

From Odyssey's November 2017 Newsletter

Reflecting on 2017 so far, I believe this year had many (if not most) of you making difficult financial decisions. The level of concern about PPO impact and practice transitions is fairly high judging from course attendees and phone consultations. Everyone is worried about money, right? It just feels different lately. Restrictions placed on contract-bound providers cause real profitability concerns for solo and mid-level providers. Larger companies can handle more financial risk. They also have more leverage to head off potential losses with negotiating power.

Adding an associate and preparing for a practice sale can also be a financial stressor. Solo providers realize that to be more productive that they need to either clone themselves or become robotically efficient. The best compromise is to bring on an associate. That means practice valuations and contracts What if you find out your practice isn't what you thought it was worth? The process is very stressful even without the personalities! Group practices have this transition process down to a science because they do it all the time.

What if you're not a corporation? How do you prepare for significant financial decision-making? Be ready. That's as simple as I can put it. Read up on transitions *before* you need to go through them. Talk to a financial adviser *before* you have significant revenue. Learn how to lead *before* you have a team. I talked at length about all of this in my podcast episode #13 "Feeling Financial Pressure? You're Not Alone." I listed seven proactive steps you can take now and have it as a download here. More detail is in the podcast. I hope it helps!

1. Work with a member of the [Academy of Dental CPAs](#) or a financial advisor who is familiar with dental offices.
2. Invest in non-dental education such as general business, economics and leadership courses. Finding out how other industries succeed can provide insight into your own company's operations.
3. Recommit regularly to what's important. Family, charity work, etc. *Your job is not your purpose.*
4. Discover the empowerment of delegation. Accepting help is how leaders grow in their own positions.
5. Keep an eye out for change both inside and outside of your practice. External factors like regulations or local business failings will affect you.
6. Be okay with emotions surrounding financial decisions. Numbers are logical but the angst they can cause is anything but. Throughout your career painful choices will need to be made.
7. Find your purpose. Why do you work? What's your end goal? Successful business leaders have game plans but also exit strategies. Their purpose guides many of the decisions they make.

