

How to Be the Best Chiropractic Assistant

By Paul S. Inselman, DC

After practicing for twenty-six years, I honestly can say that a well-trained chiropractic assistant (CA) is one of a practice's most valuable assets. Understand though, it is a two-way street. A poorly trained CA can be the largest liability to a practice.

In this economy, it is vital that the CA creates ongoing value for the doctor. This will not only ensure the profitability of the practice but it will ensure the CA's job security.

Before I get into some of the specifics of the job, let's investigate some of the general qualities that a top-notch CA possesses. If you lack some of the listed skill sets or qualities, now is the time to start improving upon them.

To be a top-notch chiropractic assistant, start with these important qualities:

- 1 Be a phenomenal people person. If you do not love people, then this is the wrong job for you.
- 2 You must have a great phone voice and phone presence.
- 3 You must possess fantastic organization skills.
- 4 You must be able to multitask efficiently.
- 5 You must be a team player and get along with others.
- 6 You must have confrontation skills. For example, you must be able to ask patients for payment.
- 7 You must be likeable.
- 8 You must portray empathy and a caring attitude.
- 9 You must be genuinely interested in helping others.
- 10 You must be a self-starter.
- 11 You must be loyal to your doctor, practice, and teammates.
- 12 You must be willing to smile until your face hurts.
- 13 You must be able to detect and anticipate problems with patients.
- 14 You must be willing to come early and stay late.
- 15 You must be willing to participate in outside events that could be outside of normal business hours.



Let's go over how to improve your skill sets so you can deliver better service to the patients.

1 You should not have to be told how to be a great people person. That trait is typically one you either have or you don't. To better facilitate those skills, genuinely put other people's needs before your own. For example, imagine that you are just about to take a bite out of your sandwich when the phone rings. A people person happily responds by putting the sandwich down to attend to the person on the phone.

2 A great phone voice and presence is essential to being an excellent CA. Always answer the phone with a big smile. Believe it or not, the person on the other end can "see" that big smile. Next, listen carefully to what the person needs and repeat back for confirmation. Finally, be a great people person and take care of the caller's needs as you would want someone to take care of yours.

3 Organization is the hallmark of success. To be better organized, have your desk completely cleaned off every evening before you leave. That means you must complete all of the day's work on that day. Don't leave filing or insurance claims for the next day. Do everything the same day and watch how easy and effortless your job becomes.

4 If you can't multitask, then you should not work in a chiropractic office. Working as a CA means that you should be able to answer the phone while making copies and directing a patient into an adjusting room. If you are not good at multitasking, practice by doing several things at once. Start by having a phone conversation while filing, or have a phone conversation and make copies. Then move on to other tasks and practice doing them simultaneously. Here is the good news: anyone can learn to multitask with continued practice.



No matter what happens, you must be loyal to your doctor and teammates. That makes a successful team. One for all and all for one.

5 Chiropractic practices are team-player environments. If you can't get along with others, a chiropractic office is not the place to work. Remember, if you are a people person, working with other teammates becomes an easy task.

6 Confrontation does not mean having a "knock-down, drag-out" bloody fight. Confrontation by definition means "the clashing of forces or ideas." To collect fees from patients, you sometimes must stand confidently behind your idea of "You need to pay for your services now" versus the patient's idea of "I'll pay you next week." This is a very important skill to have, not only in the office but also in life. A good way to develop this skill is to role-play with your teammates.

7 Being likeable is easy. Smile and care about the other person while being selfless in your acts. Be kind and do everything that you say you will do and everyone will like you.

8 At all times a CA must portray a caring and empathetic attitude. When people come to the office, they are often in pain and not feeling their very best. This can cause people to become nasty. You must not take it personally. You are there to help your doctor with the healing process and that begins with you being able to handle any situation with a patient. A truly caring attitude complete with empathy (putting yourself in another's shoes)

will go a long way to helping that patient heal and feel good about you and the office.

9 Chiropractic is a helping business. If you do not like to help people, then you need to find another job. To be good at being a helpful person, you only need to put the other person's needs first.

10 A self-starter is someone who shows initiative. Don't be afraid to make mistakes because that is how you learn. If you show your doctor that you are not afraid to lead and can think outside the box, on "raise day" you will be very happy.

11 No matter what happens, you must be loyal to your doctor and teammates. That makes a successful team. One for all and all for one. Live by that rule and your office will become a great source of security and joy.

12 Healing begins with attitude. Nothing exudes a great attitude of caring more than a genuine warm smile. Smiling can even help to heal yourself and others. Smile often and watch others smile back at you.

13 You must be the eyes and ears for your doctor. Patients will tell you things that they are afraid to share with the doctor. You never want to break a patient's confidence but you do need to alert your doctor if a patient is doing something, or might do something, to harm recovery.

14 You will find that working in a chiropractic office is not just a job. It becomes a way of life. You should be willing and able to come early and stay late.

15 Outside events and lectures are a major method used to grow the practice. You must be willing to participate to help your office grow.

Being a chiropractic assistant can be one of the most fulfilling and exciting careers on the planet. How great would your day be if you knew that you helped sick people get well? How great would your day be if you spent it making others smile? By being good at your job and following these simple suggestions, you will have greater job security and career fulfillment.



Dr. Paul S. Inselman, President of Inselman-coaching, is an expert at teaching chiropractors and their staff, how to build honest, ethical, integrity-based practices based on sound business principles. From 2008-2012 his clients' practices grew an average rate of 145% while the general profession was down 28%. His twenty-six years of clinical experience coupled with ten years of professional coaching has allowed him to help hundreds of chiropractors throughout the nation. He can be reached at 1-888-201-0567 or inselmancoaching@gmail.com