Positive impact, positive results!

It’s important to make a positive impact from the start, to entice dental patients back. Success coach Adrienne Morris offers some advice to help get on the right track.

1 Promise less, deliver more. Expecting too much from a patient only means it really pays to undersell what you are giving and then over-deliver: the end result, a client who is thrilled to have gained a truly valuable product/result which exceeded their expectations. At the same time you will have an initial and brief and hopefully an extremely satisfied client who will be happy to recommend you and use your services again and again. Whatever you have gained profit-wise, you will have vastly exceeded as far as your reputation for performance, delivery and reliability is concerned.

2 Play full out. You know this isn’t a dress rehearsal. Treat each and every opportunity as if it’s the most important in your life and give every- thing you’ve got. You never know who is watching to see how you’re performing. Even if they don’t sign up this time, it may take just one more occasion for them to see you or the results of your work in action to convince them that they did. If you’ve got what they want. Don’t be disappointed if they don’t give you an order or booking at the first meeting or the next – you have to build up trust and confidence. And if you’re always giving of your best, this will be enhanced each time they meet you or hear about you.

3 Pay attention to detail. Don’t be sloppy – attend to even the smallest detail because all those minute details add up to a great professional finish and that’s always going to make a good impression. Check spellings of names, check titles and how people like to be addressed.

4 Know your subjects. If you’re trying to reach someone, get names of the ‘gatekeepers’ ie, secretaries, personal assistants, receptionists – establish a rap- port with them – they’re the ones who might just get you through the door when they’re rejecting everyone else (Peter Thomson, the renowned business consult- ant, refers to receptionists as ‘re- jectionists’ with good reason).

5 Follow up good contacts. Always follow-up when you meet someone new with whom you feel you have really con- nected – drop them an email and remind them of what it was you had in common or had chatted about, remind them what it is you do, and for whom you have done it. If you have to write a thank-you, a handwritten note will always leave a good lasting impression, as long as it’s legible. Mention that if you meet some- one who could be a potential cli- ent for them in whatever they do, you will definitely put them in touch – and do so. Hopefully in time they will reciprocate.

6 Be positive and put on a happy face. Sure it’s hard to remain positive when you’re feeling overwhelmed, but whining isn’t an attractive quality. The Tony Robbins mantra ‘attitude of gratitude’ really does have power. Whenever you’re facing a setback, do a mental checklist of what IS working in your life right now, what you DO have going for you, what other people are cheering you on, and give thanks for your good health, for a roof over your head, for your friends and family, and encourage you to be striving to do bet- ter. Lift up your head, put your shoulders back and smile – you should feel better straight away.

7 Focus on solutions, not problems. You have to switch your focus to solving the issues preventing you from getting to where you want to be. Dur- ing the process every step will be a learning exercise and this is that learning that is going to help you grow and in itself be life-changing. This, as well as the end result, is going to make a significant difference to you in the long run. Facing a seem- ingly daunting task but breaking it down into manageable chunks and dealing with each of these, one step at a time, will make it seem much more approach- able. The learning you will get from your setbacks will be in- valuable and make you stronger.

8 Walk the walk. Spend time with the peer group you want to be in – in other words, hang out with people already living the kind of life you want, doing what you want, who have what you want. Don’t be nervous about asking for advice. You must have noticed how people love to give it, even when you haven’t asked for any. Copy their behaviour, their style, dress the part, talk the talk – but only if it feels right for you because if you don’t feel relaxed, it will show in your body lan- guage. Be a ‘player’ and remem- ber the coaches’ adage – ‘fake it ’till you make it’.

About the author

Adrienne Morris is a success coach helping professionals and small busi- nesses reach new heights of success through coaching, mentoring and self-esteem, communications and confidence coaching. Call 07956 514714, email coachalpinesgrowth.co.uk or visit www.alpinesgrowth.com.

Company Feature

Is The Joke on You?

