

# Taking Your Practice from **VISION** to **REALITY**

by Eric J. Morin, MBA



When you hear about the importance of having vision for your practice, it is often something that gets discussed briefly at a workshop and grouped together with your mission statement, core values, and other traditional categories. You may discuss it one other time in a meeting or conversation with fellow team members, but unfortunately, it never gets mentioned again. However, understanding vision and its proper use in your practice can assist you in accomplishing your practice and financial goals.

***Here are a few great questions to consider:***

***Where are you going?***

***Do you have a true path for your practice over the next 12 months, 3 years, 5 years, and beyond?***

If it seems like your practice has not been moving in the direction you intended, then you truly have not visualized where you are going and how to get there.

I encourage the doctors I work with to become the CEO of their practice. One of the main goals for any CEO is to plot a clear and decisive path for the company. Once you have determined this path, it is vital that you share this vision with your team. I would also encourage you to sit down with each team member and ask them about their vision and career. If this isn't feasible, then have someone you trust sit down with the team and relay the information back to you.

If you want to achieve any and all goals for your practice, the very first place to start is vision – not in training or implementing a sophisticated scheduling process. Believe it or not, most people do not come to work primarily for pay. When surveyed nationally, employees typically



rank pay as low as five or six on their list of priorities. Your team wants to know where they are going.

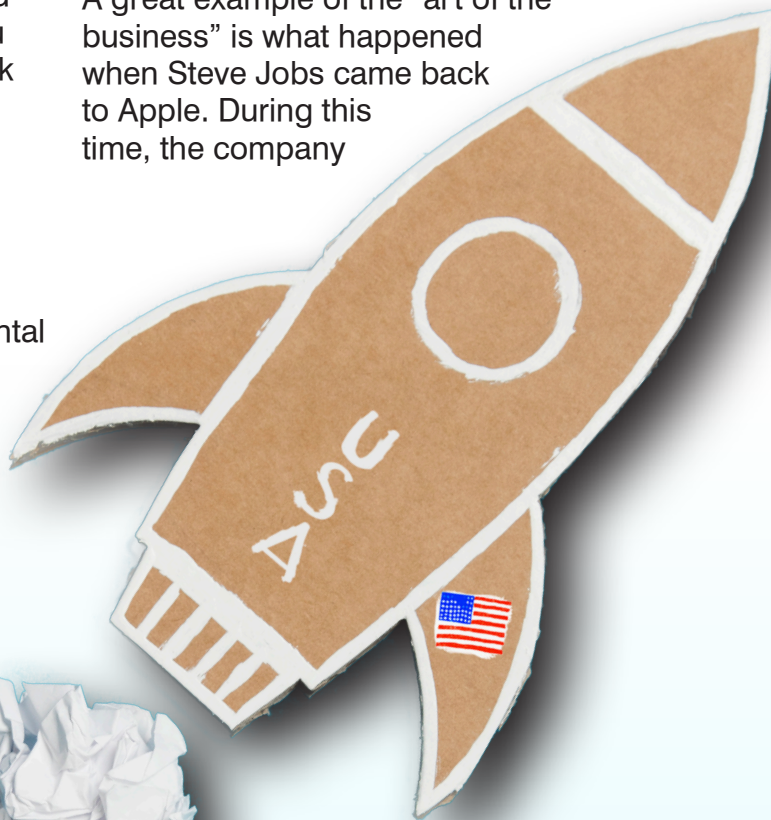
The key to getting everything you want in this world is helping others get what they want. Once you determine each person's vision and get everyone aligned with the same goal, you will be surprised how hard your team will work in assisting you in reaching all the practice's financial and clinical goals.

I was recently at a doctor's office and she explained to me that her dental assistant was a single mom with two children struggling to make ends meet. I asked the doctor if her dental assistant knew the vision for the practice and how it could impact her team member's life and family. She answered no. If a team member does not know how reaching the vision of the practice impacts their life personally, their main focus will be pay. The problem with this outlook is that another office can always offer more money and that team member will eventually find someone to pay them more.

Failing to understand the true financial impact is one of the primary reasons a doctor does not focus on vision. It is what I would label the "art of business."

The "science of business" is where most business owners like to stay, as results are easily measured. However, understanding the "art" of a business is the area which can create the largest financial gains.

A great example of the "art of the business" is what happened when Steve Jobs came back to Apple. During this time, the company



was nearing in bankruptcy, yet putting more money into marketing. Although some may have thought reducing expenses (the science) would have helped Apple, Steve instead focused on redesigning the products and changing the overall customer's experience (the art).

He had a vision for the company and he used that vision in everything he created; this led to Apple becoming one of the strongest companies in the world. His vision also included the most recent Apple headquarters, Apple Park.

Although he did not live to see it completed, it is there because he envisioned it, shared that vision with those around him, and helped put



*Apple Headquarters, Apple Park concept rendering.*

together a long-term plan to make it happen.

The truth is, vision is what makes great companies great. Vision is where you need to start if you want to build an organization designed to last that achieves its goals, not only for you as the business owner, but for all those that come in contact with it. I can guarantee that if you continually share your vision with your team and how it impacts them personally, they will come together as a team to accomplish almost any goal you imagine.

**So, where should you start?**

**My recommendations include:**

**1. Write down your vision for your practice and what it looks like 10 years from now. Get specific. Write down how many operatories you have, what your total team looks like, and how many locations you have.**

- **What car are you driving?**
- **Where are you going for vacation?**
- **How is your practice impacting your community and your team?**

**This is a great exercise to perform individually and as a team.**



**2. Once you have a solid 10-year vision in place, ask the same questions for five years, three years, and one year.**

**3. Once you have established your one-year vision, determine what practical steps are needed in accomplishing those goals. For example:**

**How many new patients would you need to get the desired revenue?**

**4. Set each person's goals on your leadership team. If you do not have a leadership team in place, reach out and we can talk about the steps for getting this in place for your practice.**

**5. Meet weekly and discuss each person's progress.**

If you focus on these steps, you will start to see your team and practice come together to achieve your goals.

Each day, my team and I talk about vision and our goals during our morning huddle. We also frequently discuss how much impact we will have if we focus on our vision. I always tell the individuals I work with: You get what you measure. People who measure more accomplish more. I can guarantee that vision is the first step to getting amazing results.

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