

## High Quality Referrals And A System To Get Them By Trisha Donaldson

Referrals – whether we are in a growth or downturn economy, who does not need more of them? They are receptive to what you have to say and you already have a degree of BLT built in because they were referred to you. They make quicker decisions and often become part of your top 20% clients. The question is “How do you get more high quality referrals?”

To get started, consider this question:

- Who are your best patients now?
- Your Financial Top 20%?
- Your favorite patients who are always on time, pay on time and are a joy to be around – they may even bring you



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Aren't these the type of patients you want more of? The beginning step is to take the time to identify all of your “best patients” and then to identify the qualities that they have in common. Now you know what type of patient a high quality referral comes from in your practice and you have a list of patients where you can begin your new referral system.

Let's say the team has done its homework and has identified and listed your Financial Top 20% and other best patients. In the morning Huddle you have selected the patients you wish to ask for referrals for the day. The team have reviewed the charts of those patients and recalled the experience of working on those individuals. The patient of choice is now sitting in the dental chair.

**Step 1 :** Give a sincere compliment to the patient. By that we don't mean a blanket white-wash like, “You are a great guy/gal.” We mean something more personal like, “It is great to see you again Miss Pearly White. You've kept your teeth in such great shape and we're excited to have restored your mouth to total health.” Whatever the compliment is – it needs to be sincere and individualized.

**Step 2 :** Help the patient re-live his or her original problem. Simply ask, “Do you remember the first time we met and the condition of your gums and teeth?” Taking the patient back to the original condition is extremely important. It's just a law of human nature that the value of any service decreases very rapidly after the service has been performed. Once we are restored to total health we forget the shape we were in when we needed the attention.



## High Quality Referrals (Cont.)

**Step 3 :** Re-Sell the things you have done. This completes, usually in about 30 seconds, the patient's experience with you. Gratitude is often expressed at this point, especially in those circumstances where the dentist really saved the oral health of the patient. You might say that an obligation vacuum has been built.

**Step 4 :** Ask for help. "Miss Pearly White, we've just made a decision to expand our practice. I hope this doesn't sound selfish, but we'd like to have more patients just like you." Most people cannot resist a direct request for help.

**Step 5 :** Explain the purpose of your practice. "Do you know that 80% of our population has some form of gum disease? Half of the population does not have a permanent dental home. We believe dentistry works best as a preventative health science and so we feel it is our responsibility to help those people get the care they need."

**Step 6 :** Express concern for the people that the patient knows who may need a happy dental home. "I worry about the dental health of extended family and friends of my patients who don't yet have a good dental home."

**Step 7 :** Make it easy for the patient to think specifically about groups of people he or she has influence with. This would include people who work at the same company, family members, golf and tennis or bowling buddies, people that the patient knows do not have a happy dental home.

**Step 8 :** Ask the patient how you can help introduce your practice to those people that the patient has identified as needing a dental home. Ask the patient if it would be helpful to give a brochure about your practice, something tangible that the patient could give the prospect.

**Step 9 :** Make sure that the next logical step is defined. For example, you might suggest that you will call in a couple of days to see how the patient's conversation went with the prospect.

In addition to your "best patients" don't forget your NER and NEER Marketing as a part of bringing in great new patients. NER = Naturally Existing Relationships. Who are some of those people who are NER for the Dentist and the team members? The list should certainly include family, friends and close acquaintances. NEER = Naturally Existing Economic Relationships. WHO do you do business with? Do they have a good dental home? Do their families and friends have a good dental home. If you need help in uncovering your NEER relationships, check your accounts payable.



## High Quality Referrals (Cont.)

Now you have a system to ask for high quality referrals and you know more about your patients - what do you want to see happen from this? It is time to set SMART Goals.

- How will you recognize your referral source?
- Will you say "Thank You" when they are in the office or do you have something else in mind? Will you be consistent?
- Who in your practice will take the leadership role to implement and make sure to follow through on the referral system?
- Would you like to hear more great patient experiences and feedback?
- Would you like for your team to experience less stress when asking for referrals?
- How many more "ideal" patients would you like to have from your referral sources?

We hope this article helps you to develop as many High Quality Referrals as you would like coming through your practice door. If you wish to implement this system and have any questions, please call us. We are here to help you MAKE IT HAPPEN!



**Trisha Donaldson; National Client Advisor** Trisha loves the communication skills that our seminars are all about. Her greatest joy is serving others and helping them to find the most workable solutions for the challenges in their lives. She discovered that getting dentists and their teams to Dental Boot Kamp allowed her to do exactly that and she became hooked on the end results. Trisha dedicated herself to helping all the dentists she served with both the Dental Boot Kamp Continuum and special Coaching programs designed to tackle even their toughest problems. She is completely committed to making sure that our clients' experiences with Dental Boot Kamp, the Coaching Team, and Eagle Network are as good as they can possibly be and she is extremely happy to be part of The Coaching Center team. Trisha can be reached at [trishadonaldson@thecoachingcenter.net](mailto:trishadonaldson@thecoachingcenter.net) or toll free at 877-830-3328