

IMPLANT PRACTICE SUCCESS REPORT

from Thommen Medical and Levin Group



Welcome to Issue #22 of ***The Implant Practice Success Report***, a monthly newsletter on implant practice success. Levin Group and Thommen Medical are very pleased to provide business education to you and your team. Each month, ***The Implant Practice Success Report*** will feature leading edge education for managing, marketing, and maintaining a robust and successful implant practice.

In this issue we focus on a powerful leadership development tool as well as a reminder of the role that referral marketing plays in surgical practice success.

How Does Your Team Really See You?

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

One of the most interesting aspects of leadership development is discovering that the way we see ourselves is not always how others do. There is a business tool often used by HR departments and business executives called a “360”. A 360, as the name implies, provides the subject the opportunity to learn how they are viewed “from every angle” by other people below you, around you, above you and even outside the organization.

Many doctors who go through a 360 are incredibly surprised by the results. Sometimes the feedback can be positive, but other times they are clearly defined areas that require attention and improvement. The point is that a 360 gives you a realistic (brutally honest) understanding of how others see your strengths and weaknesses, which often does not match up with how we see ourselves.

Based on the 360 concept, here are three suggestions to find out how others see you that will allow you to begin to identify certain key areas that can be improved from a leadership standpoint.

1. Ask your team for feedback on your own performance. Know that at first, they may not fully trust this request and be hesitant to provide honest feedback. Try forming the question in a manner that asks the person to give you three areas where you can improve. That will allow them permission to address your weaknesses and challenge them to be quantitative and specific.
2. Ask several team members to become your advisers. For some surgeons this may feel

awkward given traditional “doctor – staff” dynamics. Bear in mind that you are not requesting they advise you on clinical matters, but rather leadership skills. Surgeons do not learn much about leadership in dental school. Leadership is an area that must be developed and improved, and it is well worth the effort.

3. Assess your team dynamics. Performance is not the sole measure of success. If you have high turnover, practice conflict, poor team performance, or team members whose performance is declining, then you have a leadership issue. It is easy to blame the team members but sometimes it is the leadership. It doesn't occur to the leader to look inward and recognize that their leadership style may need to change, especially in the face of challenging times. Leaders need to be resilient, flexible and continually working toward improvement.

If you can find three areas to improve your leadership skills based on team feedback, you will make excellent progress in a short period of time.

ROGER P. LEVIN, DDS

Roger P. Levin, DDS is the CEO and Founder of Levin Group, a leading practice management consulting firm that has worked with over 30,000 practices to increase production. A recognized expert on dental practice management and marketing, he has written 67 books and over 4,000 articles and regularly presents seminars in the U.S. and around the world.

Referral Marketing 2.0

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

Since 1985, we have had the benefit of observing the effect of referral marketing on specialty practice production. Back in 1985, there were two key concepts that had a significant impact on increasing referrals, and these concepts are still viable today:

1. Focus on relationships

Relationships have been important for thousands of years. Even Roman philosophers over 2,000 years ago referenced networking as a way to maintain contacts, build social networks and be engaged. The reason this concept has sustained for all that time is simple human nature. People like people, especially when they see them, touch them and get to know them.

2. Quantity and quality

One would think that if a specialty practice had high-quality marketing strategies that would be all it would take. However, unfortunately, that is not the case. We found that the quantity of

strategies is just as important as the quality. You always want to present yourself and your practice in the best light, but you also must do it frequently. Today, you must have a broad range of strategies that reach the referring practices in different ways.

Referral marketing still works just as effectively as it did 30 years ago. One expression that applies very well is, "If you are not paying attention to them, someone else will be happy to do it for you."

When specialty practices slowdown, which happens with normal business cycles relative to factors such as the economy, they race back to referral marketing. The on-again-off-again approach is not nearly as effective as having a consistent approach over time. The challenge is to make sure that you are frequently touching referring doctors in a way that maintains relevance.

To contact Dr. Levin or to join the 40,000 dental professionals who receive his Practice Production Tip of the Day,

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