

# HOW TO CREATE YOUR A-TEAM



# ExecTech Management Consulting

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## How to Create Your A-Team

Each of your employees is one of the following:

- A. High Performer
- B. Adequate Performer
- C. Poor Performer
- D. Negative or Destructive Employee

When all of your staff members are A performers, you have an A-Team and your success is guaranteed. When most of your staff members are B performers, you have an average practice. To the degree you employ C and D employees, you fail.

Fortunately, at least 60% of all employees are A or B performers.

## The Fifteen Characteristics of Each Type of Employee

### A. High Performers

1. Above average productivity
2. High energy
3. Work area is clean and organized
4. Learns quickly
5. Completes all assignments, on time
6. Requires little or no supervision
7. Takes the initiative to lead him/herself and others
8. Brings in new patients on a regular basis; promotes you and your practice at every opportunity
9. As far as anyone knows, has no personal problems
10. Gets around or through job-performance barriers; finds solutions
11. 100% dependable, trustworthy and honest; perfect attendance record
12. Professional appearance at all times
13. Says things like: success, opportunity, happiness, wealth, communication, agreement
14. Instantly and easily liked by almost everyone
15. Finds ways to improve the practice, increase productivity and save you money

This is an A performer! Give this employee opportunities for performance bonuses and other benefits. Delegate more tasks to him or her and promote whenever possible. He or she likes to be challenged with new tasks, targets and quotas. This employee is gold!

### B. Adequate Performers

1. Average productivity
2. Occasionally high energy
3. Work area is sometimes clean and organized
4. Average intelligence; eventually learns the job
5. Completes most easy assignments, but needs help with difficult assignments
6. Requires supervision
7. Waits for someone else to lead and happily follows
8. Occasionally brings in new patients
9. Has personal problems, from time to time
10. Asks you for solutions to job-performance barriers

11. Dependable and honest, most of the time; good attendance record
12. Average appearance
13. Says things like: good enough, get along, adequate, talk it over, fairness
14. Friendly personality
15. Sees little need to change the practice; makes no effort to save money, but is not wasteful either.

This is a B performer. He or she has the potential to be an A employee, if managed properly. Treat this good employee with kindness and respect; give training and coaching and expect the best. Re evaluate in 3 6 months.

### **C. Poor Performers**

1. Below average productivity
2. Low energy
3. Work area is not clean and often disorganized
4. Below average intelligence; difficulties learning the job
5. Cannot complete assignments; delegates tasks back to you; alters your assignments
6. Frequent mistakes; requires constant supervision
7. Does not actually follow your leadership efforts
8. Rarely brings in new patients
9. Has constant personal problems
10. Easily defeated by job-performance barriers
11. Not dependable nor honest; poor attendance record
12. Below average appearance
13. Says things like: do what you have to do, misery likes company, unfair, could be better
14. Disagreeable personality
15. Suggests changes that may harm the practice and increase overhead

You need to replace your C performers. If you are tempted to keep him or her on the job, consider your purposes and priorities and you will see your practice is better off without him or her. There is no need to be harsh or unfeeling, and you can certainly help the person on a personal level, but he or she has no place in your practice.

### **D. Negative or Destructive Employees**

1. Somehow manages to worsen the practice productivity
2. Drains your energy
3. Messy, disorganized work area
4. Below average intelligence; never learns how to correctly do the job
5. Pretends to complete assignments, but never really does
6. Constant mistakes and poor performance seems normal
7. Fights your leadership efforts
8. Somehow repels new patients
9. Spreads personal problems
10. Makes job-performance barriers a bit bigger
11. Dishonest, liar, possible thief; poor attendance record
12. Distasteful appearance
13. Says things like: investigation, lawsuit, getting worse, makes me sick, everyone says . . .
14. Antisocial personality
15. Suggests changes that harm the practice and increase overhead

Terminate this D employee as soon as legally possible. If the employee poses a legal risk, consult a labor law attorney before terminating, especially if he or she is a long term employee or in a protected class (age, race, gender, religion, handicap, etc.).

