

BERNADETTE BEACH

Dear Practice Manager

Letters, Insights and a
Dash of Humour

REAL TALK
REAL ADVICE
ZERO FLUFF

Dear Practice Manager: Letters, Insights and a Dash of Humour

Real talk. Real advice. Zero fluff.

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Real talk. Real advice. Zero fluff.

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The experiences, scenarios, and examples described in this book are illustrative. Any resemblance to actual persons, practices, or situations is coincidental.

Dear Practice Manager

If you're holding this book, chances are you're the backbone of a medical practice — the one who makes sure the doctors turn up, the patients get seen, the bills get paid, and somehow, everyone keeps their sanity through the chaos.

And that's just before morning tea.

Because managing a medical practice isn't really about checklists and spreadsheets, is it?

It's about navigating personalities that can make or break your day, juggling priorities that pull you in every direction, and wearing so many hats you've lost track of which one you put on first. Some days you feel like a miracle worker. Other days, hiding in the supply closet with a chocolate bar feels like a perfectly reasonable plan.

This book isn't a dry manual full of jargon or a "how-to" guide written by someone who's never actually worked in an office like yours. It's a collection of letters written *to you* — by someone who's been there, seen the good, the bad, and the downright exhausting.

These letters talk honestly about the stuff no one really warns you about.

The people.

The pressure.

The decisions you make quietly, every day, that keep everything moving.

Think of this as your unofficial mentor, a voice in your corner, and occasionally the reassurance you didn't realise you needed.

So pull up a chair, grab that chocolate bar (you've earned it), and let's get real about what it actually takes to be a great Practice Manager. Because you're not just managing a practice — you're holding together a community of people who rely on you more than they probably ever say out loud.

And yes — you've got this.

Your Fellow Practice Manager

People

Managing People Without Losing Yourself

Dear Practice Manager

The Staff Member Who's Always "Off on Mondays"

Let's be honest — every practice has *that* staff member.

The one who somehow never works Mondays.

They're sick on Mondays.

They've got appointments on Mondays.

They've "already flagged it" on Mondays.

By Tuesday, they're fine. Completely functional. Often cheerful.

It's impressive, really.

Here's why this matters more than it seems.

It's rarely about the Monday itself. It's about **patterns**, **fairness**, and the quiet resentment that builds while everyone else picks up the slack.

Because while you're trying to be understanding, the rest of the team is noticing everything. Staff always do. They might not say anything at first — but they're keeping a mental tally.

And sooner or later, someone will ask:

"So... are Mondays optional now?"

That's when it becomes your problem.

Here's the real deal:

- **Trust patterns, not excuses**
One Monday off is life. Five is a pattern. You don't need to jump to conclusions — but you do need to pay attention.
- **Document what you're seeing**
Dates. Reasons. Frequency. Facts only. This isn't about vibes — it's about clarity.
- **Have the conversation early**
Not confrontational. Not awkward. Just factual.
"I've noticed you're frequently unavailable on Mondays. Is there something going on we should talk about?"
- **Be consistent**
Flexibility is fine. Selective flexibility is how morale quietly dies.

Sometimes there's a legitimate reason — great. You can plan around that.

Sometimes there isn't — and behaviour often improves the moment it's calmly addressed. Remember: avoiding the conversation doesn't make you kind. It just makes the issue last longer.

You're not being harsh.

You're not being unreasonable.

You're being fair.

And fairness is one of the most underrated leadership skills there is.

—Your Fellow Practice Manager
(Who Has Seen This Exact Pattern Before)

Dear Practice Manager

Your Staff Hates Morning Meetings (And You Might Too)

Okay let's call it — nobody comes to work excited for a morning meeting.

Not the receptionist.

Not the nurse.

Not you.

Especially when it's scheduled right when the phones start ringing, the waiting room fills up, and everyone is quietly wondering why they're standing around instead of doing the work that's about to explode.

If you've ever looked around the room and seen:

- blank stares
- people clutching coffee like it's life support
- someone checking the time every 30 seconds

...you're not imagining it.

Morning meetings have a reputation — and not a good one.

Here's the problem: most morning meetings try to do too much, too early, with too little caffeine.

They turn into:

- long-winded updates
- side conversations
- a list of everything that's about to go wrong

And somehow, everyone leaves more tired than when they arrived.

But here's the real deal — **meetings aren't the issue. Bad meetings are.**

When they're done right, morning meetings actually make the day easier.

Here's how to stop yours from becoming a daily endurance test:

- **Keep it short — shorter than your coffee break**
Ten to fifteen minutes. That's it. If it needs longer, it needs a different time.
- **Stick to today**
Staffing gaps. Schedule issues. One or two reminders.
Not last week's drama. Not next month's strategic vision.
- **Don't let it become a vent session**
There's a fine line between "raising an issue" and "emotionally unloading before 9am." Save the deep dives for later.
- **Start on time and end on time**
Nothing kills goodwill faster than a meeting that ignores its own finish time.
- **Open with one win**
Even something small like:
"Yesterday was busy, but we handled it well."

Morning meetings aren't about control — they're about clarity. When people walk away knowing what to expect, the day runs smoother.

And if your team still groans a little when you call them together?
That's okay.

At least now, it'll be brief.

—Your Fellow Practice Manager
(Also Running on Coffee)



For the parts of the job no one really talks about

BERNADETTE BEACH