

HOW TO CREATE, GROW AND SELL YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Practiceplan
The business of dentistry

Part of the **WESLEYAN** Group

Here you will find quick fire thoughts and tips on how to create, grow and sell your membership plan

Think about what people want:

- Good patient experience
- Being understood
- Trust
- Relationship building

Why has dentistry changed?

- Patient expectations
- Patients have more knowledge about dentistry
- More competition in the area
- You need to make the practice unique to stand out

How do you stand out?

Today expectation is higher, competition is higher, loyalty is gone.
This is how you stand out:

- It's about making people feel good so they'll spend more!
- Reviews are really important, no one reads the good reviews, people go to the bad ones. So ensure you are regularly asking for reviews, make it part of everyday, particularly after a big course of treatment.
- Finding out what's important to the patient, giving them choices of what they want.
- You have to have a social media strategy, you have to be different.
Sharing patient stories is a great way to encourage new patients after seeing a success story.
- Think about e-consultations (emailing pictures, video call consultations, Skype).
- Give your practice a premium feel, to be a part of a club, use words such as Platinum/Gold. Everyone wants to feel like they are part of something. The biggest mistake is not thinking about how others like to be treated. Treat other people how they want to be treated as opposed to how we want others to view it. How a patient would perceive it as opposed to how the practice want it to be perceived.

There are two types of needs when people buy something:

Explicit needs: what it is that you have to sell – dentistry, cosmetic dentistry, plan, a service.

Implied needs: the reason someone wants it – e.g. implants for confidence, looking younger, ability to eat, to be attractive to others, to look good, to feel special, have a feeling of deserving it, status to look good to be noticed.

All industries focus on the explicit and just focus on this need.

You've got to go beyond the surface and find out the needs of why first, listen to the patient, dig deeper about why they want it. Stop talking about what you can offer and find out about why the patient wants it.

When talking about the membership plan, what does it include? What does the consultation include?

Explicit – the stuff they expect.	Routine exam (15-20 mins session), full mouth, comprehensive oral health check. Not just the teeth, risk factors, social factors, risk and disease. People want to know what's right with them, not wrong with them. Preventing them from disease. Don't use the term 'check-up'. Use a term such as intensive oral cancer screen, it's all about building the value for money that the plan includes.
Implied – long-term health benefits, prevention, healthy teeth and gums, reduce the risk of tooth loss, save costs in the future for replacements.	Looking to prevent more treatment. Think about photo scanning to keep a record of a starting point. Take a series of photos so you've always got a record of the starting point to see what you're working towards. All about the experience, makes the patient feel special/valued. Building the value for money that the plan does.

Hygienist Appointment

A separate dedicated appointment specifically to help keep your teeth as clean as possible, remove bad bacteria that causes tooth loss and helps with gum disease. Only scaling and polishing to the affected areas. The hygienist will go intensively below the gum to get rid of all the bad bacteria, using special tools to cleanse your mouth to help give patients the best way to maintain dental health for life. Use words like 'extensive hygiene visit'.

- Don't use the word 'instruction', as this implies, the patient is not doing it right.
- Don't use 'scale and polish', this is an NHS term.

It's your job to make patients come back and make them feel like they are doing a good job in looking after their dental care.

- Oral health score sheets are a good idea to show people their progress and records to take away to see what progress they are making. It's about being positive, so they are a good tool to show patients they are progressing.

If you give patients a great impression, they will want what you have to offer them. We assume too much, we assume with the membership plan that patients don't want it. When we assume, we never get to the implicit, it's all about the explicit.

Probing process

Broad probes – ask all the questions to find out what's important to them. Asking the right kind of good questions, gives us the ability to probe further, such as:

- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your smile? And why?
- How is it making you feel at this time?
- If we could improve your smile, how would that make you feel?

Asking probing questions give us the opportunity to open doors.

Focused probes – tell me more about... why does this...?

Finalising probes – brings closure to the probing questions. Moves to the next step 'selling'.

Verify the implicit and explicit needs:

- How important is it to you to keep your gums healthy?
- How important is it to you to not have to have a tooth out?
- How important is it that you can spread the cost monthly?

Relating this to membership plans

The plan is a facilitation of keeping them with the practice for the long term. No need to sell the plan, it's there for the people that need it. It's all about the people, the practice and the benefits to the patient. Integrated as part of our family, the practice will work with patients to get the foundation right to keep your mouth healthy for life.

The plan will sell itself. Patients want long-term benefits and to be looked after, so you don't need to sell the membership plan. People like people who understand them. Don't put words into patients' mouths. Use what the patient says. It cements that you listened to what they said.

Your membership plan should never be sold on price or discount, it should be sold on value.

The whole team

- As a team, think about what kind of questions each part of the team/part of the journey fits best.
- The best way would be for the reception team to ask about why they chose the practice.
- Thinking about the patient journey, how to keep the conversation going so it doesn't just stop dead at reception. Reception can help find the trigger. The dentist will find out about the smile questions. All about finding out if the plan is valuable to them.

What you can implement


- Team briefing every single day, prepare for the day, the dentist and nurse particularly.
- Colour code who you are going to talk about the plan with.
- Have a sign about how many patients they have, make it visual.
- Incentives for the team.
- Don't take no for an answer. Ask 11 or 12 times before we get the message heard. Not every visit. Ask once every year.


Things to remember


- No excuses attitude, whatever it takes, we are in it together.
- Natural growth, making it part of everyday.
- What you focus on develops. Have a target of what you want to achieve. You won't hit anything if you haven't got something to work to.

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