



YOUR PRACTICE / BUSINESS

Reach Out and Touch More Patients: 3 Steps to Expand Practice Reach

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Expanding your reach really doesn't take that much effort. It often boils down to becoming a little more efficient at the things you may already be doing; or simply stepping outside of your existing comfort zone. We often know what we should be doing, but for some reason, we don't do it. Why? Often it's because we overthink things and have trouble getting out of our own way.

Tricks, shortcuts and flavor-of-the-month strategies don't work in the long run. You have to go back to basics and fundamentals. Get outside in the arena and don't just watch from the stands. It's the foundation of any successful business or entrepreneur. That's where we're headed. Let's go.

Step #1: Get Better at Telling Stories

If you really want to make an impact, talk to and connect with people. I don't mean just any talking. *Storytelling talking*. There's a big difference between telling and storytelling. One involves talking at someone and is ultimately about you. The other involves talking with someone - and is all about them. See the difference?

The proliferation of the Internet has whisked us further and further away from one-on-one conversation and connection. We've become disconnected. But we are hardwired to tell and listen to stories. It's the most optimal way to transfer and learn information. It's ancestral. We bond through storytelling. Deep squatting along the fire and telling stories of the day is where we came from. We don't deep squat anymore and we are poor storytellers.

Everybody loves a good story. Think about some of the best and most memorable teachers you had in school. I bet they were good storytellers. It's not just about delivering the information. We can get information anywhere at anytime. Just ask your phone!



To change another person's life with chiropractic, you are going to have to connect with their emotions. You do that from the heart and the primal emotional brain. It trumps everything else.

Action steps: 1) Analyze your current communication style. Are you talking *at* people or *with* them? Have your staff listen in on some of your conversations and give feedback. (Perhaps they already can give you feedback if you ask them.)

2) Record yourself during an assessment or report of findings. You will be surprised at what you hear. Drop the cookie-cutter delivery you learned from consultants and focus on one human being talking to another. When you connect via story, there should be no need to "convince" anyone to get care. 3) Buy a book on storytelling and read it.

Step #2: Start Talking in Front of People

It's not easy to stand in front of people and talk (tell stories). That's why so few do it. It can be terrifying. I've been there I know what it's like. The last thing you might want to do is step in front of a crowd and talk, but that's why it's so powerful. When you do it, everything changes.

The beautiful thing about technology is you don't really even need to be physically in front of people to talk to them. You can be standing in front of your computer camera, [making a video](#) recording of your talk; or you can conduct a virtual webinar during which people can see you and ask questions. Work your way up to standing in front of a live physical audience if you are too nervous. Pretty soon, it will be second nature.

The key is to pick topics you feel passionate and excited about (such as chiropractic). When you share what you truly care about, you are less likely to be nervous. Remember, add storytelling to your talk. People love to hear before-and-after stories of people overcoming hardships to triumph. This is a great opportunity for you to have patients who have been through your program share their stories.

Actions steps: 1) Start small and organize a public talk at your office. Record yourself even if no one shows up. Then post your talk on your website for everyone to see; and/or blast it out on your social media platforms. You also can go more technical by having a live Facebook feed at the same time. 3) Buy a book on public speaking and start reading it.

Step #3: Leave Your Office in the Afternoon

Lunchtime is a valuable opportunity to get out in the world and meet new people. I know it's tempting to stay in and do paperwork; you can finally catch up on the seemingly endless documentation that's been hanging over your head. But that's always going to be there, and eventually it will burn you out - to the point that you will resent getting new patients. So get outside and introduce yourself to local businesses and hand out business cards. (Yes, they do still make business cards.) Make sure you wear your clinic shirt with your name and logo on it.

It might feel uncomfortable in the beginning to put yourself out there and meet new people by handing out your card. But if you do it with a smile and good intention, you'll find people are extremely open and receptive. Remember, we don't see the world as it is; we see it as we are. So be a better you.

Action steps: 1) The first day after reading this article, go outside at lunch and hand out five business cards with a smile. Every day, add another card. 2) Take a look at your current business card. If your picture is not on it, throw out what you have and get new ones. Make them colorful and simple. 3) People want to connect with you, not the information on your business card. Put a QR code on the back of your business card linked to a special video you already recorded of the talk you gave in step #2. See how that works?

Take the First Step

Your mission is to concentrate on these three objectives for the next 30 days. Start with the one that makes you feel the most *uncomfortable*. That's how you'll get out of your own way. Most importantly, have fun and remember why you became a chiropractor. Because when you expand your reach, you change more people's lives; you change the world. Now that's powerful expansion.