

Reorganize your practice

There is no question now that the recession has hit our economy and has hit us hard. Many dentists are reporting a slowdown in their schedules with patients putting off treatment longer and cancellations are up. Note that I said many dentists are, but not all dentists are reporting this. Some dentists are actually reporting that their numbers are up and their practices are increasing.

So why are some dentists doing better in the recession, some dentists doing the same as before, and some dentists worse and even much worse? As I meet hundreds of dentists every single week wherever I lecture, the answer always comes down to two things — attitude and reorganization.

First, your attitude will make all the difference in the world. Yes, we all know that the recession has caused huge job losses and an incredible lack of consumer confidence. If you and your dental office are going to roll up into a ball out of fear, and patients can see the fear in your eyes, I can guarantee you that they won't go ahead with treatment and you subconsciously will steer them away from doing any dentistry at all.

What every other business and industry is doing now is reorganizing and shifting the way they do business. This is the key to survival and even to thrive. The sure way to failure is to do nothing or, worse, keep thinking that the way I have always done things is the way I will be doing them in the future.

It is time to reorganize your professional career as a dentist. When times were good, dentists used the excuse that they were too busy in their offices to learn new skills through continuing education. Stop making excuses for yourself and get out there and get trained and retrained in new areas of dentistry that you have not been involved with before. The most successful dentists we see are the ones who have invested in themselves and their teams with quality continuing education to learn new skills.

Here are some suggestions, especially for a down economy, of some procedures that are big winners for patients and for your practice:

- 1) *Endodontics*: there are so many quality endodontic courses out there that I would not even know where to begin. For the general practitioner, the Ultradent ART Endodontic system is a simple to learn, very proficient endodontic system. Essential Dental Systems gives outstanding hands on courses using their EZ Fill Technique designed for beautiful endodontic results.
- 2) *Implants*: Learn to love the edentulous and denture patient again and learn about narrow diameter implants, which are affordable and easily accepted by patients. The system I use in my own practice is Atlas Narrow Diameter Implants by Dentatus. Take one of their excellent courses and in a few hours, you will be well versed in placing these implants. Dentatus has developed an extremely easy

system for general dentists that consists of only two surgical burs. The key to their system is their Tuf-Link silicon liner, which retains the denture incredibly well. There are significant advantages to this system because of its unique retention system without the challenges with housings and O-rings. Go to www.dentatus.com for information on their courses on narrow diameter implants.

- 3) *Botox and dermal fillers for every dental practice:* Even in the current economy, these are very popular patient treatments that dentists around the country are now starting to learn and offer. These services are not only for medical/dental spas, but also for every routine dental practice. You can use these procedures to enhance cosmetic dentistry, treatment of TMJ and bruxism, helping denture patients adapt to dentures, and smoothing of facial wrinkles to enhance your esthetic dental cases. Many dentists learn these procedures so they can save money by treating their wives, friends or team members and save money rather than having them go elsewhere and paying someone else for this service. This is certainly one of the hottest topics I speak about in my lectures. Hands-on training opportunities are available through my Web site, www.commonensedentistry.com.
- 4) *Lasers:* Laser dentistry is here and it is time you get on board. The big advantage is that you can greatly reduce or eliminate the need for local anesthesia. You need to make the right choice in this field. The Powerlase AT laser by Lares Research is a hard and soft tissue laser; it uses the right wavelengths available for all uses, which most other lasers cannot claim. It is a complete laser operatory in one unit. Lares Research is a recognized and trusted name in dental handpieces, and now in dental lasers. Very few dental companies offer a money back guarantee to back their products which makes Lares Research the company you would like to do business with, both for handpieces and for dental lasers.

Simply put, your best investment is yourself and your training. In this economy, now is the time to look at yourself and your office with a critical eye and see how you can improve and add to your clinical skills. By doing so, you are following a sure recipe for success for the challenges that we all have to deal with every single day.

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