

Excel is the Skill You Need or Need to Improve



It's Time to Improve Your Excel Skills

Excel (or any spreadsheet program, try **OpenOffice** if you don't have Excel) should be the go-to tool for any medical practice manager who is tasked with data analysis.

Examples of some of the data you should be analyzing in your practice:

- What are my net collection percentages by payer?
- Am I receiving reimbursement at cost plus for any vaccines and injectables I am supplying to patients?
- Do I know the potential value of a contract offered by a payer or an Independent Physician Association?
- What is the cost of adding a new physician, NP, PA or service line to my practice?

Your practice management system may already crunch numbers for you, but:

1. Is it exactly the information you need?
2. Is it in the format in which you need it?
3. Is all the data I need to analyze found inside the practice management system?

What if you don't trust the information coming from your practice management system? Many managers don't. One of the first rules to data analysis is "Know What You Are Looking At". Are you confident that the data you received is the data you asked for? You may need a conversation with your practice management system support team to be sure you understand where

the system is pulling data from and if it is the date you want.

A clear understanding of how your practice management system filters and reports your data is critical to producing INFORMATION. Data only has the potential to become information when it is accurate and actionable.

How to learn Excel or improve your Excel skills:

If you know only enough Excel to get by, Nate Moore's series on Excel is a great place to start. Because he is in the healthcare field, his examples make sense. His videos (new ones regularly) are free **here**.

I first wrote about Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) back in 2013 **here** and the list of offerings just keeps growing. Coursera offers buckets of **free** courses, including courses on Excel like these:

- Microsoft: **Microsoft office Fundamentals: Outlook, Word and Excel**
- PricewaterhouseCoopers Accounting Firm: **Problem Solving With Excel**
- Rice University: **Introduction to Data Analysis Using Excel**

For those of you that have the basics of Excel under your belt, proceed to learning about **Pivot Tables**. They will become your new best friend.

Big list of all kinds of free courses **here**.