



MARKETING / OFFICE / STAFF

## Stick Strategies: Enchant Your Patients So They Stick Like Glue

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I am guilty! Absolutely guilty! And I'm sure you are too. For the majority of my chiropractic career, I have been guilty of completely ignoring the No. 1 most influential resource my business had. I spent many years searching for that one marketing idea; the one "fix" that was going to explode my practice without having to spend a lot of money or time.

We all think we are missing the one secret strategy that will generate lifelong patients who do nothing but adore us and refer like crazy! For me, it was a frantic quest jumping from one idea to another, always ending up in the same place.

And then it hit me, as I hope it will hit you, too: The biggest advantage and resource you have in your business is *you* - just you being you! Distinguishing yourself and enchanting your patients is about taking *your* essence, *your* experiences, *your* skills, *your* uniqueness, and *your* passion and sharing it with each patient in an extraordinary way that touches their soul on an emotional level. No matter what your competition does, there is one thing no one can ever do as well as you can - *be you*. No one can copy the energy you bring to your patient's experience and the feeling they have after an encounter with you.



Why is this so important when it comes to building our practices and [our referrals](#)? In order to answer that, let's look at why patients do business with you in the first place and what it is that leads them to become recurring, referring customers who stick like glue.

When it comes to creating lifelong relationships with patients, one of my strategies is to lead each new patient down a path of three phases: commencement, attachment and enchantment. Let's examine each one and see how easy it is to cultivate lifelong patients.

#### Phase 1: Commencement

In the initial commencement phase, the primary thought of a patient is strictly for you to solve their problem. They know you, but that's about it. Their interaction with you and your business is more logical than emotional. If you just simply solve their problem, chances are you will not see much of them after that problem resolves. That is because in this initial phase, they view you as a technician who applies a treatment. We know we are so much more! It is imperative that we advance them beyond this thought process.

#### Phase 2: Attachment

Patients stick around for an entirely different reason. Now their thoughts are more along the lines of, "The way you solved my problem was both good and valuable." They become more familiar with you and your business style. Now they know *and* like you. These patients consider returning to you and consider using you for different health issues as they arise. Their retention is better as they start to view you as more than just a technician, but also a valuable resource for a multitude of their health care needs.

Patients who attach to you are wonderful for your practice. But if your goal is huge practice growth, we need those who attach to us to learn how to refer in a big way.

#### Phase 3: Enchantment

Customers refer for completely different reasons. When they are enchanted with you and your business, the fact that you solved their initial problem becomes almost secondary. You have shown

them your "wow" factor and they want to share you with the world. They now have an emotional connection with you and become a more engaged, responsive patient. They know, like *and* trust you, which is the trifecta that will lead you to endless referrals and customers for life!

### Implementing Stick Strategies in Each Phase

One very effective way to advance your patient toward more loyalty is to implement "stick strategies" at each phase designed solely for the purpose of making patients "stick" to you and your office. Stick strategies are automatic procedures you implement with each and every new patient that are intended to turn first-time patients into repeat patients ... and eventually into lifetime patients. Positioned correctly, your stick strategies will move the patient from commencement to attachment and ultimately, to complete enchantment.

There are literally hundreds of stick strategies you can develop in each phase so your true personality and business style shine, allowing your patient to walk away with an exceptional experience.

### A Great Stick Strategy: The Shock-and-Awe Experience

One of my favorites is the "shock-and-awe experience" I use in the attachment phase. You may have heard of a shock-and-awe package. In marketing circles, this describes a benefit-laden package that is completely unique and full of useful content designed to positively overwhelm the recipient. The idea is that the package gets sent in an unexpected way so the customer gets so blown away by it that it sets you high above anything your competition has ever done, and turns the prospect into a paying customer.

In our practices, the expense of sending these packages does not typically make sense. However, the same concept can be applied to how you portray your personality and business style to your prospects and patients. Rephrase the definition of the shock-and-awe "package" to a shock-and-awe *experience*. Give them an experience with you in this phase that sets you high above your competition and blows them away. Remember, *you* are a unique, benefit-laden superstar filled with useful content, knowledge, advice and personality that can be shared in a way to positively overwhelm the patient.

You can excite them, energize them, educate them and connect with them in a way that is much more powerful than a package they receive in the mail (and a heck of a lot cheaper!). Call them (just because), give them articles about things they would love (just because), spend extra time with them (just because), ask about their families and their thoughts on current events (you get it ... just because). Leave them with an experience that creates a big, unforgettable impact.

### Your First Step

When developing your personal shock-and-awe experience, start by looking at your [testimonials](#) from some of your enchanted customers. Look at the words they used to describe you. Most often, they are not words about your product - they are words about *you*. Recognize that these are the personality traits making the biggest impact on your patients. These are the words they will use to describe you to a potential referral. Find ways to ensure that this is the "you" each patient sees and they will quickly become attached.

Share yourself in a way that will knock your patients' socks off and you will never regret it. *You* are your practice's most influential resource; *you* are all you need to truly succeed.

