

Effective or Efficient?

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This is a particularly challenging time for all business owners, including chiropractors, because money is tight. What used to seem easy is now more difficult. Plus, it's taking more time, effort and energy to figure out fresh, innovative ways to get new patients through the door, existing patients to stay and old patients to come back.

There's another reality you must face. You can't work harder than you are now. There simply aren't enough hours in a day to do more. That means your only option is to work smarter. Now, I know you've heard that before; however, I want you to approach smart a little differently.

When most people think about working smarter, they think, "How can I do more in less time?" In other words, they are looking for ways to do things more efficiently. Yet efficiency may not be the answer for you. Here's why.

Efficiency vs. Effectiveness

Efficiency is all about doing the same things in less time with less effort. Now that sounds good. It sounds like it's exactly what you need. However, I caution you that efficiency may be exactly what you *don't* need. You see, if doing more of the same things isn't increasing your patient base and retention; if it isn't giving you more free time now ... then you can't expect it to produce more when you do more of it. You can be extremely efficient at doing all the wrong things.



The key to your success in 2011 and beyond is effectiveness not efficiency. It's *effectiveness*, which involves doing the right things. The right things are the things that produce results. Let's discuss some specific, [simple action steps](#) you can achieve in your practice immediately to see tangible results.

When you do the right things, you don't need to do so much of them to produce the desired result. That means you get what you want with less work. It also means you have more time for other things, including planning what you want to accomplish and how to get it.

For example, when you're efficient, you could make 30 recalls and [reactivate five or seven patients](#) from your time investment. When you're effective, you could make the same 30 calls and secure 15-20 scheduled appointments from the same time investment. It takes the same amount of time to

get a really good result as it does to get a really poor result.

Efficiency is about making those calls as quickly as possible, playing the numbers game and fooling yourself into thinking every "no" takes you one call closer to a "yes." Effectiveness is all about knowing who to call and understanding what to say on those calls to produce results in as few calls as possible, realizing the purpose is to make a connection that could develop into a relationship. Remember, I have always said that building and solidifying relationships is the key to success. Patients want to go where they feel cared for, are treated as individuals and see people they know.

It is a fact that since patients make decisions based on feelings, it is crucial to make sure that the following actions steps are adhered to on a consistent basis. This will help you and your team be more effective in 2011. Passion equals productivity. Believe it or not, your patients know how authentic you are as a team.

Action Steps for Effectiveness

- Give patients what they want - all the time.
- Make sure each and every visit to your practice is a great experience.
- Make sure each patient feels special.
- Appeal to their five senses.
- People are sophisticated; educate them.
- Really listen, especially on the first visit; communication is key.
- Always live in present-time consciousness.
- Be unique; make patients confident that they made the right decision in choosing your practice. They will tell others!

It is extremely important for you and your staff to be happy because collectively, you determine the mood and pace of the practice. Team members are the first people patients come in contact with when they enter your office. If they are happy, they will pass this feeling along to your patients.

Finally, keep in mind that the [effectiveness of a team](#) can be no greater than the effectiveness of its leader. Leaders set the pace. Great leaders know that team members don't care what their leader says -- they care what their leader *does*. Make 2011 more effective and watch some of your challenges disappear.

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