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Newsletter Article Reprint

The Three Most Common Case Presentation Mistakes

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Our Most dentists we talk to today want to do more complex, comprehensive dentistry but many find it difficult to get patients to accept treatment. They make at least three major mistakes:

#1: Pushing too hard.

Simply put, a number of case acceptance programs can be overly pushy. These programs are based on valid sales concepts but are primarily useful in product sales. If patients feel pressured into treatment, they will take one of three actions:

1. Push back in subtle and not-so-subtle ways.
2. Erect communication barriers.
3. Never return to the "pushy" practice, probably spreading negative word of mouth.

The truth is most patients say that they would like to have comprehensive dentistry. They don't always receive it because of four barriers blocking their paths: Cost, lack of knowledge, lack of trust and fear. So instead of selling, consider educating as a health care consultant to lower each barrier. With many patients, only over time can you establish a comfort level and the necessary trust for patience to accept comprehensive programs.

#2: Believing that case acceptance occurs only at the treatment consult.

Comprehensive cases are usually accepted during a series of small steps. The steps include:

1. The first phone call or office contact, followed by the time period between the call and first visit.
2. Interactions at the initial visit to the office including office environment and with the administrative and clinical staff (there are more than a dozen of them).
3. The time period between the initial visit and the treatment solutions conversation.
4. The clinical findings review and treatment solutions conversation.
5. Often, a series of recare conversations.

So, as you can see, "this could take a while." You need to be prepared for it.

#3: Believing that only one person is responsible for case acceptance.

When done correctly, case acceptance is actually a culmination of events involving everyone in your office. As a result, your team needs training on the entire case presentation system and their particular role.

While avoiding these mistakes may not remove every barrier, improvement will benefit your practice, and not just financially.

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Dr. Nate Booth is a speaker, consultant and author. Nate teaches case acceptance at the South Beach Dental Institute and is a practice management advisor for ChaseHealthAdvance. He is the creator of The "Yes" System: How to Make It Easy for People to Accept Comprehensive Dentistry.

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