## How to Analyze Your Staff Members

You can determine which type of employee you have by considering their 15 characteristics. Nobody fits one category perfectly, but each employee will have one category with most of the characteristics. For example, a C employee may have two A characteristics, four B characteristics, nine C characteristics and one D characteristic.

To help you evaluate your employees, we have created a new online tool. You answer 15 questions about an employee and you get immediate results along with our specific recommendations for the employee. Go to [www.exectechweb.com/abcd-tool](http://www.exectechweb.com/abcd-tool).

You can also use the analysis form on the last page of this guideline. Check boxes for the characteristics that best describes the employee. Add up the checkboxes and you will know which type of employee you have.

## Ten Important Facts You Need to Know about Employees

Most practice owners are not aware of the following.

1. Average practices have a mix of B and C employees. All it takes is one A performer to improve a practice. All it takes is one D employee to ruin a practice.
2. Highly successful practices have 70% or more A performers and the rest are B performers. The owners of these practices earn up to three times more than average practices.
3. Practices that are stagnant or are failing have C and D employees. Up to 90% of your troubles come from C and D employees.
4. D employees try to ruin A and B staff members. They spread alarming news about them and try to get them removed. D employees feel threatened by anyone who is more competent than they are.
5. Of all the job applicants who apply for work:
  - 10% are A High Performers
  - 55% are B Adequate Performers
  - 25% are C Poor Performers
  - 10% are D Negative or Destructive Employees
6. Every time you hire an A performer, your statistics begin to increase. You look forward to working with the person. You can depend on A employees.
7. Every time you turn a B performer into an A performer, your statistics increase. It takes detailed job procedure manuals, role playing, coaching and good management to make this change. Up to 45% of B employees can be converted into A employees.
8. Each time you hire a C employee or a D employee, you lose as much as \$75,000 because of the time you waste trying to make the person work out, the losses caused by the individual AND the income you should have generated during that time, but did not.
9. In an average practice, 25% of new staff members are A performers or B performers while 75% are disappointments. Yet, when you know what you are doing, up to 50% of the people you hire will be A performers.
10. If you learn to find, hire and manage A employees, your practice's popularity and statistics will grow without effort. You will earn more profit with less stress than ever.

## **Ten Signs You Have C and D Employees**

If you have more than three of these signs, you have at least one C or D employee.

1. Soon after talking to C or D staff members, you feel irritated, unhappy or depressed. You feel like you have to walk on eggshells around these employees. You sometimes get a gut feeling that they want to ruin your practice.
2. Accepting the fact that you employ C and D staff members can be difficult. At first, you may deny this fact, despite the evidence. Yet if you closely observe these employees for a few days, a bright light bulb above your head will turn on.
3. C and D employees exaggerate minor problems with A and B employees. They do not like being compared to good producers. They hide or falsify their production statistics.
4. D employees usually have more control of your B and C employees than you have. They make them as cold and unfriendly as they are. They make poor attitudes acceptable in your practice.
5. You may feel like exploding at them. If you do explode at one of them, they seek revenge. They quietly steal cash and supplies, secretly ruin your reputation and silently encourage your patients to leave.
6. You feel like your instructions, advice and guidance are being ignored . . . and you are right! They take pleasure in making you feel old, irrelevant or stupid.
7. Bad things happen with patients after they come in contact with D employees. These patients not only post negative reviews, they tell others about their bad experiences.
8. You are overworked because these staff members ignore their duties. They know how to control you by pushing your buttons and acting indispensable. Fear is their best weapon.
9. D employees are often quite smart. For example, they can make you worry you are in trouble or failing. You feel a vague legal threat from them. They are opposed to outside companies, like ExecTech, that help you improve your practice.
10. C and D employees stop your forward progress. You take one step forward and they find ways to push you one step backward. As a result, you feel tired, overworked and underpaid.

## **Ten Benefits of an A-Team**

If you work hard to find and train enough A employees to create an A-Team, and if you keep them happy with plenty of challenges and rewards, you enjoy several benefits.

