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improving their bedside manner for the good of the profession as well as for the good of the companies and individuals they serve. Health is a very personal thing and so is ...

Angie Grissom • Nov. 19, 2019



We have all been to a doctor who had an impeccable bedside manner and we tend to remember it for a while. Bedside manner is the way a doctor interacts and communicates with us, their patient, and it is most memorable when we have an ailment that is either extremely concerning, painful, embarrassing or all the above.

Typically, a physician with a good bedside manner is a strong communicator, while

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improving their bedside manner for the good of the profession as well as for the good of the companies and individuals they serve. Health is a very personal thing and so is money. People take money seriously, get excited about it, nervous about the lack of it and sometimes experience great anxiety and pain when sorting out their financial position and forecasts. So, who is in a better place than you, the trustworthy accountant and most trusted business advisor, to show great empathy, listen well and ask questions to help put your patient, i.e. client, at ease?

Ask Thoughtfully, Listen Carefully, Respond Reassuringly

A good bedside manner for a doctor might include showing empathy, being open to communication, involving the patient in health decisions, and helping the patient feel more comfortable. A poor bedside manner can appear as hurried, a failure to listen to a patient, abruptness, a dismissal of a patient's fears, and arrogance. I would argue that the same goes for accountants and other professional service providers.

In the medical profession, it appears that concern about bedside manner has increased in recent years. Some medical schools offer specific courses in practicing an empathetic approach to patients. In some hospitals, doctors are tested on their bedside manner with mock patients who are meant to test their tolerance. These courses and tests hope to improve the bedside manner of doctors who are not good communicators and who have little apparent sympathy for patients.

Don't Let Empathy Suffer in the Quest for Efficiency

While you may have perfected your communication and treatment of your clients, how well have you passed down these standards to others in your firm? With such a strong focus on meeting budgets and realization, many firms find that partners and managers feel hurried and stressed and skip the connecting and listening phase when dealing with clients in order to be efficient. What happens is that the

relationship suffers, true needs and wants go undiscovered, and the relationship does

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correct diagnosis than those who are hurried and not listening well and jump to immediate conclusions based on their past experiences.

Build Quality into Every Client Touchpoint

Bedside manner can affect the quality of care a patient receives in a doctor's office or hospital just as it can affect the quality of advice and work in your office or your client's office. Now may be a good time to look at the quality of the bedside manner both you and your staff are offering to your clients. This includes how phones are answered, how material is gathered, and the time that is spent with clients getting to know their business and the people in it. This also very much includes the way that you communicate solutions and actions steps.

Think about a time that you really helped a client and you could see it in their eyes that you made a difference in their life and business. Strive to have more of those moments. You don't have to cure a disease to have these. Improve your bedside manner and use your gifts of financial literacy and accounting and have more moments like this. Encourage your staff to focus on the people, the pain, the problem so that you can do what you do best and have a long-term impact on the financial health of your clients and their businesses. They will remember it.

Next Steps

If you are looking to improve your firm's capabilities and consistency in providing the highest-quality client experience, Rainmaker's [Five Star Client Service Program](#) can help build a client-centric culture across all levels and areas of expertise in your firm. [Contact Us](#) for a complimentary phone consultation to discuss your firm's culture and organizational development goals.

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