

Practice Building Strategies for the '90s

A SERIES OF HOW-TO ARTICLES

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You have chosen chiropractic as a profession.

More than that, you have decided that your most promising future lies in private practice.

In making those decisions you enter a proud professional group, for doctors of chiropractic have long been enterprising as men of science and business.

The doctor of chiropractic charts his own course to a greater degree than most people can boast. In today's complex world, that freedom can be one of the major satisfactions of an individual's work. The doctor of chiropractic is free to use his own initiative, test his own theories, and rely on his own resourcefulness as he moves toward his practice goals.

A look ahead and a look around will tell you that your clinical technique may be superb, your practice elegantly designed, your staff standing by in full-dress, and yet if these assets are not known beyond the practice doors, you cannot reach your fullest capacity. There is a need to communicate these facts to the health care consuming public.

Chiropractic education equips you to be an authority on the clinical practice of chiropractic.

Practice management training provides you with a sound working knowledge of the managerial and promotional skills needed to operate and to develop a successful chiropractic practice.

Up to now, too few colleges of chiropractic have trained doctors in the basic arts of communication, although it is promising to note that enlightened colleges are now adding such courses to the curriculum.

The chiropractor is, by his very nature, an editor, an artist, and a creative director. He alone can decide what message he will convey to the public about his chiropractic practice, himself, and his profession. He will want all the aids available, and will want to know how to use them.

What will this series of practice building articles do?

This series of articles is designed to survey the broad areas of communication -- publicity, advertising, promotion -- and their many ramifications. The more subtle forms of communication, from a waiting room layout to an employee's smile, are not neglected. This series of articles will offer a framework for planning your outgoing activity, will provide a working vocabulary for your dealings with the media, and will suggest practical ways you can place publicity, buy advertising space and time, and use promotion techniques. In total, this series of articles should give you a broad view of the possibilities before you.

What will this series of articles not do?

It cannot provide guaranteed formulae, solve specific problems for a particular setting, or set up steps to be followed in order. That will be up to the doctor. A chiropractic practice and its patients are infinitely varied from California to Georgia, and from Manhattan to Main Street. But the doctor can easily set his own check points at the end of each article. In each article you will find success stories from the 50 states that can be adapted for your purposes: a California chiropractor who triples his referrals by improving his communication skills; an East Coast group of doctors who collaborate to develop a wellness-week program; and an East Coast chiropractic practice quadruples its pediatric practice by becoming child oriented. Success stories on a national scale are resources to draw on. Tapping local talent is another resource. You will want to supplement this series of articles with many folders of material applicable to you alone -- your practice, and your goals for the future.

In choosing to practice chiropractic you have accepted a challenge that will never pall, a profession that will never narrow, a life's work that will widen your view each year.

Before you begin this series of articles, why not write out what you want to accomplish in your practice by months and years?

After that, why not write out specific ways you can reach those objectives for yourself?

The series of articles that follow can open new perspectives each time you review them.

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