1. Working with an A-Team is fun! You enjoy training and coaching them. They appreciate your time.
2. You feel like you have a team, not a bunch of employees. You do not feel you are on your own.
3. A employees love their jobs. If you manage them well, and are an A performer yourself, your turnover rate is low and their loyalty is high.
4. You can trust your staff. You never worry that they will take something you say or do and hurt you with it. In fact, if you get attacked, your A-Team defends you.
5. You spend less time managing A employees as they manage themselves. For example, they are just as productive when you are not in the office as when you are there.
6. Patients and others enjoy working with your A performers as they make them feel great! Warm and friendly attitudes are common and automatic. Your team gets your patients glad they came in before you even see them.

7. A performers make your practice popular. They give your patients awesome experiences. As a result, you get and deserve excellent reviews on the internet.
8. Your A-Team generates up to three times more patient referrals than average practices. These new patients are much better than new patients you get from advertising. The money you save just in marketing costs more than covers their higher pay checks.
9. A performers increase your practice efficiency, productivity and income. They take personal responsibility for the success of your practice. They increase your profit.
10. At the end of each day, you feel little or no stress. You feel satisfied with what you and your team are accomplishing. You sleep well.

## **Top Ten Challenges for Creating Your A-Team**

To create your A-Team, you have to face and handle these challenges.

1. A performers are difficult to find. They are rarely unemployed or out looking for new jobs. To attract and hire these types, you need to invest more into your hiring process than you have in the past.
2. B, C and D job applicants try to look like they are A performers. Companies, books and websites teach them how to write misleading resumes and give great interviews. This makes it more difficult to identify true A performers.
3. You need to pay A performers more than other types. They also want their pay to increase because they are increasing the practice's income. Fortunately, they are worth five times more than B employees and twenty times more than C and D employees.
4. As well as causing you stress and anxiety, C and D employees cause the same stress with A employees. They are jealous of your top performers and make it difficult for them to enjoy their work. If you do not remove C and D employees, your A performers will quit.
5. A performers know they are A performers. If you manage them accordingly, they thrive and you prosper! If you treat them like B or C employees they do not perform as they should.
6. Until you understand who you have on staff, you will not manage them properly. For example, you might waste hours of time trying to make C or D employees into A performers. You might also treat A or B performers with anger because of your C and D employees.
7. Changing B employees into A employees requires excellent management skills. In some cases, you will see steady improvements, but in other cases, you may never see a change. To create a team of 100% A performers, all of your B performers will need to become A performers, or be replaced with new A performers.
8. No matter how well you train and coach them, you cannot make C and D employees into B employees. Giving up on a C employee can be difficult.
9. D employees work hard to make you think you need them. They pretend to be A employees, but with poor performance. They also hint that if you fire them, they will hurt you.
10. To attract and keep A performer employees, you need to be an A performer manager.



## **The Five-Step Plan for Creating Your A-Team**

*"I love it when a plan comes together."*

Colonel Smith (played by George Peppard) in the 1980's TV show, *The A-Team*.

Creating your A-Team requires just five steps.

1. Classify your current employees as A, B, C or D. Base your analysis on the facts and not opinion or hope. Know exactly who you have working for you.
2. Fire all C employees and D employees. You are better off leaving their positions empty. Be sure to terminate their employment without opening the door to a lawsuit or by creating enemies.
3. Hire A employees to replace them. Learn how to find them and get them to come work for you. Only hire A employees from now on.
4. Get as many of your B employees to become A employees as possible. If you see constant improvement, your investment will pay off.
5. If your B employees do not improve, despite your best efforts, stop investing time and work into them. Replace them with A employees as soon as possible.

This five step plan is not easy, but it is very, very rewarding.

## **Ten Ways ExecTech Can Help You Create Your A-Team**

As your consulting company, we help you handle the challenges associated with creating your A-Team. We have been helping our clients create A-Teams for over 20 years and we are constantly finding faster and better ways to do so.

ExecTech gives its clients a return-on-investment in many ways, such as overhead reduction, fee increases (with an improved patient/plan mix), improved collections procedures and increased patient retention. But the biggest statistical increases come from making improvements with your staff and staff management.

