

## PRACTICE FOCUS

### BACK TO BASICS

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Welcome to the August practice success edition of your very special, very advanced, practice growth and business development focus session where we bring everyone together and we share each other's perspectives because, you know what, every single one of you, your perspective matters. It's so important for you to understand, so important for you to remember. There is no team without every one of you.

There is no practice without every team. So it's very important today, today in honor of the approaching back to school season, I'm going to take you back to basics and I've got to tell you, I don't know that it's any fun but it's certainly so necessary.

It's so easy to be thinking about all the *new and different*s when we need to be thinking about *the old and the same* because what makes you successful today is no different than what makes you successful before.

It all comes down to that patient engagement and keeping the fundamentals of your dental practice dialed in and running a well-oiled machine.

So today, without further ado, we're going to just dive straight in to everything we're going to cover for this month and it should be actually very interesting. I know many people go back to school in September but, hey, we've got to get a head start.

It happens every single year and, you know something, I don't know that it's very sexy but it is very effective to go back to the basics and revisit

the fundamentals and the foundation of the practice.

I can always tell, always, a practice or doctor or a team that has lost sight of what really matters when they're searching for bright shiny objects. Instead of focusing on what really matters, the bottom line is success is not always sexy. It is not guaranteed. It is not new and different.

It is monotonous and routine and, hey, isn't

that exactly what we would hope for? That there could be a routine we could follow to make sure that we're hitting our goals.

That is why it requires discipline and focus and determination and commitment from everybody sitting and listening, everybody.

Today, we'll go all the way through the most important back to basics elementary ideas that are undoubtedly going to lead to your biggest breakthroughs the rest of this year.

You should know that they can be repeated every single day. So I want to say good luck and I don't want you to dismiss, pretend understanding of these without careful scrutiny and strategic planning because I can assure you, anything you think, reality is worse than that.

So you do have room for improvement, you

understand. Now, I'm going to give you ten things. I'm going to talk briefly about each one of them. Some, we're going to fly past. Others, we're going to dive deep into..

**#1- Telephone:** Now I know so many people get beat over the head about the phone all the time, so today I'm going to keep it very big picture. Let me explain to you something, number one, you need to know, how many phone calls are we getting? Are we missing calls? It's nobody's fault. You don't have to blame. You don't have to point fingers. It's a simple concept. If you're busy, the phone's ringing, nobody's answering, okay, that's fine. At the end of the day, **every call is a new opportunity.**

The number one way to increase new patients is to answer more phone calls. So unless you can tell me specifically how many

times you're missing the phone or voicemail is being incurred, then you don't have an answer.

Number one is, are we missing calls? Number two, we need to identify how many of our prospective callers are turning into appointments.

Now we're not looking for everyone, but we absolutely want to make sure we're getting the most important ones. I'm not a fan of tricking people on the phone. I'm not a fan of treating every caller like they're the same.

No, you know our approach is emotionally engaging, questioning to build rapport and relationship with the caller. It's just critically important that you have the time available to do that and that you're not putting people on hold and doing things like this.

So I would just make sure that you go back and revisit the phone and discuss about it, the feeling you want to come across when the phone is answered and, of course, the effectiveness of who's answering the phone first, who's answering the phone second, who's answering the phone third? What is our protocol if we miss a call?

I have to tell you, so many people, they miss the caller ID. You have to be calling people back. If you come in on Tuesday morning and Monday night, people called, you check the caller ID and they didn't leave a message, you should call them. You never know.

You cannot take for granted. Any one good A patient is worth a lot of money, so we have to be very assertive.

**#2- Hygiene:** Listen, the healthy foundation of every practice is hygiene. You want to maintain the longevity

of your patient base with hygiene. Hygiene should be driving growth on the restorative side of the practice.

In many cases, many of you have patients that you perceive you've taken them to a complete stage of health. I don't know if it's true or not, but at the end of the day, I want to make sure that you go back and always do a reboot of hygiene every year, I would say every year. You could do six months. It's a simple concept.

What is our average visit, average new patient visit, hygiene first time, average perio patient visit, average standard patient recall, average standard patient exam, whatever? You need to know.

The other thing you need to do is sit down as a team and say, "What is our ideal hygiene business supposed to be? What

can we do better? How can we educate more? How can we hand off patients better? How can we get more diagnosis out of the hygiene room?

Additionally, what do we want to accomplish from the clinical side of hygiene? Do we have an ideal hygiene checklist?" You should set a goal to elevate your hourly values to a minimum of \$250. There's no person in my life, in our team's world, in Dental Success Today that is a hygienist who cannot hit \$250 an hour. It's really not even a possibility. So if you aren't, you need to challenge yourself. I know every single one of you, so I know that you're capable. You just need to challenge yourself. It's a minimum expectation this day and age.

**#3- Family Referrals:** Listen, we give you lots of systems. We give you lots of things to organize in the

practice to help you get family referrals. It comes down to a simple concept. You need to take an inventory of your patient base and see how many patient referrals you're getting based on the number of patients coming in.

You should be averaging somewhere around one out of every two new patients bringing you family referral. You should be averaging somewhere around two patients out of every ten patients that are coming to your office. So you should see a constant flow of family referrals and, of course, you need to be asking. You need to be sure that you're doing family inventory as part of your chart reviews, many different things.

