Successful communication in your daily practice

Part I: Grumbling patients

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Imagine getting to your clinic every day and feeling confident that whatever happens to you, you will be able to resolve it. Resolve a problem easily—in a way that not only you will feel happy with yourself but also your patients and staff will stay loyal to you, because they will also be happy with the service and solutions you provide them!

You might be one of the best dentists in your area that has all the knowledge, the experience and the latest technology. But your clients do not see that, they might not understand it. Maybe they cannot see your expertise because of the way you are dealing and communicating with them; maybe your way of communication is not clear enough or not at the level that some of your clients desire!



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This is my gift for you today: A whole new series of the most popular and challenging scenarios that might happen at your dental practice and how you will deal with them so that your patients will leave your practice with the feeling: "My dentist is THE BEST!"

How to deal with...grumbling patients?

Let's start with the first script: How to deal with a patient that complains just for the sake of complaining? In the following, I will introduce to you 5 steps of how to deal with this problem successfully and peacefully.

How many times have we completed an excellent work or have we followed every step of the treatment protocol (for example whitening)? How many times have we informed our patient in detail regarding any discomfort that he or she might feel during a treatment? But the patient still loves to grumble: "Doc, I feel..., the bleeding is excessive..., I have such sensitivity after the whitening..." and so on.

5 steps for a successful communication

Of course, in view of such a patient you might get upset, angry or frustrated; this is absolutely normal and an expected reaction. The important thing is to deal with your patients, to keep them and nothing else. Let's investigate now the steps that we can apply to get a successful result.

Step 1: Breath

I know it's hard to not get angry with grumbling patients, but let's vision ourselves as the conductor



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of an orchestra: We are responsible to guide them all in the path that we desire.

Step 2: Listen

What is the real problem? Maybe the patient just wants to be listened at and pampered a little bit? Or she wants her 'problem' to be resolved by giving her something back (see Step 3). Of course, she has nothing to complain about, everything is normal and expected, but you will never say that to her!

Step 3: Act accordingly

Give your patient something so that she will feel that her problem is acknowledged and that it will be resolved immediately by you—her trusted doctor! This could be an advice like "Do not rinse for 6 hours", or a prescription as "Use this cream, it will reduce the sensitivity".

Step 4: Follow-up

Of course, it is a must to call her and check that she is all right some hours before she calls you (which might the same or the next day, it depends on the case).

Step 5: Ask the right question!

Do never ask her: "Is everything all right?" Why not? Just because of the fact that she will then start complaining again. Ask instead: "I just call to check that everything is ok!" By using this phrase you will not allow space or thought for more complains.

It is so simple!

Start using the described 5 steps each time that you have this 'invisible problem'. At least, try it as an experiment and see if it works for you as well! Write me your comments or even add-ins. I will love to hear them!

In the next issue of laser magazine, I will present you the second part of this new series of communication concepts that will teach you with 5 simple steps how to shush the patients that have too many questions with courtesy and caring. Until then, remember that you are not only the dentist of your clinic, but also the manager and the leader. You can always send me your questions and request for more information and guidance at dba@yiannikosdental.com or via our website www.dbamastership.com. Looking forward to our next trip of business growth and educational development!_

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Im ersten Teil ihrer neuen Serie zum Thema erfolgreiche Kommunikation im Praxisalltag gibt unsere Autorin fünf Tipps, wie Zahnärzte erfolgreich mit notorisch unzufriedenen Patienten umgehen können. Denn ein grundlos meckernder Patient kann aufseiten des Behandlers schon mal schlechte Laune hervorrufen. Der erste Schritt für eine harmonische Kommunikation ist daher: Durchatmen! Im zweiten Schritt rät die Autorin, genau darauf zu hören, was der Patient eigentlich will. Oftmals möchte er oder sie einfach ein bisschen mehr Aufmerksamkeit. Diesem lässt sich wie in Schritt drei beschrieben, mit einigen zusätzlichen Empfehlungen oder Handlungsvorschlägen begegnen. Im vierten Schritt geht es dann darum, den Patienten nach seinem Befinden zu fragen, noch eher dieser es geäußert hat. Ganz wichtig dabei: Keine Frage stellen – wie in Schritt 5 beschrieben –, sondern eine Aussage im Sinne von „Ich wollte nur mal hören, ob alles ok ist" formulieren. Auf diese Weise nehmen Sie Ihrem Patienten den Wind aus den Segeln und geben ihm, was er braucht. In der nächste Ausgabe gibt die Autorin Tipps, wie Sie Patienten mit vielen Fragen elegant begegnen können.