In addition to 70 articles and guidelines on staff management, ExecTech clients receive help with the following.

### **1. Classify Your Current Employees**

When you start your ExecTech program, your staff members complete an on line questionnaire designed to show us what type of employees you have. We then interview each of your employees, in private, to find out how they like their jobs, what they want to improve with themselves, what they have to say about you and much more.

We then share all of our information with you and give you our analysis for each employee.

### **2. Staff-Management Planning**

Based on our findings, we help you devise a step by step plan for each of your employees.

For your A employees, the plan may include giving them more responsibility and better bonus plans.

For your B staff members, you may give them new training opportunities, more guidance and statistical management.

The plan for C and D employees can include tests, warnings and deadlines to see if they are truly C or D types.

### **3. Staff Termination**

ExecTech's client guideline, "How to Terminate Employees," explains how to comply with related labor laws when firing a C or D staff member. The guideline includes a list of related legal risks, which employees are high-risk, how to give termination warnings, when to bring in an attorney, the actual steps for terminating an employee, how to soften the blow, what to tell your other employees and patients, how unemployment insurance works and more.

If you and your consultant decide a staff member needs to go, you will work out a step by step strategy for that individual employee. The employee's plan may include a series of warnings, important documentation, witnesses and attorney consultations. Your consultant will then coach you through each step and can even come to the termination meeting with you.

#### **4. Hiring System**

The job market is constantly changing and our consultants are always on top of the trends. They know which job ads are working best this year, where to advertise and how much pay you need to offer. They also help you implement a hiring system that works every time.

ExecTech's guideline, "How to Hire Great Staff Members" explains, in detail, the ten steps for hiring A performers:

- Define the Job Requirements
- Attract the Best Applicants
- Screen the Candidates
- Review the Job Application
- Interview the Applicant
- Test the Applicant
- Check the Applicant's Background
- Conduct an Analysis Period
- Make the Final Decision
- Make the Offer

As a result of this system, you hire better qualified employees who are more likely to succeed than ever before.

#### **5. Employee Handbook Office Policy**

Over the years, we have refined and updated our sample office policy manual over 10 times. With each version, we solve more staff problems before they occur and cover the most recent labor laws.

Our manual is written to be a management tool, not just a legal document. It is written at a high-school reading level so all of your employees can understand every sentence. The terms, procedures and rules outlined in the policy are meant to be followed on a daily basis.

You and your consultant go through the sample manual and customize it to your practice. You then send it to a labor attorney for a review and approval.

#### **6. Day-to-day Staff Management**

Your consultant helps you implement dozens of vital staff functions needed to keep your staff members performing at their peaks.

For example, why and how to conduct daily staff huddles and weekly staff meetings, how to set weekly production quotas, how to motivate your staff members to reach their quotas, how to issue staff directives, how to deal with conflicts and disagreements, how to resolve every type of staff problem and much more.

#### **7. Staff Pay and Bonus Plans**

As well as help you create competitive pay levels that work best for your employees AND your bottom line, we help you implement bonus plans to motivate your employees and increase your collections.

When staff members take advantage of their bonus plans, they increase their own pay on their own. They become more responsible for their success. They become more valuable to you.

Of course, C and D employees do not think individual production based bonus plans are a good idea as it shows how little they produce.

A and B staff members love the idea.



## 8. Staff Performance Reviews

Because of bad experiences when reviewing C or D employees, many practice owners make these mistakes.

- Conduct staff performance evaluations only once or twice per year
- Emphasize other matters over productivity
- Are too critical of the staff member
- Do not confront problems, but give a superficial, social evaluation
- Discuss vague generalities instead of specifics
- Shock them by accusing them of poor behavior based on rumors
- Present a list of errors accumulated over time
- End the evaluation with disagreements or bad feelings
- Do little between evaluation meetings to help the staff member

With ExecTech's system for conducting staff reviews, the employee starts the process by completing a self evaluation worksheet. He or she faces the facts alone and then with you. During the meeting, you improve your working relationship. You conclude the meeting with a plan of how the employee can improve his or her performance and pay.

