



What makes for a successful dentist CEO?

In this four-part series, we examine the fundamental tasks of the modern dentist CEO. See part one for [*Building the right team*](#) and part two for [*Setting a strategy*](#).

Part 3 of 4: Driving execution

As discussed in the most recent installment of our series, setting a strategy can be broken down into two tasks: formulation and execution. Here are some thoughts on how to drive success in execution.

Maintain a positive attitude

Attitude starts at the top and trickles down through the entire organization. A dentist or practice manager can maintain a positive organizational attitude by having the right people in the right places, keeping them engaged, setting clear expectations, and offering praise when warranted. A positive attitude at the top will have a material impact on productivity, quality, service, innovation, and even on the way your patients perceive your organization.

Act quickly

Be prepared to make quick decisions if necessary. Decisiveness is one of the most important qualities a leader can possess. In most cases, making a less than perfect decision is preferable to making no decision at all when action is required.

Narrow your focus

An important step in driving execution is to define the top drivers of your business and quantify them (as ratios, for example). Every organization has multiple, competing priorities, but it helps to focus on what's really important and to mute the noise. It may be \$/patient visit. It may be crowns/patient. It may be new patients/month. Whatever it is, choose the one ratio that best defines your practice's success. Other competing priorities will be addressed at your team meetings, but everyone should always know the status of your top drivers of success. Measuring and tracking those key drivers helps keep the spotlight on them.

“The main thing is to keep
the main thing the main
thing. Organizations with
too many priorities have no
priorities and risk spinning
their wheels and
accomplishing nothing.”
Stephen Covey



Keep accountability clear

Every function and process in the practice should have an accountable team member with key performance indicators to measure results. Linking staff performance evaluations to those key indicators helps reinforce the message of what's important and also helps maintain the all-important focus described above. Distractions will always pop up, but if a team member knows beyond the shadow of a doubt what they're accountable for, they will be better armed to prioritize and focus on what really matters.

About Planet DDS

Founded over a decade ago, Planet DDS was the first dental practice management solution built as a true cloud solution from the ground up.

Since then, we've remained true to our initial vision: to help dentists run their practices so they can focus on what matters most—patient care.

We now deliver our innovative cloud platform and virtual business services to thousands of dental professionals across the country.

Driving execution is the third fundamental task of the successful dentist CEO. Don't forget to refer back to the first two ([*Building the right team*](#) and [*Setting a strategy*](#)) as you embark upon the execution phase to ensure your practice is achieving its full potential.