

## PASSIVE VS ACTIVE DENTAL ASSISTANT

There is a clear difference between a passive and an active dental assistant. A passive assistant is not actively engaged in his/her job. An active assistant takes charge of his/her own learning and does whatever it takes to get the job done. Take a look at the following behaviors. Decide what you would do in a situation. If you find that you are more passive than active, then it's time to change your behaviors or realize that dental assisting may not be the best career choice for you.

Situation	Passive Assistant	Active Assistant
Autoclave stops functioning and gives an error code.	Tells a coworker that the autoclave has an error.	Sees the error code, gets the autoclave manual, finds the error code listed in the troubleshooting section, determines what part may have to be ordered, and then goes to the manager/doctor with the problem AND solution.
While assisting for a filling, the doctor reminds the patient that the decay may be more extensive than what appears on the radiograph. The pulp then becomes exposed and the filling procedure now turns into a root canal.	Does not recognize what is happening and must have the doctor tell the assistant to get out the root canal materials and instruments.	Recognizes that the pulp has been exposed and since this was a possibility from the onset, already has some of the root canal materials and instruments nearby.
Assisting for a crown and the gum tissue starts bleeding around the prep.	Does not recognize what is happening and/or does not understand the procedure enough to know that this requires attention.	Understands that any bleeding can interfere with the next steps of the procedure and so he/she gets out a hemostatic agent without being told.
Low on impression material.	Sees that the practice is low on impression material or doesn't even notice it at all.	Keeps an eye on all stocked materials and doesn't let materials get low enough so as to interfere with a patient's treatment.
Doctor introduces a new service.	Half listens to the information given by the doctor regarding the new service.	Listens intently to the information given by the doctor regarding the new service. Asks questions. Writes down notes. Finds additional resources available to educate him/herself on the service. Learns as much as possible, which may occur on his/her own time, to be as prepared as possible to educate patients and to assist for this service.
Lab case has not arrived for patient coming in today.	Did not know the case had not arrived until setting up for that patient moments before patient is due to arrive.	Follows a clear system of lab tracking to ensure that cases are in office, and that they have been correctly fabricated by the lab BEFORE a patient is called for his/her appointment.

# PASSIVE VS ACTIVE DENTAL ASSISTANT ASSIGNMENT

**GOAL:** To understand Passive vs Active Dental Assistants

**LOGISTICS:** Create two scenarios. Do not use the same examples from the previous page.

Think of a situation and describe how a passive assistant would handle the situation and then how an active assistant would handle the situation.

Situation:

Passive:

Active:

Think of a situation and describe how a passive assistant would handle the situation and then how an active assistant would handle the situation.

Situation:

Passive:

Active:

Date of completion:

Reviewed with doctor/manager:

Initial after satisfactory completion: