

**How To Keep Your Solo Practice Thriving in the Era
Of Corporate Dentistry and DSO's.**



“You are here to make a difference, to either improve the world or worsen it. And whether or not you consciously choose to, you WILL accomplish one or the other.”

-Richelle Goodrich, author

www.DebraEngelhardtNash.com
DEBRAENGELHARDTNASH@GMAIL.COM

704 895-7660 office

705 904 3459 cell



“Leadership is not about a title or a designation, it’s about impact, influence and inspiration, impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading the passion you have for your work, and you have to inspire team-mates and customers.”
 - Robin S. Sharma, author

The Impact of Leadership:

“Leadership is action, not position.”

The Circles of Impact – The Circles of Practice Influence



Generic behavior

Expected behavior

Augmented behavior

Potential behavior

Where is your practice? _____

Debra
ENGELHARDT-NASH

Behavior that Makes An Impact – What Sets Your Practice Apart?

What's your story?

What is your philosophy of care?

How do you let your patients know?

What does the Team say about You and Your Practice?

How do we communicate?

**Body
Language
Tone
Written**

TELEPHONE INTRODUCTION

THE NEW PATIENT EXPERIENCE

TELEPHONE INFORMATION IS SHARED WITH THE ENTIRE TEAM.

THE NEW PATIENT LEARNS ABOUT OFFICE PHILOSOPHY AND THE QUALITY OF CARE.

THE DOCTOR IS INTRODUCED TO THE NEW PATIENT BY A TEAM MEMBER.

THE PATIENT IS SCHEDULED FOR TREATMENT *AFTER* CONSULTATION AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE.

THE NEW PATIENT RECEIVES A FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL.

PATIENTS ARE SEATED WITHIN TEN MINUTES OF APPOINTMENT TIME.

PATIENTS OF RECORD ARE RENEWED EVERY 5 YEARS.

THE OFFICE HAS A WAY OF LETTING PATIENTS KNOW ABOUT THE SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE.

PATIENTS ARE ALWAYS INTRODUCED TO IDEAL DENTISTRY.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE FLEXIBLE WITHOUT BEING HARMFUL.

THE ENTIRE TEAM IS COMFORTABLE ENDORSING THE PRACTICE AND ASKING FOR REFERRALS.

OUR OFFICE LITERATURE, FORMS AND LETTERS ILLUSTRATE OUR QUALITY.

WE HAVE CONDUCTED A PATIENT SURVEY WITHIN THE LAST FIVE YEARS. (And ordered a demographic/psychographic survey of our top zip codes.)

WE MONITOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR TREATMENT PRESENTATIONS.

WE CONDUCT REGULAR TEAM MEETINGS TO DISCUSS PATIENT CARE AND PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT.

WE REVIEW OUR PATIENT & PRACTICE STATISTICS REGULARLY.

THE OFFICE HAS A PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT BUDGET.

OUR IDEAS ARE EASILY SHARED.

“Most of us understand that innovation is enormously important. It's the only insurance against irrelevance. It's the only guarantee of long-term customer loyalty. It's the only strategy for out-performing a dismal economy.”

Gary Hamel, American Businessman

What Steps Will You Take As A Result of Discovery?



12 TRAINING PRINCIPLES

“THE BEST TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE WORLD IS ABSOLUTELY WORTHLESS WITHOUT THE WILL TO EXECUTE IT PROPERLY, CONSISTENTLY AND WITH INTENSITY.”

JOHN ROMANIELLO

1. PATIENTS DON'T TALK TO THE PRACTICE. THEY TALK TO YOU.
2. GREAT SERVICE STARTS WITH A GREAT ATTITUDE. (WOULD YOU WANT TO TALK TO YOU?)
3. THERE IS ONLY ONE JUDGE OF GREAT SERVICE. THE PATIENT.

4. PATIENTS DON'T THINK OF THEMSELVES AS PATIENTS. THEY THINK OF THEMSELVES AS PEOPLE WHO NEED OUR HELP. ENJOY HELPING PEOPLE AND YOU'LL DO A BETTER JOB.
5. THERE IS NO RIGHT WAY TO TALK TO PATIENTS. EVERY PROBLEM IS DIFFERENT SO EVERY CONVERSATION IS DIFFERENT.
6. DON'T JUST TALK TO PATIENTS. TALK TO THE TEAM. EVERYONE IS THE VOICE OF THE PRACTICE.
7. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF PATIENTS. YOU HAVE TO CARE ABOUT THEM. (GREAT SERVICE IS NOT JUST A TRANSACTION. IT'S A BOND.)
8. DON'T JUST SOLVE PROBLEMS – CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO ELIMINATE OR MINIMIZE PROBLEMS. (VIEW PROBLEMS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW.)
9. DON'T JUST LISTEN – LEARN. ACTING ON SMALL COMPLAINTS CAN GENERATE BIG IMPROVEMENTS.
10. LEARN TO ANTICIPATE.
11. EVERY PATIENT IS A JUDGEMENT CALL. THE DEEPER YOUR KNOWLEDGE, THE BETTER YOUR JUDGEMENT.
12. IF YOU REALLY WANT TO HELP PATIENTS, DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP.

8 Rules for Increasing Influence

By Debra Engelhardt-Nash

www.DebraEngelhardtNash.com

What does it take to get a “Yes” to treatment from your patients? There is no quick fix, magic wand or potion that will give you the treatment success you’re dreaming for. The difference between success and failure is not a single secret but it is a secret formula. There is a series of 8 critical principles that will lead you to success. Some of these are fundamental steps that successful salespeople and entrepreneurs have been executing for centuries. They are attributes that high achievers have in common.

1. BELIEVE YOU CAN.

A sense of confidence is the air you have about you that’s bred by preparation. Prepare with education. Acquire the skills to become proficient in your work. A commitment to

ongoing training keeps Doctor and Team on top of the latest clinical techniques and practice development strategies.

Expose yourself to what's new. If you're not learning new techniques and technology your practice will not be prepared to offer these to patients. Providing in office training programs, sharing journals and manufacturer's materials for review helps the Team stay current in dentistry. Plan with goals and the details for their achievement.

The best part about confidence is that it's contagious. You can give it to your team and your patients.

2. INTENTION

The doctor who will gain the most is the one who wants it the most. Victory does not always go to the swift (hare vs. tortoise), victory does not always go to the powerful (David vs. Goliath) and victory does not always go to the lowest price (Kia vs. Mercedes). The victory we call success goes to the best-prepared, self-believing, responsible person who sees the opportunity and is willing to take a risk to achieve.

3 . TEAM

There are influential moments during a patient's visit when opportunities occur to discuss and validate treatment options. Finding these occasions to perpetuate and sustain the perception of quality care is the responsibility of every Team member. From the initial moment of contact to post treatment continuing care visits, the Team builds quality culture at all patient encounters. With the rest of the Team, the Chairside Assistant is responsible for those critical moments in and out of the operatory. Being Chairside with patients is an exceptional opportunity to communicate quality and endorse treatment.

4. KNOWLEDGE

Additional training to learn new techniques and technology will boost Team confidence in talking to patients. A well-informed auxiliary can help patients better understand treatment recommendations. The more knowledgeable in materials, treatment processes and technology, the more information they are able to share with the patient. Confirming the doctor's diagnosis and helping define the treatment plan aids in patient understanding and promotes treatment acceptance.

With the use of visual aids, the Chairside Assistant can explain treatment. Photographs, intra-oral cameras, and media learning improve patient communication. The Chairside Assistant should be adept with learning technology use them to augment patient learning.

Teaching the Assistant to share patient information improves Chairside efficiency and doctor / auxiliary utilization. This Team member can assume a lot of the responsibility of patient communication while the doctor is attending to other treatment needs. Knowing the details of patient care helps the Chairside Assistant become the Treatment Ambassador.

5. EMPATHY

Patients are looking for validation of treatment choices. They want the assurance that they have chosen the right office and the right doctor for their dental care. When the Chairside Assistant introduces the practice philosophy and praises the doctor's care, she is fulfilling the need for treatment validation. In essence, the Assistant becomes the second opinion at the chair.

The dental Assistant can take the time to listen to patient concerns, expectations and questions. The Assistant becomes the liaison between doctor and patient. Time must be allocated to listen without interruption. Appropriate body language telegraphs empathy and interest to the patient. The Assistant should sit at eye level with the patient, at their side, and slightly forward. Eye contact must be maintained and the Assistant leans into the patient. This body language says, "What you are saying is important and I am paying attention."

Data entry and record keeping is integrated in such a way that does not take precedence over patient focus. Full attention is paid to what the patient is conveying, not what the response will be. Other distractions to patient focus is eliminated or minimized.

6. ENTHUSIASM

Being excited about treatment possibilities transmits to patients. The Chairside Assistant must convey her / his zeal for the practice. Praising the doctor and exhibiting enthusiasm for what the treatment plan can offer the patient in dental health and appearance translates to the patient. When the staff is genuinely excited about the office, and apparently proud of the doctor's care, it captures the patient's interest. Patients like to be surrounded by a team of professionals that exude confidence and show interest in their care. The enthusiasm of the team captivates the patient.

Imagine going to a Theme Park, such as Disneyworld or Universal Studios and meeting apathetic employees. These are employees who aren't excited about the thrills and adventures being offered by the park. Would that change your experience? If you asked a ride attendant if the amusement is fun or worth the wait, and they responded by saying, "I don't know", or "I have been on this so many times, that it isn't fun for me anymore", would that alter your opinion? Or, if the employee said, "This is just my job, I don't enjoy the ambiance anymore." would you have a different perspective? This writer thinks that you would.

Enthusiasm is infectious. Creativity and enthusiasm will outsell experience. Patients will respond more favorably to a positive, affirming Team.

7. SINCERITY

Patient communication must be genuine. In order to be believed, the message must be heartfelt. The Dental Assistant must communicate with authority and sincerity. Scripting may be a helpful tool in designing communication. But if the Team member does not believe the message, the patient may feel the remarks rehearsed and contrived.

Time must be spent in helping Team Members understand and appreciate treatment philosophy, practice systems and desired treatment outcomes. Opportunity to ask for clarity and tools to help in patient communication is handled in staff meetings and Team dialogue. Core beliefs are described and discussed to provide a clear understanding of practice philosophy and design to achieve sincere endorsement.

The patient will witness care from all Team Members when everyone genuinely agrees on the core values of the practice. The message may be articulated differently, blending individuality with the philosophical foundation of the practice. But the core belief is the underlying theme in all communication processes.

8. PRESENCE

In order to communicate effectively, the Dental Assistant must be fully present. This is more than physical attendance. The Assistant must be in the moment, paying attention to the words and watching for signs that the communication connection is successful.

The patient may be reluctant to tell the doctor that they don't understand, or haven't fully grasped the treatment dialogue. This is when the Chairside Assistant becomes an interpreter. When the doctor is not in the room, the Chairside Assistant reviews information, confirms treatment recommendations and asks the patient, "What questions can I answer for you?" This allows the patient to ask for more information and gain more assurance in the treatment plan and procedure.

The schedule must be structured to allow the Dental Assistant to attend the patient in the operatory rather than leave them stranded while attending to non-patient duties. Sterilization time, chart completion and preparing for patient care must be factored into patient treatment time to avoid leaving the patient alone to attend to these functions. Patients want to feel well cared for, and are more interested in how they are being treated, rather than if the next operatory is being stocked.

Sitting with the patient while the doctor is out of the room, or during a planned waiting period during the procedure aids in the communication process. Using this time as an opportunity to discuss their care, their potential treatment results and the additional services the practice can offer builds rapport and patient loyalty.

There are many tasks that need to be accomplished by the Assistant. Exceptional assistants are specialists in infection control, materials management and operator efficiency. In addition to these clinical duties, effective patient communication is an essential skill for the Chairside Dental Assistant. What drives all of the practice tasks is patient care. Patient care is improved when communication processes are fine-tuned.

Opportunities abound to improve and enhance Chairside Communication. The result is patient comfort is improved, treatment acceptance is increased. Patient satisfaction is achieved and practice potential expands.

The real secret to gaining treatment acceptance is to put your heart into your work.

Debra
ENGELHARDT-NASH