#### **#4- Monitor Diagnosis and Treatment**

**Planning:** There really should be one person in charge of really validating, usually the

clinical lead, sometimes the treatment coordinator. I want the doctor's performances from the diagnosis and treatment planning values.

Diagnosis and treatment planning values *have to be monitored*. They have to be overseen and you have to be make sure that you're setting goals for yourselves and for each other and for this point here, I'd just say have an open discussion about how we can drive more diagnosis out of each column in the schedule, out of each type of patient visit, and let's make sure that we don't have any treatment planning falling through the cracks.

Sometimes we may be rushing to treatment and we're not getting the patient to understand it fully before they leave. Sometimes we may be not preparing the

treatment plans comprehensively enough on the patient's second visit. Have an open discussion about this.

#### **#5- Team**

##### **Satisfaction, Motivation, and**

**Focus:** This ought to be a fun discussion. Let's talk about it. How's it going, my friends? How is the team doing? Since you're all a part of it, you should be able to answer.

You need to follow my four sequences of questioning:

- #1- what's going well?
- #2- what could be going better?
- #3- what questions do you have?
- #4- what decisions do we need to make? What things can we commit to? What actions can we take?

Those four steps are going to help lead you to a refocusing of the team. So let's make sure that we're happy,

we're focused, we're motivated.

**#6- Follow-Up:** Is it happening? Is it happening out of hygiene? Is it happening out of new patient exams? Is it happening out of restorative unscheduled treatment follow-up? Is it happening off of missed or cancelled appointment? Whatever it is, are we following up?

**#7- Communication:** Communication, I would say you just go around the room and let's just rate your communication on a scale from 1 to 10 right now. How effective is the communication with the team? That's patient to team, team to patient, patient to doctor, doctor to patient, team to team, team to doctor, doctor to team, do you get the point?

Let's make sure that we are getting back on track with our meetings, our huddles,

our organization, our daily end of the day debriefs. Let's just do a little checkup on the communication.

**#8- Cash flow, payment in advance, collection before production:** Simple, if you're not asking every patient to pay at the time they schedule, you've got work to do. You have to control the cash flow to the practice. Every person's responsibility is to make sure that money is coming in.

**Money is the lifeblood of the practice.** You all know it. You're not working for oxygen. You need to make sure you're maximizing your full payment in advance, your collections before production is done, money at the time of scheduling, or even deposits over the phone for scheduling.

So let's take a little assessment of this and see what we can do better.

**#9- Chart reviews in patient records:** Are we effectively reviewing every patient's chart a couple days or the day before? Are we making sure of what's missing, what's unscheduled, what needs to be done? Do we have a seamless method of either printing off a treatment plan or making notes so that the assistant or hygienist or doctor can make sure everything is being addressed?

Are we fully executing the effects of the treatment coordinator in the practice to oversee and make sure that this is being done? Simply doubling your daily production is making sure there's more treatment to do. You need to review your charts the day before, identify people who have pending treatment and people who have treatment that is yet to be diagnosed.

## #10- New Patient

**Experience:** Every step of it matters most. We'll do another more in-depth training session in the future. However, at this point, I simply want to ask you, if you're feeling rushed or you're not fulfilling your goals of educating patients and performing effective comprehensive diagnosing, then you need to change something.

You need to make sure that you have time with the patients to solidify commitment and diagnosis. There's never going to be diagnosis done that doesn't require time with your patients. It's that simple.

Okay, here we go, your homework. You have ten things there. You should have ten assignments.

I want you to have ten action plans, ten big ideas, ten breakthroughs, and I want to make sure that somebody owns every

one of them, **ten divide and conquers.** This ought to be fun. It won't take very long.

A lot of these are yes and nos. They're quick decisions. They're filling gaps. They're trying new things and somebody has to be responsible to make sure it happens. So again, go through each one of them, have ten little assignments for each of the big topics.

Let's get back to basics, solidify the foundation, the fundamentals of the practice. I'm going to tell you, the bottom line is this- *the creation of dentistry scheduled treatment will always lead to your biggest breakthroughs.*

Stop focusing on production, start focusing on acceptance and commitment of treatment in your schedule and grow exponentially by selling health and the benefits you're capable of to others. That is the key to everything we do.

Let's refocus on your mission, on what you are capable of, and realize that these ten things must happen. It's not a buffet. You don't pick and choose. It's not an a la carte menu. **There's no gaps allowed.**

To do the best by your patients and maximize your potential, doing the best that you are capable of doing, you need all ten of these fundamentals to be revitalized, refocused, re-solidified, and to have somebody fully accountable for the execution, the follow-through, and the results that you're getting.

I wish you the very best in this back to school season as you prepare for the next phase of summer and you ramp up for the coming months to finish out 2016 strong. This is the month to refocus.

This is the month to get everybody back on the same page.

This is the month to get these ten things dialed in to your practice, to make sure that you're doing them better than ever before. It's going to be amazing and I know something about you. I know that you're capable of anything you set your mind to. I hope that you will drive the growth of your practice through these ten very *very* simple but significant impact items within your practice. Good luck.

We're here if you need us and, please, this month we're offering a very special reward to anybody who sends us their ten action steps, ten action plans, ten assignments, for all ten of these big breakthrough foundational items. So please, get that over to Tyrella and a surprise will be on its way to you. Take care.