

ExecTech Management Consulting

To: Practice Owner

Tips and Ideas

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Do You Hate Asking for Referrals?

Most practice-management speakers or consultants tell you, "If you don't ask for referrals, you won't get any. So ASK, ASK, ASK!" You are supposed to corner your best patients and say things like,

"Who do you know that could use our services?"

"Give me the names of friends or family members who should be coming to see me."

Your poor patients say, "Hmm . . . let me think about that . . . I'll get back to you."

They are thinking, "What will they do with these names? Call and badger them?"

It can be very uncomfortable for everyone concerned, right?

Fortunately, there are better ways to get patient referrals that do not cause stress, as covered in many ExecTech client articles and guidelines. Here is another one.

Instead of Asking for Referrals, Ask for Recommendations!

If you provide an awesome service to a patient, he or she will be happy to recommend you to others. It's quite easy to ask for recommendations.

"I'm so happy you enjoy coming here! I hope you'll recommend me to your friends."

"Yes, Dr. Jones is awesome. He would appreciate it if you recommend him to others."

"I love working with patients like you and would be grateful if you recommend me to someone."

Your patients then leave your office with a mission that can lead to new patients and even some positive reviews.

Recommendations Are Better than Referrals

When a patient refers a friend or family member to you, they say,

"If you need a dentist, see Dr. Jones."

"You should go see Dr. Smith about that vision problem."

"Dr. Williams can help you with that rash."

Yet when a patient recommends you, it can sound much different.

"Dr. Jones is the best dentist I've ever seen. When he gives you a shot, you don't feel a thing!"

"I recommend Dr. Smith. I wouldn't trust my eyes to anyone else. Her staff are also great!"

"I had a rash like that and Dr. Williams took one look, gave me some cream and it cleared right up!"

Of course, to get recommendations you need to give a memorable, awesome service. You need to make each patient feel like the most important person in the world. You need to deserve the recommendation.

Give them Cake

When you earn a recommendation from a patient that leads to a new patient, you need to show your appreciation! If you enthusiastically thank the patient, the odds increase that he or she will continue to recommend you.

If you include a token of your appreciation, like a pair of movie tickets, a Starbucks Gift Card, consider sending the patient a thank-you cake. Why?

Most people share their cakes with others, and your name will certainly come up as they eat it!

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