



Implant Game Changers

A Whitepaper Series By Roger P. Levin, DDS

Implant Game Changers is a monthly whitepaper on an important implant practice management topic. It provides you with a quick and easy way to understand a specific business challenge and how to translate the solution into higher production and profit, greater efficiency, more implant patients, lower stress and greater personal satisfaction.

Where Will Your Implant Practice Be in the Next 5 Years?

Where will your practice be in five years? This is an excellent question. Will it be bigger with higher production? Will you be placing more implants? Will you have a strong stream of steady referrals? Will you place fewer implants? Will the practice be flat or in decline?

The truth is that we simply cannot know where any practice will be or how it will be performing five years from now because life and business always have uncertainty. Will inflation be higher in five years? Will there be a recession? What effect will global warming have on prices and supplies? It may be that none of these will have any effect on a growing practice at all. It may be that they have a significant effect. Everything is uncertain.

All of this simply adds up to the science of mathematical probability that there is no such thing as 100%. No one can guarantee that your practice will be more successful in five years or what may or may not occur that affects your practice. Unfortunately, human nature is to simply think that if things are good today, they will be just as good or better tomorrow. Our reality today heavily influences our predictions for the future, and we're often biased and emotional about them. So, what can you do to ensure a great future?

Do these three things right now

You can't predict the future, but there are things that need to happen in your practice right now. There are three things that we advise Levin Group clients to think about and act on immediately long before they need it. The challenge is that you may have had several fantastic years. Keep in mind that some of that is due to what we called the "pandemic effect" that caused the public to have money to spend on dental treatment that they would not normally have spent. The government has released large sums to the American public and the public is using some of that money for

discretionary decisions such as implants. One way or another this simply will not last, and we will return to what I refer to as a normal new normal.

So, what are these three things you can jump on right now to shift toward success in the future? They are systems, customer service, and building value.

1. Documented, proven, step-by-step systems

Documented means the information has been put into a format that can be accessed by new and current staff for immediate study and training. Proven means that you don't spend the next five years in trial and error determining what is working and what isn't working and how it will affect the performance of the practice. Step-by-step means that it reads like an instruction manual, which is the easiest way for the staff to learn.

The best practices have the best systems. How do we know this? Levin Group has a 30-year ongoing study of top 10% producing practices and one of our findings is that the best practices simply have the best systems. If you accept that concept, then you must also accept that you must upgrade your systems regularly and even replace them when advisable. The key is not to wait until you need to, but to be ahead of the curve. This is what the best specialty practices do. It is also why they remain the best specialty practices.

It will take you 12 - 18 months to go through your systems. You don't want to try and overhaul them all at once or you'll simply blow up your practice. Pick one system at a time such as scheduling, the implant treatment coordinator presentation, the new patient experience, treatment modalities and protocols, communication with referring doctors, collections, fee options, or managing dental insurance. By taking the time to improve each system over time, you'll help your practice achieve the highest level of performance.

2. Five-star customer service practice

Five-star service is not common. Most practices believe they have five-star customer service, but they really have three- or four-star service. This isn't bad, but it's not the same as five-star. Five-star customer service truly differentiates a specialty practice from the pack. It increases referrals, builds better relationships, and grows case acceptance. This is because five-star customer service creates an image of excellent clinical quality. In reality, one has nothing to do with the other; however, perception is often reality and patients will judge the clinical quality based on their customer service experience.

To get a better understanding of your practice's level of customer service, we suggest that you ask every patient a question like this: "Mrs. Jones, how was your visit today?" This is an open-ended question allowing the patient to respond as they see fit. Don't ask if it was a good visit because then the patient can only choose from a yes or a no. You want feedback in real time that can be used to make effective improvements.

3. Building value in every patient interaction

The easiest way to build value is to know your brand and brand statement. For example, Levin Group's brand statement is, "Increasing practice production through

proven business systems." That is what we do, what we want our audience to know, and what we want to accelerate. What is your brand statement? Does the entire team know it? Do you talk to patients about it? In most cases the brand statement does not exist and, therefore, fails to build value.

Take the time to develop your brand statement and share it with your referring doctors and patients regularly in conversation. It will gradually become known and respected, and it will propel the practice to higher levels of success. There are many other ways to build value with patients from evening phone calls to sending flowers after large implant cases. It all begins with a desire to support the patient at the highest level.

Summary

The probability that your practice will be as successful five years from now is unknown. I sincerely hope that it is even more successful than it is today, but there is no 100% guarantee. All you can do is focus on the most important aspects of practice success that will create higher level performance tomorrow. The three areas described above will benefit any practice if they are addressed before you have a specific need.

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Roger P. Levin, DDS is the CEO and Founder of Levin Group, a leading practice management consulting firm that has worked with over 30,000 practices to increase production. A recognized expert on dental practice management and marketing, he has written 67 books and over 4,000 articles and regularly presents seminars in the U.S. and around the world.

To contact Dr. Levin or to join the 40,000 dental professionals who receive his *Practice Production Tip of the Day*, visit www.levingroup.com or email rlevin@levingroup.com.