

# The Journal of the Michigan Dental Association

---

Volume 106 | Number 6

Article 2

---

6-1-2024

## Building a Unified Dental Team

Michelle C. Dziurgot DDS  
mdziurgot@michigandental.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.ada.org/journalmichigandentalassociation>

---

### Recommended Citation

Dziurgot, Michelle C. DDS (2024) "Building a Unified Dental Team," *The Journal of the Michigan Dental Association*: Vol. 106: No. 6, Article 2.

Available at: <https://commons.ada.org/journalmichigandentalassociation/vol106/iss6/2>

This Editorial and News is brought to you for free and open access by the State & Local Dental Publications at ADACommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Journal of the Michigan Dental Association by an authorized editor of ADACommons. For more information, please contact [commons@ada.org](mailto:commons@ada.org).



By Michelle C. Dziurgot, DDS  
Editor-in-chief

# Building a Unified Dental Team

**W**hat has been keeping our dental teams together since the COVID-19 closure in March 2020? *Unity*. Unity is essential. Unity is the

backbone of separate individuals joined into cohesive well-oiled machines driving down the road of dentistry for their patients.

Unity is working on the same patient, but in different capacities — our patient coordinators aid our patients in scheduling and reviewing co-pays; our insurance coordinators verify our patients' benefits if we participate with their plans; our dental assistants provide us that second pair of hands as well as comfort our phobic patients; our hygienists aid in preserving our patients' gingival health — and we cannot forget our cleaning crews, keeping our offices tidy and free from germs. These team members must work in alignment to achieve our specific goals.

How can we create unity in our dental teams? It isn't an instant process; we must strive and work for it daily. Here are several steps to aid you and your dental teams.

## Communicate clearly and openly

Be honest with your dental team. Provide team members the chance to voice their ideas and opinions. To nurture them into unity, have regular team meetings, on-site or off-site. On-site meetings can cover CPR, HIPAA, infectious disease, and OSHA training. An excellent resource is DiSC® training, offered by the Michigan Dental Association to help our teams discover their inner behaviors and how to use this knowledge to work together for the betterment of the office. Contact Brandy Ryan, our MDA director of human resources, at 517-346-9416 or at [bryan@michigandental.org](mailto:bryan@michigandental.org) to schedule a DiSC® training session. Offsite meetings might include things like ziplining and adventure climbing at Tree Runner West Bloomfield Adventure Park. It will get your heart beating!

## Share goals and visions

Set measurable and realistic goals for your team. Each team member must be included in goal-setting. They must have a sense of ownership in the vision desired by us, the captains of our dental ships. We must track these goals and make changes as needed. Don't drive your office into an iceberg — it's okay to veer off course to keep your boat afloat! Remember, your team members have individual responsibilities and roles, and it's our job to help each see how they contributes to our vision.

## Build trust among your team

Trust is a building block of unity. Our dental offices must value honesty and reliability. Each team member must be dependable, show up to work on time, and have integrity in his or her performance. Office managers along with dental and hygiene team leaders must lead by example. Understand that demonstrating true empathy for our team members during health or home life challenges bolsters their trust in us.

## Respect every culture

Be inclusive. Promote all cultural celebrations, and respect diversity in all team members. Recognize the unique backgrounds, ideas, and skill sets of each of your team members. Cultivate offices in which differences are embraced. Embrace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies and training. Contact the Michigan Diverse Dental Alliance, which represents a group of dental organizations across the state, to move dentistry forward. Visit [midiversedentalalliance.org](http://midiversedentalalliance.org). When the dental field welcomes all backgrounds, we all benefit. ●

---

*What do you think? Contact Editor Dziurgot at [mdziurgot@michigandental.org](mailto:mdziurgot@michigandental.org).*