

Developing the Right Marketing Message

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In the book *The Answer*, by John Assaraf and Murray Smith, brain neuroscience, business planning and marketing are the major topics. It provides a unique perspective on how the way your brain works and the way people think in terms of business and marketing strategy, and the connection between the two. By understanding how the brain works, you can literally create whatever type of practice you want. By understanding how people think, you can develop a precise marketing strategy and message that matches the vision of what you want your practice to be.

Who's Your Ideal Patient?

It is important that you determine what kind of patient you want to attract. *The Answer* refers to this as your "ideal customer." This really comes down to the law of attraction. Clearly establishing your ideal customer or patient profile is vital for any marketing strategy. The authors state that "You only see what you are looking for," which is how the brain works. Focusing your thoughts and your messages on your ideal patient is the foundation for developing a dream practice. This can be done regardless of whether you are starting a new practice or already have an established practice. We encourage you to try to create a crystal-clear picture of the ideal patient you want to service in your practice.

Patient Wants vs. Needs

It is also very important that you understand your ideal patient's needs versus wants. Your marketing message and the service you provide must target wants over needs. In other words, all of your marketing strategies or marketing pieces must include the underlying message that speaks to patient "wants." Most patients need you to figure out and fix the cause of their pain, but what do they want? They may need to be taught exercises, stretches and diet changes, and they even may need supplementation. It's up to you to determine what they want and meet that desire without compromising your integrity as a doctor. Tell them what they need, set up your practice so that it can supply what they need, but give them what they want.

For example, people get frustrated when they go to the doctor because of long wait times and/or not enough time with the doctor. Following this scenario, your patient may think, *I want my time to be respected, and I expect the doctor to spend enough time with me and not just give me a prescription and send me out the door.* You may address this concern by making sure the patient knows, "We respect our patient's lives by routinely running on time and we are 100 percent focused during the quality time we spend with our patients." By the way, you must be able to do this as well. In other words, you must be able to deliver the message you are sending.

Determine Your USP

Another concept that falls in line with determining needs versus wants and is critical to innovating your dream practice is your practice's "Unique Selling Proposition" (USP) or your tagline. Your USP is the underlying message that must be communicated in your marketing strategies and marketing pieces. It is the most important single benefit that you offer to your patients. It conveys

what your business stands for. The following are some great examples of well-designed USP's: "When what you drive says who you are." "Fresh, hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less, guaranteed." "Serious pain relief from people who care." "Save money, live better."

There are hundreds of examples of great taglines, but you must create the message that matches what you feel is most important to your ideal patient. A well-designed USP becomes your underlying message in all of your marketing material, and it communicates what you do so that not only your ideal patient gets it, but everyone gets it. We encourage you to take the time to design/create a USP or tagline for your practice and make sure that it is clearly communicated in all your marketing pieces. We recommend that you to have your practice tagline written somewhere close to your company name on business cards, letterhead, envelopes, Yellow Pages ads, newspaper advertising pieces, practice brochures, signs, pens, your Web site home page, T-shirts, staff uniforms, gym bags, "Thank you for referring" cards, your e-mail signature, blog site, Facebook site, Twitter site, and even any YouTube videos you may do for your practice.

By applying these concepts to your existing or new practice, you can lay the foundation for a business that is guaranteed to succeed.

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