

# Team Culture Examination

## Is yours a “closed” or “open” practice climate when it comes to the integration of new employees?

An open culture encourages innovation and a dynamic sense of community. A closed culture believes in uniformity and control to keep people on task and together.

Creating an open culture, including the conscious integration of new employees into the team, will pay dividends when it comes to employee turnover, retention, and attitude.

## Rate yourselves by thinking about these points:

- 1** Ask your most recent hires what it was like to join your practice. Note the difficulties and think through how to lessen them next time around.
- 2** Increase awareness among the current staff of the difficulty both of being a new employee and having a new employee. As we work together, we learn to work in synchrony in a way that works for each of us. A new team member can't help but disrupt this flow in the beginning. Ask for tolerance and patience for the staff upfront and reward it when you see it.
- 3** Have someone in leadership meet with new employees weekly for the first month, and monthly for the first quarter after that, to make sure there is a set time for clarification, questions and behavior shaping (helping the employee recognize what works and doesn't work at the practice).
- 4** Review your training process. Does it allow for mentoring, and careful, intentional integration of new employees or associates? If not, put a team in charge of developing such a system and teaching it to the entire staff.
- 5** Look at each new addition to the team as an opportunity to add something new to the practice protocols or logistics. After a few weeks, ask new employees if they see anything they'd like to change based on their past experience or training. Be open to trying new ideas.

**Redo number 1 each time you prepare to hire a new team member.**

