

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

FIRM MANAGEMENT

4 Practice Management Tips for 2022

A mainstay in larger firms, there's plenty of reasons to use a practice management system in smaller firms as well. Designed to streamline workflow, practice management systems can also help you better serve your clients, including making it easier ...

Mary Girsch-Bock • Mar. 29, 2022



With tax season coming to a close, it's time to take a deep breath, look around, and see what worked for your firm (and what didn't) this tax season. While you're at it, it might also be a good time to take a look at practice management systems that may be a good fit for your firm, particularly if you're still operating without one.

A mainstay in larger firms, there's plenty of reasons to use a practice management system in smaller firms as well. Designed to streamline workflow, practice management systems can also help you better serve your clients, including making it easier for them to get you the documents you need. Practice management systems also help staff better manage their to-do lists, while ensuring that work completed is billed in a timely fashion.

What's not to like?

Though most practice management applications center around a time and billing component, applications on the market today include everything from project management, financial management, and CRM capability for better managing customer details.

While most firms have applications that currently manage these tasks, in many cases they're separate systems that don't necessarily talk to each other. The beauty of a complete practice management system is that there is one single system that manages everything seamlessly, eliminating the need to manage your customer information in one system, assign workflow tasks in another, and bill for services in yet another. And if you found yourself busier than ever before this year, having a practice management system in place can help you analyze employee productivity levels as well as profitability levels.

But what if you have a system in place and you and your staff are still struggling with time management and timely billing? There are a few things you can do to get better organized, including the following.

- 1. Don't just accept any client:** When building your firm, you're probably not in a position to be finicky when it comes to accepting new clients. But if you have an established firm, accepting any or all clients may not be a good idea. This is particularly true if you're looking to specialize, which we'll talk about later. For example, if you wish to concentrate on general tax preparation, you can probably feel comfortable accepting most clients. However, if you want to specialize in accounting services for small businesses, it might be best to limit the number of personal tax returns you take on.

2. Review workflow management: You get paid for your time. You must manage it well. Set aside a day or two for client meetings; whether they're in person or on the phone. That way, your work won't be interrupted by meetings. The same thing goes for staff. If you typically route documents to other staff members, make sure you have a process in place that will advise you if something is due or overdue. This is particularly important during tax season when you're inundated with paperwork, but the same premise applies the rest of the year as well.

3. Consider specializing: Specializing may not solve your workflow problems, but it can help you build your practice around a particular specialty. If tax is your thing, stick with that and don't veer off into other areas. But what if you have financial planners on staff? Marketing your firm as a financial management specialist can prove to be beneficial, attracting clients looking for that particular service. Specializing may not be for you, but it's worth consideration.

4. Invest in the latest technology: Investing in new technology is worth every penny invested. Get rid of those slow computers, temperamental printers, and all of the numerous small business software applications you're using and invest in one single application that can help you manage documents online, streamline workflow throughout the firm, and offers a client portal for better communication capability with your clients. Consider this your reward for making it through another busy season by giving yourself the tools to become and remain organized and efficient.

The best time to implement a new practice management system in your firm is now. Come January, you and your staff will be glad you did.

Firm Management • Technology • Article

CPAPA is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2023 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved