

How Can We Go Wrong?

John Hanks, DC

I've been thinking about what I could sell to chiropractors. I wouldn't mind having some extra dollars in my pocket. I have some ideas about selling some kind of gadget, technique or seminar. After all, chiropractic journals and magazines are full of advertisements from entrepreneurs touting new technique "discoveries," or improved clinical mousetraps, most of which disappear as fast as they appeared. One of my favorite ideas was from the DC who came up with fortune cookies stuffed with pearls of information about subluxations, instead of fortunes.

My first discovery offered to my colleagues will be the Hanks' Personality Index (HPI). A chiropractor can now reveal the core personality of his or her patient by analyzing the imprint of the patient's face on the adjusting table face paper. Every DC knows about the mess a patient can produce with facial oil and makeup, and until now, we have been tearing off this imprint and throwing it away! No longer! Now, with my new 12-hour seminar, every chiropractor can understand the personality of the patient without asking a single question. Think of the power a doctor can have by instantly identifying introverts, narcissists, nymphomaniacs, paranoids and the occasional person with Munchausen's syndrome. Included in the seminar will be a manual with 50 typical samples of oily facial imprints and how to analyze them. A 300-hour certification course will lead to the chance to be a fellow in the Academy of Face Paper Analysis.

A second idea is to sell a new intake form for first-time patients. I have seen dozens and dozens of ads for sample forms, designed to make administrative work or clinical record-keeping smarter and easier. Often, in my opinion, these forms ask too many questions, and simply annoy a new patient. For example, a useless question to me is, "On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the strongest, how dedicated are you in improving your health?" How many patients are going to rate their efforts as a 1? I think it's time to simplify things. My new form will have only three questions: 1) What's wrong? 2) What do you want me to do about it? 3) How much are you willing to spend to get better?

Along that same line of thinking, I have devised a process of identifying "good" patients, meaning those with money. This will all be described in my new book, *The Affordability Quotient*, which explains how to grade your patient's wealth and ability to pay their doctor bills. In the book, I show you how to give a score for certain variables (and assets), starting from the minute a new patient calls for an appointment. I have my staff immediately do a MapQuest for the address of the new patient as soon as it is given to us over the phone. This is to find out if the patient lives in an upscale neighborhood. We then Google the patient's name with his or her date of birth to see how prominent they might be in society. When the patient comes in, we score the obvious things, such as the patient's job, car keys (which identify how expensive their car might be) and spouse's job. When the patient is face down on the treatment table, I have the staff peek at the labels on their clothes. This may all seem a bit aggressive, but if a patient is going to need 200 to 300 chiropractic adjustments a year, it only makes sense to know if he or she can afford them.

Finally, I need some kind of gadget to sell. I have thought about adjusting instruments, but I don't think I can improve upon some of the crazy devices I have seen. Some doctor told me about being adjusted with a hammer and a cork when he was in France. The "adjustor's" pedigree is unknown, but apparently he placed a wine cork on the specific vertebra and hit it with a hammer to move the

bone. It occurred to me that I could package a claw-hammer and 10 corks in a nice carrying case. But I can't get a patent, so I gave up on the idea.

Instead, with truth always being stranger than fiction, my friend Phil showed me just the gadget I want to sell. Phil is a chiropractor who, like me, appreciates tools. He bought a very fancy and pricey adjusting instrument, and now does most of his treatments with the patient sitting and resting forward on what looks like a massage chair. But he was having a problem adjusting the sacrum with the stylus, particularly with men, because the pants got in the way. So, he devised what he calls the "Plumber's Helper." It is a hook with a sandbag attached to it. He hooks it on the male patient's belt and it pulls the waist band down. Voila! Access to the sacrum is assured!

I know I will make a mint with this gizmo. Phil hasn't gotten a patent on it, but I will be fair with him ... maybe a 50/50 split on the profits. I mean, how could we possibly go wrong?

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