



From “Spinning my wheels” to doubled production in 6 months.

Dr. Milton Cook, of Smithfield, VA (population 8,500), bought his practice in 2003. “This practice started in 1897,” he said. “When I bought it, it was one dentist, a part-time hygienist, one receptionist and one assistant.”

Working hard, Dr. Cook quickly built his practice to include one full-time dentist, a part-time associate, three hygienists, three front desk staff, and three assistants.

But then he hit a plateau. “It was stressful personally trying to keep everything straight from staff to overhead to patients to patient satisfaction to cash flow,” Dr. Cook said. “I was trying to manage it all. I was spinning my wheels. I’d never worked for anybody else or had any specific training in management.”

Seeking answers, Dr. Cook signed up for our Hygiene Diamonds training on the recommendation of his *Henry Schein* representative. After attending the training in September 2019, Dr. Cook didn’t hesitate to join The Team Training Institute. “I was looking for help on the business side as far as how to set up systems, how to define roles, how to define job descriptions,” he said. “I knew I really needed that help.”

Within 30 days, production increased from \$100,000 per month to \$126,000. By February 2020, production had jumped to \$185,000. His office was on track to double production, when COVID-19 forced Dr. Cook to shut down on March 17, 2020. Despite losing half of March, they produced \$114,000. After reopening on May 1, 2020, production reached \$228,000 – a 128% gain in just 6 months.

Here are 4 ways the Team Training Institute has helped Dr. Cook transform his practice:

1. **Begin with an open mind.** Michelle Keckler, his lead hygienist, had concerns before attending the Hygiene Diamonds training. “Whenever they talk about consultants coming in, I immediately would put up a wall,” Michelle confessed. “I’d think, all they’re going to do is tell me, ‘You’re doing this wrong, you’re doing that wrong. You’ve got to see more patients – shorter appointment

times.’ That was always my fear,” she said. But coaching from the Team Training Institute was *different*. “The surprise to me was that there were so many small things we could focus on,” Michelle said. “We left that day with a lot of aha moments ... and we were all ready to jump right in as soon as we got back to work.”

2. **Remove capacity roadblocks.** While others were cutting back during the COVID shutdown, Dr. Cook looked for ways he could expand his practice. “We have literally doubled since The Team Training Institute,” he said. “During March and April when we were shut down, I added two new operatories, and I hired another hygienist. I knew I was out of capacity as far as doctor chairs and doctor time availability. I think the expansion has a lot to do with my increased production. And that’s what Dr. John told me at the coaching retreat. He said, ‘You have a doctor capacity issue, you just can’t get them in.’”
3. **Offer sealants and fluoride to all patients.** “We are doing a whole lot of sealants now because we really never offered it to adults at all before,” Dr. Cook said. “When we started offering sealants to adults, we started seeing a lot of acceptance from adults on that. A couple of hygienists will do 20 to 25 in a day.” Success has come despite some initial reservations. “There was a concern by hygienists when we first started,” Dr. Cook said. “Like, ‘I’m not going to have time to do four sealants on somebody.’ They’re doing 20 now. It’s interesting to see that when you get them emotionally involved in the process, they really take it to heart.”
4. **Add same-day dentistry.** Before the Team Training Institute, Dr. Cook only did same-day dentistry in emergency situations. The simple change of allowing patients the option to take care of problems immediately made a big impact. Cancellations decreased, and production increased. “Same day dentistry is what really drives our practice,” Dr. Cook said. “Hygiene, now that it’s profitable, is a big component. It makes up anywhere from 30% to 50% of our production on any given day. And then our same-day treatment is another 30% of our production.”

Today, Dr. Cook is no longer stuck in a rut. “Without The Team Training Institute, we would still be doing the same we always did _ spinning our wheels and not growing,” Dr. Cook said. “For me personally, it’s rescued me from getting burned out from dealing with everything. I did not need to reinvent the wheel to make a successful practice. The TTI systems are proven to work and can show you how to do that. You just have to believe in the process.”