

PRESENTING FINANCIAL CONSULTS

Let's move on to the logistics of the actual financial consult. Once the treatment has been entered, the benefits have been determined, and the financial form written up for the patient, it's time to have the financial discussion.

We recognize that a new employee might be nervous to discuss financials with patients. Here's our advice about that.

MASTER THE THREE THINGS WE OUTLINED IN THE BEGINNING OF THIS SECTION.

The more knowledgeable you are about dental treatment, dental benefits, and the practice's financial policies and forms, the more confident you will feel. That confidence will come across to the patients. They will be more likely to trust you and your practice if they FEEL as if you know what you are talking about.

BE PROUD OF YOUR PRACTICE.

If the doctor performs good dentistry, then you should be proud of your fees and the service your practice provides. Do you believe in his/her work? Do you think the practice can accomplish what the patient wants/needs to be done? (If not, maybe find a new doctor to work for?)

OK, so let's say a financial form has been created and written up or printed out, whatever the practice's preference.

Now it's time to discuss the financial aspect with the patient.

Let's pause for a second with an example to help put all of this in perspective.

Let's say you were looking to buy a new car and went to a car lot. Would a sales person walk up to you and immediately point to cars and call out prices? No way! That sales person would attempt to find out what your needs were. He/she would then tell you ALL the great features about the car before telling you the cost. That sales person is trying to build value that will explain why the car costs what it does. Most likely the sales person would find out what your specific needs are and then repeat them back to you.

For example, if you were to mention to the sales person that you wanted a bigger SUV to accommodate your growing family, the sales person would most likely use that information when looking at cars. "Take a look at this SUV. It has room for 7. Would that work for your growing family?" By restating the customer's original objectives, the sales person is reassuring the customer that he has acknowledged the customer's needs and is providing the solution.

***Why would the sales person do that?
To build value, of course!***

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How can this same principle apply to dentistry? Let's create an example where a patient is having some discomfort with a broken tooth and needs a crown.

Imagine this scenario. The doctor tells the patient he needs treatment, and the front desk team member walks up and says, "That will be \$1300!" What did that team member do to build value? Nothing! A more ideal situation would call for that team member to do the following:

1. Team member asks the patient if he has any questions on the treatment that the doctor recommended. Often times, patients will feel more comfortable asking questions of other team members instead of the doctor.

"Before we review your specific payment options, do you have any questions on the treatment that the doctor is recommending?"

2. Team member reviews the treatment, even if the patient does not have any questions.

While reviewing the treatment, the team member should be sure to respond by BUILDING VALUE into the conversation using the BEGINNING, the MIDDLE, and the END concept.

Think of it this way.

The patient's concern before they came to your office is the BEGINNING.

How the office can help is the MIDDLE. Use the 3 Positive Response Rule here!

The way they will be improved is the END.

"I know that broken tooth is causing you some discomfort. We can easily fix that tooth with a crown. In fact, we offer same day dentistry for crowns. Because we are a digital office, we do not have to take any messy impressions. You can actually watch the crown process, too. It's pretty cool! By the end of today's appointment, that broken tooth will be fixed. You will be able to chew like normal on that tooth again. No more discomfort!"

We love the idea of restating the patient's own words, reassuring them that we can take care of the problem, and then letting them know how well off they will be after treatment. Did you catch all three of those things in our few simple statements to the patient? We will break it down for you.

VALUE BUILDING CONVERSATION

(BEGINNING) ECHOING THE PATIENT'S CHIEF CONCERN(S): *"I know that broken tooth is causing you some discomfort."*

(MIDDLE) REASSURING THE PATIENT THAT WE CAN HELP: *"We can easily fix that tooth with a crown. In fact, we offer same day dentistry for crowns. Because we are a digital office, we do not have to take any messy impressions. You can actually watch the crown process, too. It's pretty cool!"*

(END) LETTING THE PATIENT KNOW HOW WELL OFF HE WILL BE AFTER TREATMENT:

"By the end of today's appointment, that broken tooth will be fixed. You will be able to chew like normal on that tooth again. No more discomfort!"

PRESENTING FINANCIAL CONSULTS ASSIGNMENT

Let's look at another example.

A patient comes to your practice because she knows you offer adult orthodontics. The patient reports that she never smiles for family photos because she is embarrassed about her crooked teeth.

What would be "the BEGINNING" a team member should say to this patient when sitting down to review financial arrangements?

What would be "the MIDDLE" a team member should say?

What would be "the END" a team member should say?

We like this: *"I'm sorry to hear that you don't smile for family photos. The good news is that we can give you the smile you've always wanted with Invisalign. With clear, removable aligners, Invisalign will straighten your smile in about a year. This time next year, you will have the BIGGEST smile in your family photos."*

See that? We've very easily been able to address the BEGINNING, MIDDLE, and END concept for that patient. What do you think would be more effective when presenting financial arrangements? Simply stating a fee? Or taking a few minutes to build value with the BEGINNING, MIDDLE, and END concept?

The time to review the financial form is AFTER the value building conversation. If the financial form is given to the patient before the value building conversation, quite frankly, the patient will not hear anything being said. He/she will be too focused on the numbers. So, have the value conversation first. Use those few moments as an opportunity to look the patient in the eye and have them feel your compassion, kindness, and confidence. Then, take the form out and review the payment options with them.

It is a great idea to practice financial consults on team members before going live on patients. Patients will not feel confident in the practice if the person reviewing treatment and financial options is not confident.

Date of completion:

Reviewed with doctor/manager:

Initial after satisfactory completion: