

## PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

# THE DYNAMIC DUO

Learn how a strong doctor–office manager relationship can grow your practice.

**D**octors of optometry in private practice aren't just caring for their patients. They also need to tend to their businesses.

"If you are going to open a McDonald's, it's understood that you start the business with management in place," says Steven Reed, O.D., owner of Family Vision Clinic in Magee, Mississippi. "For health care providers, there is no reason to abandon the basic management ideas and principles commonly used in other successful businesses. There are practices out there that are well inside of what their potential could be because they simply don't have effective management in place."

A big piece of effective management, Dr. Reed believes, is having a good office manager on staff.

Dr. Reed and his office manager, Beverly Roberts, CPOT, have been working together for 10 years. Initially, Roberts was a technician in the practice, and when Dr. Reed realized he needed an office manager, he asked Roberts to take on the role. She manages Family Vision Clinic and another nearby clinic the practice just opened. She also oversees two other practices that Dr. Reed and a partner own, traveling to those offices once a week to make sure things are running smoothly.

Dr. Reed and Roberts will share their time-tested insights on how to develop a good doctor–office



Beverly Roberts, CPOT



Steven Reed, O.D.

manager relationship at the 2016 Optometry's Meeting® in Boston, June 29–July 3. The continuing education course, "Building a Dynamic Duo," will focus on what an office manager can bring to a practice and then how to effectively create the position and foster the relationship.

"One of the huge benefits of having a strong relationship between the doctor and the office manager is that you can achieve, and you should be achieving, big goals in that practice," Dr. Reed

says. "So part of this course is getting the offices thinking in terms of being very goal-oriented. You don't know where you are going unless you have some place in mind."

Dr. Reed and Roberts offer the following pieces of advice for optometrists who are thinking of hiring, or want to strengthen their relationship with, an office manager:

- **Clearly define the position.** The office manager must have a detailed job description that aligns with the short- and long-term goals of the practice. That means there is no one perfect office manager job description—the role will look different at each practice. As the practice goals change, so should the office manager's responsibilities. "Each year I've served as office manager, the position has grown in an exciting way," Roberts says. That's because the practice has expanded, adding more doctors, staff and patients.
- **Regularly schedule time to meet.** Dr. Reed and Roberts speak daily about what's going on in the various offices, but they've learned that they also need to regularly meet one-on-one to go over the nitty-gritty details of the business. "We make a point every single month to sit down for as long as it takes to go over stats, goals, where we stand and so forth," Dr. Reed says. —Gayle Bennett

› Register for Optometry's Meeting® in Boston, Massachusetts, before May 2 to receive early-bird discounts at [optometrymeeting.org](http://optometrymeeting.org), and attend "Building a Dynamic Duo," presented by Steven Reed, O.D., and Beverly Roberts, CPOT, Friday, July 1, at 10 a.m.