

# **Five Easy Steps to Get Existing Patients to Accept the Treatment that is right for them**

The one thing you must do first to recession-proof your dental practice



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# Five Steps to Enrollment

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## Summary

Enrolling patients in dental treatment does not need to be a trial and error process. By following the five steps of enrollment, dental teams can increase case acceptance with predictability. When you apply these skills to existing patients and new patients, your practice will be recession proof.

You are not competing against the dentist next door or down the street. You are competing against Best Buy, Amazon.com, Zappos, Toyota, and any other retailer where your patients prefer to spend money. When we educate our patients on the value of dentistry and follow these five easy steps, dental practices will start to see an increase in production and collections.

## Step #1: Establish Rapport, Relationship And Communication

The first step in this process is to establish rapport, build a relationship with the patient, and open up the lines of communication. Here are some strategies to do that:

### Match & Mirror

People are attracted to people that are like themselves. To mirror someone, it to provide a mirror image. For example, if you were to raise your left hand, I would raise my right hand to create the mirror image. When we mimic this observable behavior like body language, hand gestures, facial expressions, and key phrases we move one step closer to establishing rapport with our patients.

Watch how this works with other people. You will notice that people in rapport are mirroring each other. This is a strategy that you are already seeing and using.

Think about compliance when someone puts on white coat. When you speak, it has a powerful affect. You have a position that is different from someone on the street.

### Observe Modalities

There are three modalities that people fall into: visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

Modality	Description
Visual	Their eyes will pop up. Look in their eyes first. Picture is worth a thousand words. People communicate with words, tonality, and physiology. They will move a lot, talk fast, and use their hands. They will say, "I see what you mean", "what will that look like."
Auditory	Their eyes will not go up, they will stay straight at you. They will defocus because they need to process through sound. They may even tilt their head a little bit as if to hear better. When speaking, there is less movement, more logical. Auditory use words like, "I hear what you are saying," "that sounds logical," "that sounds right"
Kinesthetic	Their eyes will go down. Their whole body may go down as well. They need to feel it and internalize it. They will act slowly and observe things closely. More sensitive to pain, want more comfort. Respond to touch. If you take care of a kinesthetic person, they will be your friend for life.

### Determine Meta Programs

Metaprograms are behavior patterns and define how we respond to things. By understanding the patient's metaprograms, we can respond to their preferences and provide another way to build rapport.

Metaprogram	Description
Moving towards vs. moving away	Some motivated to get pleasure (30%), other motivated towards avoiding pain (70%)
Big Picture vs. details	e.g. accountant, architect, doctors, researchers
Process vs. outcome	
Sort by others vs. sort by self	Sort by self go with an internal compass vs. an external voice.
Possibility vs. necessity	Similar to moving towards and moving away. 30% are possibility and 70% of necessity.

## The Power of Questions

Another way to learn more about what your patients want, and how you can fill their needs is to ask quality questions. In fact, at Fortune Management, we are known for saying that the quality of your life is directly proportionate to the quality of the questions you ask yourself on a habitual basis.

- How can we help?
- What is the most important thing we can do for you today?
- What is your main concern?
- How did you find out about us?
- Who may we thank for sending you to us?

**Test/Rule: Do not proceed until rapport is established.**

## Step # 2: Discover Values And Rules

The next step in the process, which is really at the core, is to discover the patients values and rules. Here are some strategies to do this:

### Ask Quality Questions:

Ask Questions that help you notice patient's emphasis toward values: pain, appearance, money, time, recognition.

- What is most important to you in relationship with your doctor?
- What did you like most about your previous doctor?
- What did you like least about your previous doctor?
- What are the three most important things to you?
- In comparison, how important is health to you?
- What needs to happen for <what's important> to show up?

**Test/Rule: Proceed now if you know their highest values and priorities.**

## Step # 3: Give Them What They Want

Show them how present conditions conflict with their highest values. For example, let's assume that you discover avoiding pain is their highest value. "If you don't get this situation taken care of as soon as possible, you will be in more pain than you are today."

Show how the proposed treatment will help them achieve their highest values. "This procedure will allow you to get out of pain and stay out of pain."

### Trial Close:

It is helpful to ask some questions, that are likely to have "yes" answers so that you can future pace them to accept the treatment. For example,

- Can you see where this treatment will move you closer toward \_\_\_\_\_? (Highest values.)
- Does this feel / sound / look like we're on the right track?
- Does this feel / sound / look like something you would like to do?
- Am I making sense so far?

**Test/Rule: Any negative response to trial close, go back to Steps 1, 2 or 3.**

## Step #4: Obtain Commitment:

After you have built rapport, discovered the patient's values and rules, showed them how you are going to provide what they want, it is time to obtain their commitment. If anyone of the previous steps is not complete, go back.

Now, assume that the patient will accept the treatment, pay attention to patient's communication (words 7%; tonality 38%; physiology 55%), and if appropriate, provide alternative choices. Remember that words are only 7% communication, so pay attention to all of the other queues as well – tone, body language, facial expression.

If you are getting non-quality responses, do one of the following:

- Call me when you are ready.
- Someday you'll want the crown. We'll be here.
- If this gets worse, let me know.
- I will see you in six months and then we will decide.

All of these responses assume that the patient will do this in the future. By doing this, you may be able to accelerate them back to taking action now.

## Step # 5: Completion / Acknowledgement:

Now, you want to acknowledge the patient for taking action. Congratulate the patient on their decision to accept treatment. Future pace the patient as to how they will love the result, e.g. “you are going to love how your new smile looks.” Cement relationship by providing great service. This is also a good time to ask for referrals. See our Care-to-Share program for more information.

### Ask Quality Questions:

Won't it be nice when your treatment is completed?

I'm your contact in this office so you can tell me when something good or bad happens.

If you ever need anything or have a friend or someone in your family who does, let me know. I will be sure they are well taken care of.

## How to handle objections:

If patient doesn't commit, recycle or find out objections (time, money, fear, upset). Here are five simple steps to handling objections.

1. Assume acceptance
2. Identify the objection. “What is preventing your from moving forward now?”

**“Is there anything else you need to know before moving ahead?”**

3. Ask a new question . “So I guess what I hear you saying is how can I get what I \_\_\_\_\_ (want / need) and also overcome my \_\_\_\_\_ (objection)? Isn't that what you are saying?”
4. “So if I can show you a way to overcome the objection, would that allow you to move forward now?”
5. Show them how you provide a solution to their objection – time, money, fear.