

The Seven-Second Chiropractic Adjustment

Tom Necela, DC

Editor's note: This article was written while Dr. Necela was a student at Life Chiropractic College West.

In the time it may take you to read this sentence, a chiropractic student or doctor should be able to briefly explain to a prospective patient what it is that we do. Can you? Think of it as an "adjustment" of a person's attitude or perspective on chiropractic.[BANNER]

In his book, *Endless Referrals*, Bob Burg talks about a key aspect of marketing your services: having people understand what you do. If people don't understand what you do, how can they know that they need you? How can they effectively refer anyone to you?

Because we as chiropractic students are surrounded by chiropractic all day and every day, we may take for granted what the public knows about chiropractic. At this point in our lives, many (if not most) of our daily interactions are spent with people who already know about chiropractic. This will not always be case, especially when we graduate.

We must be able to clearly and succinctly describe our services in terms that everyone can understand and in a way that is attractive to prospective patients. How can we do this? According to Mr. Burg, this is achieved by creating a personal benefit statement. The statement must be 1) accurate in its description; 2) enticing enough to capture interest; and 3) brief. How brief? Today's marketing experts suggest that our benefit statement be a short, descriptive sentence no more than seven seconds. Yikes! I can almost hear you screaming right now! Saying the words "chiropractic, subluxation, and adjustment" takes nearly seven seconds.

We have all been guilty of letting our education get in the way of telling people what we do, i.e.: "Chiropractic uses specific high velocity, low-force adjustments to remove the vertebral subluxation. This is the condition of a vertebrae that has lost its proper juxtaposition with the one above or below or both to an extent less than a luxation, which occludes an opening, impinges nerves and interferes with the transmission of mental impulses and the optimal expression of life and well being." A big breath later, we smile and wonder why people look confused. After all, we are paying \$100,000 to learn these big words, shouldn't we use them? NO! NO! NO! Using words that people are unfamiliar with is just going to have them go into screen saver mode and stare blankly at you while you babble on. Afterward, you will then have plenty of time to try and guess where you lost them, as you will not have succeeded in getting them to make an appointment for care, getting the referral, or giving them your card.

So, throw away all those fancy words needed to pass tests and boards and get to writing one brief sentence that can describe what you do. The next time someone asks, you won't have to give them an answer like, "I am studying to be a chiropractor." This response states nothing of value. Why? The person to whom you are speaking may already have an impression (probably an incorrect one) of what a chiropractor does (back pain) and you are letting them keep it. If the person has no idea what a chiropractor does, your statement gives no clarification.

In creating your personal benefit statement, Burg recommends that we concentrate on the benefits. Instead of simply stating our job title (chiropractor), we should come up with a creative way to state the benefits of what we do. This not only provides the person with a clear description of what we do, but also gives them tangible ideas of what they will gain by using our services.

Now even those among us who are have virtually no free memory left in our brains can memorize a one sentence brief statement that describes chiropractic. Now after you write yours, there's only one thing left to do. You've heard it before, but I am going to say it again. If you want to get more people under chiropractic care, go out and tell the story. Just keep it understandable and do it in seven seconds!

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