

Jan Bookkeeper – Accounts Receivable report

Karen--A/R report MTD/YTD

Jan - LDs Baker's Dozen Summary Scorecard

Sarah – Food sales vs. Food Purchases Scorecard