



“Serious Results for Successful Dentists”

NEXTLEVEL

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DENTAL TRIBUNE

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Chairside Challenge

Weekly Article Contribution by Gary Kadi, founder of NextLevel Practice™

Chairside Challenge –

I am a one-doctor, two-hygiene Dental office in Idaho. I just can't seem to close any cases beyond a couple thousand dollars. Help!

Poolside Solution –

Doctor, you are not alone. I'm glad you asked this question because remember, nothing happens until something is sold!

Let's start with the word 'sales'. 'Sales' has become misinterpreted over the years. The root word origin means "to assist." For many reasons in our society 'assisting' has come to suggest manipulation, persuasion, to take advantage of, etc.

This is why we at NextLevel Practice, communicate sales by using the word 'educate'. You see, most of the time selling is a win/lose proposition. When you educate you are informing the patient of the problem, consequence and solution.

Customarily we advise the patient of what they need – two crowns, two fillings and one perio therapy. Notice that these are *solutions*.

In General Dentistry we should offer education in two places *prior* to the solution.

When was the last time you invested in a solution that was going to cost you thousands of dollars, was going to cause you pain *and* take time out of your day? Besides, you don't even think you have a problem in the first place!

In general dentistry we must allow the time and expertise to educate the patient in two important areas:

1. Problem
2. Consequence of not taking action on the problem

90% of all treatment in a General Practitioner's office is not symptomatic. Therefore the patient does not think they need the treatment. This is why the average office we work with has seven figures of diagnosed untreated dentistry needing to be done, yet sits dormant in charts.

Why spend thousands of dollars on additional marketing when you can generate over a million dollars by getting your team engaged and focused on converting care that has already been diagnosed?

Let me share with you the story of Rome Keith. Rome is a 38 year old cable guy who hadn't visited a dentist in 20 years. He was referred to a General Practitioner by his Medical Doctor. In observing the Patient Care Coordinator conduct Rome's New Patient Interview, I learned of his past dental experiences and current needs. Mr. Keith shared with us that his MD advised that in order to be completely healthy it was necessary to fix his oral health. He was told that he had an infection "dripping down his throat". He described how he was getting older and needed to tend to his neglect. He also said his wife noticed that he had stopped smiling after he lost his anterior tooth four years ago. Rome's smile was one of the things his wife had loved about him.

After the New Patient Interview, I asked the Patient Care Coordinator what she had heard. She said the guy didn't like going to the dentist and probably couldn't afford all the care he needed.

She then asked me what I heard. I drilled down on two primary personal motivators:

1. At 38 years old, Rome is now motivated to be completely healthy – this is a very important value – he actually said, "I want to be around when my kids grow up."
2. Regaining the confidence to unleash his smile will reconnect him to his wife.

We train team members to rethink how they listen to patients. For years patients have been "training" team members to think they cannot afford care, they hate the dentist, etc. Patients build a defense toward the barrage of negative findings and the guilt associated with improper home care. In addition, and most importantly, we as an industry have not been trained to have an understanding as to what the patient REALLY wants.

In the case of Mr. Keith, he wants to upgrade his health so he can be around for a long time to enjoy his kids. He also craves that special spark he once had in his marriage. There are personal motivators behind the purchase of dentistry. No scripts are needed.

When your team is trained to shift their filter from "they will not have the money" to asking "what is this patient's real motivating factor", you can then and only then speak to them in a way that will convince them to accept treatment. In meeting with Rome Keith, each dental team member spoke with him about how his health and relationship with his wife will skyrocket by receiving dental care.

Remember dentistry is a means, not an end. Patients buy dentistry for a reason. When you take the time to understand the real reason and tie the care you are presenting directly to it, they will find a way to buy it. Such was the instance with Mr. Keith who prompted a pre-paid \$13,000 case.