The 10th Dimension – The power of 10...

...a series of articles by Dr Ed Bonner BDS MDent, Sloan Fellow
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10 things you should know about motivation

1. To inspire people to work – individually or in groups – in ways that produce the best results, you need to tap into their own personal motivational forces. Individuals working as part of a group (may and probably do) have needs that are different from the needs of the group as a whole. Find a way to balance the needs of the individual with those of the group. The art of motivating people starts with learning how to influence individuals’ behaviour. How do you find out what motivates individuals? Simple: just ask them!

2. Motivation is the will to act. To realise the full potential of employees, organisations (including dental practices) are rapidly moving away from ‘command and control’ to ‘advise and consent’ as ways of motivating others. It used to be believed that one could not motivate another, but it is possible to create a fertile working environment, which allows others to flourish and grow. Several motivational theories are based on the premise that, given the opportunity and the right stimuli, people work well given the opportunity and the working environment, which allows employees, as long as it suits their needs and its importance.

3. The prevention of oral cancer. The only point where you have control (i.e. if their wants were not met, dissatisfaction fast before they dissatisfied). A sure sign of high motivation is showing initiative. The ideal is that everyone should know everything that affects them directly or indirectly as soon as possible. You can never communicate too much, but take care over the content and delivery of a message so that it inspires motivation upon its reception. Signs of high motivation is showing initiative.

4. To realise the full potential of employees, you need to: a) Analyse what it is by recognising needs and understanding behaviour b) Build it up by assessing your own attitude, improving communication, creating a no-blame culture at work, winning co-operation, and encouraging initiative c) Get the best from people by motivating individuals and groups, preventing de-motivation, enrich jobs, empower staff, and build careers d) Reward achievement by recognising excellence, re-warding exceptional performance, and motivating through positive change.

5. Always ask your staff for their opinions about decisions that affect them. Two key motivational questions to ask your staff are: ‘What should I do to help you perform better?’ and ‘What do I need to be doing from a better job?’ Remember, however, that not acting on such feedback will de-motivate them.

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7. To understand and employ motivation, you need to: a) Analyse what it is by recognising needs and understanding behaviour b) Build it up by assessing your own attitude, improving communication, creating a no-blame culture at work, winning co-operation, and encouraging initiative c) Get the best from people by motivating individuals and groups, preventing de-motivation, enrich jobs, empower staff, and build careers d) Reward achievement by recognising excellence, re-warding exceptional performance, and motivating through positive change.

Keeping your patients informed

The sixth in the series of managing information articles, by Dr Ed Bonner

GDC, BDA, Academies, Societies, study groups
• Photographs of self or family
• Particular expertise, for example, implants
• Diagnostic skills
• Specialised interests.

You should be telling your patients about current advances in dentistry:
• Prevention of oral and dental disease
• Dietetics
• Aesthetic and cosmetic dentistry
• Dental whitening
• Facial aesthetics
• Implantology and other dental specialities
• Orthognathic surgery
• Orthopaedic orthodontics and orthodontics for adults
• Prosthodontic and periodontal reconstruction

The prevention of oral cancer.

Positive feedback

Once the patient has taken up treatment, the flow of information needs to be reversed: you need to and should want to know whether your patient was satisfied or not. The simplest way of obtaining this information is to ask your patients whether their treatment met, excelled or failed to meet expectations. You can achieve this via a post-treatment questionnaire or by personal communication. The best benefit is if you failed to meet your patient’s expectations, i.e. if their wants were not met, you would be able to redress the dissatisfaction. Sometimes they voice their dissatisfaction to others. Or worse.

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Start shouting about your practice

In the last article, I looked at how information can be obtained to keep us abreast of current trends. This article will look at how you can use that information for marketing purposes. If we believe that our purpose is to help the public to prevent oral and dental problems and treat dental disease, then there is a wealth of opportunity via the printed and spoken media to disseminate information to existing and prospective patients that will allow us to fulfill our mission. Here’s a list of 10:

- Brochures
- Leaflets
- New patient information packs
- Website
- Blogging
- Newsletters
- Telephone
- SMS text messages
- Advertorials in magazines
- Articles in newspapers.

What should you be telling existing and future patients about yourself?
- Your name and qualifications
- Education and places studied
- Experience and areas worked
- The practice name, address, phone number
- Website and email
- Membership of organisations: positive feedback.