

Engagement "Blockers"- A Troubleshooting Guide

Often after convening a team and defining a shared vision, many people are engaged. Still, others may be initially skeptical, and only start to come around when they begin seeing the value of the work. Here are some potentially challenging personality types along with tips to address the concerns they represent.

***KEEP IN MIND: Even the most well-intentioned people can be "blockers" . Keeping your long-term vision in mind and knowing that you are not alone can help keep you motivated, even if you are feeling some negativity in the air!*

- **Negative Nelly:**

- How to spot her: Many practices have one or some. They may mean well but they have a reason why NOTHING will work: "screening will slow up flow", "patients won't want to do it", "No way other team members will be on board". Very often this individual needs to be heard; he or she is frustrated and needs an outlet to vent.
- What to do: Don't disagree, allow space for the venting, even become a trusted confidant. After 1-2 sessions of just listening- gently state "I hear all of your concerns. How about we give this part of the process a try on a small scale, keep close watch and check in how it's going? Since you are so keyed into practice dynamics, it would be great if you can give a gentle reminder to others!" (e.g. empower them)

- **Lazy Laura:**

- How to spot her: Plain and simple, she just doesn't want anything else to do. The key is to identify her, as she may not outwardly declare herself- in fact, she may be quite affable and agreeable in your encounters, but in all follow-up it turns out she doesn't deliver.
- What to do: The key to engaging her is to make the follow-up and accountability real and reliable. Ensure that she ultimately realizes how her lack of completing her responsibility has an impact, and will indeed be identified. "Incentivize" her if you are able with strong feedback for small successes, reminders that are uplifting, and snacks! If possible, provide small rewards for achieving outcomes. Lastly, remind her about the underlying reason behind the initiative.

- **Busy Bonnie:**

- How to spot her: She just doesn't have time and she is a fleeting image whenever you try to have a check in or talk.
- What to do: Acknowledge that her time is limited but that her participation is crucial to the success of implementation. Prepare yourself to give quick, concrete facts to support developmental screening implementation and what part the doctor will play. Follow-up routinely to ensure that the message was received!



- **Know-It-All Neil:**

- How to spot him: He will tell you right off the bat that he knows all the information you have provided in support of screening, and that he IS screening- in fact, all doctors are, so this initiative is a waste of time! He might eventually acquiesce, but will remind you that he is going along to appease you.
- What to do: Know-it-alls tend to find the perceived need for quality improvement insulting- it insinuates that he is not doing a good job. Most importantly, Neil wants to be validated for the work that he is doing. Acknowledge that he is doing the best by his patients and that he might even be conducting standardized developmental screens, but that it is not happening at a practice-wide level with regularity. Remind him that making the process an integral part of the larger practice process will ensure that it takes less time, happens more regularly and will continue past his tenure at the practice.