



The Look, Feel and Sounds of Chaos In An Office Can Really Have An Environmental Impact

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A chaotic environment, whether it is an office or not has some definite tell tell signs. We can usually point them out quickly from an objective view of others, but can we really discern when we have chaos in our offices? More importantly, if we do have chaos then what are we to do about it? Taking responsibility for what we see, hear and feel for ourselves and then for the management of our offices is where it begins.

Firstly, it is important to understand the basic human representations that exists in all of us which are auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Predominant auditory people are sensitive to sounds, speech and music, while visual people see things in pictures and great detail. Kinesthetic people feel things and are hypersensitive to touch.

These representations take on a different meaning when applied to the concept of chaos and how it affects people with different representations. Even though one of these may be more dominant for you as a practice manager, your ability to become familiar with all three of them within your office will prove to be invaluable and useful information. Let's investigate some of the key indicators that chaos may be ruling our medical offices.

Looks Like Chaos

Now with your mind's eye, take a walk through your office. A chaotic environment presents patients with a lobby that is unclean or sloppily kept. Most offices have cleaning crews who maintain the premises. However, the lobby is the first thing your patients see when they arrive; therefore it is important to keep it clean throughout the day.

Once you move beyond the lobby and into the clinical areas, you can see how you and your staff "live" at the office. Take a look from the viewpoint of your patients and determine if the area is cluttered with food, or lots of paper lying around.

It goes without saying that having clean restrooms in a medical office is a must. Having spent many years in offices all around the United States, I can tell you that remembering the dirty ones comes much easier; and that is probably because it is just expected that a medical office is the symbol of a sterile and clean environment.

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If you are attempting to go chartless or paperless in your office you probably are already thinking about the benefits of scanning all the paper into the new document imaging system thus providing more space within the office. This alone will help to begin to declutter your office much more efficiently. Utilize your electronic health system to scan those papers other than charts such as EOBs, contracts, accounts payable items, etc., and organize them into categories on your database much like you would in a paper filing method so they are easily found.

Feels Like Chaos

Do you have a pulse reading on the energy field within your office? You know you cannot always choose who you will be working with and sometimes you never know who they really are until you are working with them every day. Background checks and Facebook look ups can help determine who a person really is before hiring them; but if you have inherited a pre-made staff you may not have chosen them.

Have you ever heard the saying “what you resists, persists?” Well, it is true. We may sometimes think that if we ignore something it will go away or we may be pushing our anger and resentment down for face sake, but it will surely rear its ugly head when our guard is down. A practice manager who senses (feels) the chaos in the office can be proactive in preventing bigger scenes that are often brought on by neglect.

From time to time, medical offices, especially the very busy ones, will have disgruntled employees and conflicts will arise. It should not be the norm; however, it can be expected even in the best working situations. Be assured also that if you are a stressed out office manager, your employees already know it and sense your stressful vibrations.

Take care of your wellbeing as this sets an example from the top down. As humans we have basic needs for love, respect, security and accomplishment. If we get out of synch with our own values for these basic needs, we will surely become acidic to our working environment. If you are sensitive to your needs, it will help you to pay attention to those of your employees as well.

Sounds Like Chaos

Whether you are auditory or not, it is good practice to pay attention to the sounds within your office. Are the phones ringing constantly? More importantly, are comments being made within earshot of patients that are inappropriate. When your staff speaks to patients are they using a helpful tone of voice? Protecting patients’ privacy and security should be of utmost importance in your practice.

Giving clear and concise directions to patients is part of lessening the risk of error and/or omission. Clarifying with patients that they understand their directions exhibits patience and a willingness to teach and support them.

Check to make sure you have up-to-date policies on these topics as they all can contribute to the rise of chaos in an office environment if left to individual determination. It is wise to revisit the policies from time to time in order to update them and refresh everyone’s memory to their significance.

Remember, a trip to the doctor’s office is sometimes that last thing that people want to do in their daily routine. Think about all the places you have to go that are less than desired. Making the experience of visiting your medical office a pleasant one is not only the important and prudent thing to do for patients, but it can serve as a chaos preventer as well. Set the tone in your office by first making a decision to decrease toxicity in your office environment for patients and employees so that both can thrive.