Is it possible for dental practices to attract more pa- tients without spending more money on marketing? A young dentist was starting his career. He rented a beautiful practice, engaged an interior designer and invested in the latest, most technologically advanced equipment. He was sitting behind the reception desk when a man came in. Wishing to appear busy, the dentist picked up the phone and pretended he was booking an appointment. Finally he hung up and asked the visitor, “Can I help you?” The man said, “Yeah, come to activate your phone!”

As they say in the stand- up comedy profession, the old jokes are the best. Unfortunately, trying to find new patients in the current econom- ic climate is certainly no joke. The recession, combined with greater competition between practices than ever before, has left many dentists with gaps in their appointment books as they struggle to maintain, never mind increase, their patient lists.

With their discretionary spending under pressure, poten- tial patients are more demand- ing and discriminating than they have ever been before. Nevertheless, they are still gaining customer care, comfort and convenience – concepts not tra- ditionally associated with the healthcare industry but which are now vital considerations in the pursuit of success.

So how can you reduce your rates and still make money?

A woman phoned her den- tist when she received a huge bill. “I’m shocked,” she com- plained. “This is three times more than usual.”

“I know,” said the dentist, “but you yelled so loudly during surgery you frightened away my next patient.”

There are many, relatively inexpensive, ways of improving customer care, but how can a dentist offer patients genuinely better value without damaging practice profitability? Solving this conundrum in isolation can be difficult, but with a little in- formed guidance and an innova- tive but proven patient plan now becoming available in the UK, dentists can again enjoy the lux- ury of being rushed off their feet!

In the US, creative and uni- versally accessible dental plans are helping practices to enjoy the best of both worlds: improved ca- sh flow and new more patients.

With more than seven mil- lion Americans participating, US dental practices are invited to join the Dental Network and benefit from this vast pool of potential new patients. Patients can save up to $500 on dental profes- sional member dentists and their specialisations in a number of ways, including:

• Daily database updates with agents and groups
• Via the distribution of printed directories
• An online provider search

(more than 250,000 hits in the US every month)
• Multi-lingual assistance to help patients find their ideal treat- ment provider.

Devised and designed by a dentist, Munroe Sutton’s Patient Referral Plan is the culmination of 50 years’ experience in the field of dental marketing and is now available to dentists through- out the UK, bringing the same proven benefits to both patients and practices as those enjoyed in the US. Treatments are made more affordable for the patients, and practices experience the ad- vantages of direct marketing at no cost to themselves. Acceptance rates rise steeply as the financial pressures ease for the patients, and with the option of receiv- ing immediate payment prac- tices’ cashflow is also enhanced. The scheme allows for bespoke reimbursement arrangements to ensure that participating prac- tices are never out of pocket and payment is guaranteed.

The independence of the prac- tice and any existing patient pay- ment plans are unaffected, and a 24-hour automated service deliv- ers professional, efficient patient confirmation. The referral system puts dentists in touch with an ever increasing, the strength and courage patients at no cost to themselves.

By joining a scheme widely accepted in America, UK practices nationwide now have an opportu- nity to expand their activities, pa- tient lists and profitability without compromising their individual goals, existing patients or estab- lished payment plans or fee struct- ures. Attracting even a few ad- ditional patients, at no cost must be a worthwhile result, so sign up and fill those blank spaces in your appointment book!

“Open wider” requested the dentist, as he began his examina- tion. “Oh my word,” he said sud- denly. “That’s the biggest cavity I’ve ever seen – the biggest cavity I’ve ever seen!” “Alright!” the pa- tient retorted. “I’m scared enough without you saying it twice!” “I didn’t say the dentist.” That was the echo.

With the challenges fac- ing dental practices today, any scheme which offers free market- ing, encourages treatment accept- ance and guarantees prompt pay- ment is sure to attract attention. If your practice is not realising its full potential, perhaps its time you talk to a professional work- provider like Munroe Sutton and dis- cussed the options. You could be laughing all the way to the bank!

For more information please call 0808 254 5558 or visit www.munrosutton.co.uk

About the author

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