## 9. Your Other Team Members

As well as creating an A-Team of employees, you also need A performer accountants, maintenance people, billing services, lawyers and so on. For example, some accounting firms charge exorbitant fees for simple accounting procedures you or your spouse can easily do on your own. Certain attorneys like to create fear in their clients in order to increase their billable hours. Billing services only collect the easy charges and avoid the challenges.

Your consultant can help you analyze the people you currently use and show you how to improve these parts of your team, whenever possible.

## 10. Become an A Performer Yourself

You spent years in training to diagnose and treat your patients, but little or no time in training to manage your practice. Yet your management skills affect your profit more than anything else you do!

To succeed as a practice owner, you need to succeed as a business manager. You need to know how to perform every job in the organization. You need to know how to manage your group.

You need to manage your time, control your emotions and motivate yourself. You need to represent your practice with charisma, intelligence and advanced people skills. In short, you need to know what you are doing.

With ExecTech on your team, you can and will become an A type manager, create your A-Team staff and reach your goals.

To learn more, contact the office nearest you or go to [www.exectechweb.com](http://www.exectechweb.com).

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# ExecTech's 15-Point ABCD Staff Member Analysis Form

Employee's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You determine an employee's type based on the category with the most characteristics for that employee.

<b>A: High Performer</b>	<b>B: Adequate Performer</b>	<b>C: Poor Performer</b>	<b>D: Negative or Destructive Employee</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Above-average productivity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Average productivity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Below-average productivity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Somehow manages to worsen the practice productivity
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. High energy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Occasionally high energy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Low energy	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Drains your energy
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Work area is clean and organized	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Work area is sometimes clean and organized	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Work area is not clean and often disorganized	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Messy, disorganized work area
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Learns quickly	<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Average intelligence; eventually learns the job	<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Below-average intelligence; difficulties learning the job	<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Below average intelligence; never learns how to correctly do the job
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Completes all assignments, on time	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Completes most easy assignments, but needs help with difficult assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Cannot complete assignments; delegates tasks back to you; alters your assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Pretends to complete assignments, but never really does
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Requires little or no supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Requires supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Frequent mistakes; requires constant supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Constant mistakes and poor performance seems normal
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Takes the initiative to lead him/herself and others	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Waits for someone else to lead and happily follows	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Does not actually follow your leadership efforts	<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Fights your leadership efforts
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Brings in new patients on a regular basis; promotes you and your practice at every opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Occasionally brings in new patients	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Rarely brings in new patients	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Somehow repels new patients
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. As far as anyone knows, has no personal problems	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Has personal problems, from time to time	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Has constant personal problems	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Spreads personal problems
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Gets around or through job-performance barriers; finds solutions	<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Asks you for solutions to job-performance barriers	<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Easily defeated by job-performance barriers	<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Makes job-performance barriers a bit bigger
<input type="checkbox"/> 11. 100% dependable, trustworthy and honest; perfect attendance record	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Dependable and honest, most of the time; good attendance record	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Not dependable nor honest; poor attendance record	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Dishonest, liar, possible thief; poor attendance record
<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Professional appearance at all times	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Average appearance	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Below-average appearance	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Distasteful appearance
<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Says things like: success, opportunity, happiness, wealth, communication, agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Says things like: good enough, get along, adequate, talk it over, fairness	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Says things like: do what you have to do, misery likes company, unfair, could be better	<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Says things like: investigation, lawsuit, getting worse, makes me sick, everyone says . . .
<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Instantly and easily liked by almost everyone	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Friendly personality	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Disagreeable personality	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Antisocial personality
<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Finds ways to improve the practice, increase productivity and save you money	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Sees little need to change the practice; makes no effort to save money, but is not wasteful either	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Suggests changes that may harm the practice and increase overhead	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Suggests changes that harm the practice and increase overhead
<b>Total =</b>	<b>Total =</b>	<b>Total =</b>	<b>Total =</b>