

Hi!

I have been a Chiropractor for 3 years. I had my own practice in Buffalo NY and then decided to move back home to Northern NY in August 2021. I reached out to a local chiropractor in hopes of joining their practice, I threw all my eggs in one basket; I was desperate to find a job. In November 2021 I was welcomed into the practice after multiple meetings and personality tests later to make sure I was what they were looking for.

Things began to spiral slowly downhill at first and then as the months passed, speed was gaining. I began to notice in March 2022 that the owners of the practice and I had very different ideas on what chiropractic treatments are. I let it go for a while and thought I could get past it and become what they were looking for in a provider. I was hired to treat patients and help grow the practice, eventually to take the practice over as the owners were looking toward retirement in the upcoming years. What the owners were looking for was an exact replica of them, someone who treated patients the exact same way as they did with no variations in care.

Fast-forward a few months later, July 24, 2022 to be exact and my life would never be the same. A few days prior I had a meeting with my boss about the concerns I had with treatment and the practice in general.

- I had stated that 3 minutes wasn't enough time to treat patients in and the practice felt like a factory setting (4 patients every 15 minutes was expected).
- I had stated that I struggled with coming to work everyday trying to adjust just like him. (He prefers an activator tool method and I prefer manual adjustments)
- I had stated that diversity in the workplace is a good thing and having 2 providers that treat differently allows for more options for patients to get the care they need. I really struggled when patients would see me as a provider and ask to be manually adjusted because they were not feeling better with the treatment they had been receiving. I felt torn between doing what a patient is paying for or doing what I was hired for. Those listed above were the concerns I had in the meeting, for which I was hoping we could come to a compromise. Little did I know I would be fired...on a Sunday. The reason they gave me was "our views don't align." Which was true and in hindsight this has been a blessing in disguise, but not without significant struggle. When I signed my contract there was a 2 year 25 mile radius non-compete clause in it. I had asked before I signed if we could alter that and the owners had said we could negotiate if needed. When I was fired I asked if that negated the contract and they said no, the non-compete still stands. Not only in NY a fire at will state, its also a state that still utilizes non- competes. So now, I am jobless, in a lot of student loan debt and not allowed to work within a 25 mile radius of my home. Living in a small town, 25 miles is the equivalent of 45-60 minutes of driving time.

This is just the tip regarding the things they have put me through. The rest I have listed below.

- When I was hired I was not allowed to practice or adjust anyone. I was a desk receptionist and the only reason I got to adjust was because Covid-19 struck their household, twice. So, I went from seeing nobody for weeks to seeing 70-80 patients a day. All while expected to treat them the exact same way they did without altering anything.
- Before they fired me, I had to fire an employee who had worked for them for 2-3 years. She had 2 shifts left before her “resignation” date was to be reached. During those 2 days I hired 2 new employees. This is where things get strange...I was allowed to hire and fire employees. I was allowed to create new treatment plans for patients but I was NOT allowed to change existing treatment plans for patients. Which still does not make sense.
- He would become jealous and would pull the other staff members aside and ask why patients were on my schedule instead of his. During the meeting I had with him in July 2022 he made a comment about how he didn’t like that patients he had seen for years no longer wanted to be seen by him and began showing up on my schedule.
 - This point and the one above, demonstrate qualities of narcissism. My former employer was/is a very controlling person who wants things to be exactly his way. While in the situation it was very hard to see, but now that I no longer work at that practice it is much clearer that I would always be inferior to him and his abilities.
- They fired me 3 days before I was supposed to get a \$4,000 bonus, needless to say I never got that.
- I began weekly mental health counseling because I was afraid to run into them out in public, the thought of seeing them sent me into a pure state of anxiety. It had reached a point where I would only leave the house when I knew they had operating business hours. I still talk to a mental health counselor every week. I began that in February 2022.
- I had a virtual court hearing in March 2022 with a labor law judge with the Department of Labor in NY because they felt I was ineligible for unemployment benefits. During that hearing my former boss had stated that I was fired for misconduct, the judge had decided after the hearing that his reason for firing me was not misconduct and had included prior court cases to justify her decision.

- He had printed off posts from my facebook page and mailed them to the Department of Labor stating that I was working. My facebook posts were informative posts about common conditions people have and how to fix them or who would be best at helping with said condition.
- He bribed patients to get information about what I was doing. He gave away free services for information about me. He had bribed patients on 2 separate occasions. The first time being in October 2022 - soon after he fired me and the second occasion being March 2023.
- Since the virtual court hearing things with my former employer have been quiet but I am afraid that he will continue to harass and find ways to come after me. I have spoken to the assistant in the Attorney Generals office about this situation as well.

I am sure this exceeds the definition of brief, but this situation has been exhausting. Mentally, physically and emotionally. If you do the math I was only at this job for 8 months before being fired. I chose to keep the names and business name of my previous employers anonymous because I do not feel that is relevant. This is my story and if were being honest, they did me a favor by firing me. All I want is to be able to work in my town again and treat patients the way they deserve to be treated. Patients deserve to be heard and they deserve more than 3 minute interactions with their chiropractor. I want to be the voice for those in healthcare that cannot practice or perform what they love to do because of a binding contract. There cannot be secrets in healthcare. There cannot be confidential information about treatments or technology in healthcare. The goal of healthcare is to help people and by having non-competes we are not helping people. Being a female in a male dominant profession is not easy, in fact its grueling.