

Growing Your Practice The Comprehensive Re-Evaluation Robert H. Maccario, MBA

Since you have already spent significant sums on attracting and acquiring your current patients, it's time to leverage your resources. I have created two processes to help you do just that: the first one is what I call the Z-factor. This describes the framework within which you can systematically grow your practice, and it's based on a low-risk concept with a high potential for success. The second concept is that of the comprehensive re-evaluation, or how to get your current patients to accept the best care you now have to offer.

The Z-Factor

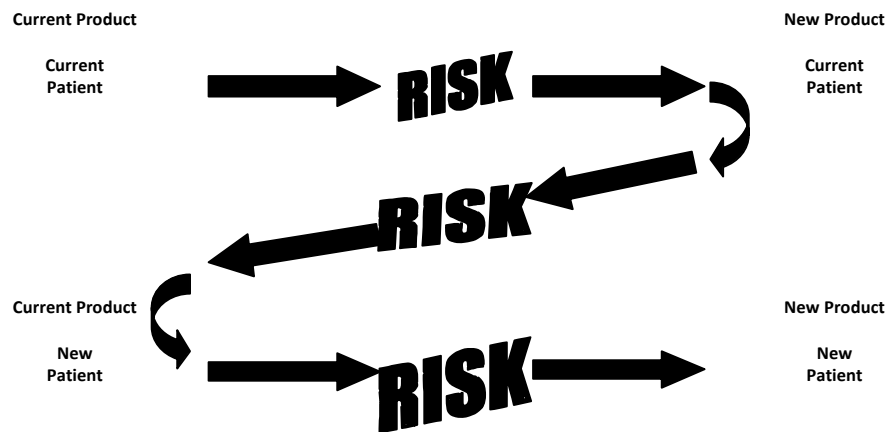
As any business owner knows, you want to concentrate growth in the areas that have the highest potential for success—and the lowest risk to the business. The components to consider are your current services/products versus new services/products, and whether your practice's relationship with the customer is established or new. The Z-factor states that the easiest way to grow your business is to always start with your current customers (guests) and continue to offer your current services/products (I consider cosmetic dentistry a current product/service). Why does this present the highest potential for return with the lowest risk? Your current customers know you and trust you, since they have bought from you before with success, and are most likely to buy from you because of this established relationship. Your current services and products are the easiest for you to offer because you have confidence in your skills and knowledge. Basically, they know you, and you know your stuff.

The next step in building up business—but with a little more risk—is offering new services/products to established customers. This presents a little more risk because although your current customers know you and trust you when it comes to services you've performed in the past, you may not be totally confident in delivering this new service/product. Isn't that why most of the new procedures you offer are first practiced on staff or family, who trust you completely? Your family and staff will understand if the procedure doesn't come off quite as smoothly as it should.

The next step in growing your practice is offering current service/products to new patients. This is a riskier proposition because although you are confident in your skills, these potential patients/guests may not be. The relationship is not established—there still may be a question of trust. You and your team's ability to quickly establish rapport with patients can have a significant positive impact on this transaction.

The last scenario is the most risky and the least likely to succeed, but unfortunately represents how most small businesses start out when it comes to external marketing: offering new services/products to new guests. Not only are you not yet confident in your skills, but your patients/guests are also strangers coming into your practice.

It should be clear by now that the best way to grow your practice is to start with your current services/products and give all of your patients a chance to say, “Yes to the Best”. For more than 18 years, I have been teaching this simple concept with consistent success: Give your current patients a chance to buy the best care your skills and ability can produce. When you are creating a treatment plan, your only concerns should be the clinical aspects, and whether you can deliver this high quality of care. Don’t worry about the money, and never concern yourself with the insurance. Only after you have begun to offer all of your existing patients the best should you consider implementing an external marketing program. Anticipate at least a six- to nine-month lead-time in implementing your external marketing program. So if today you started offering all of your current patients the opportunity to have the best care, tomorrow you should start developing your marketing plan.



Comprehensive Re-evaluation

You might be thinking, “That sounds great, but how do I offer my existing patients the best care? They’ve been in my practice for years and thought they were already getting the best.” First, you must recognize that they *were* getting the best—the best you could do at that time. But that was then, and this is now.

Invite your current patients/guests back for a comprehensive re-evaluation. What is a comprehensive re-evaluation? A marketing term for a new patient exam. If you invite a long-term patient back in for a new patient exam, you will break all the rapport you have worked so hard to build—so just call it a comprehensive re-evaluation. You will still perform all of the procedures you ordinarily do for the new patient exam, so it should be fairly extensive, even including some new procedures like a Scan 16.

To introduce this offer to your long-term patients, I suggest that you give your guest the chance to say yes to the best by using a script along the lines of the one below, taught in the Dental Concierge system. Assume the patient is in hygiene: at the morning meeting it was discussed this guest could benefit from your current level of services vs. the care they currently have- give them a chance to say “Yes to the Best”

“Bob, you have two fillings in your lower right bicuspid. They are fine—I know they are I did them myself. I thought you would like to know that over the years the art and science of dentistry has changed. We now have new materials and techniques that were not available before. I have completed a master’s training in esthetic care. If you wanted the best I could do for you, the best dentistry has to offer, you could replace those fillings with a more state-of-the-art material and get a more natural look. You don’t need them, but I feel all of my patients have the right to know the best I can do for them. I would like to invite you to come back for a comprehensive re-evaluation to lay out a game plan for the best dentistry has to offer.”

If the patient were to ask you “Why now?” your answer is simple. The art and science of dentistry has changed over the years, and you and your staff now have training in these new techniques and materials. These long-term patients come to you because they trust your judgment—you told them up front that they don’t need this new care, but you wanted them to know the best dentistry has to offer. You will be surprised how many patients will have an interest. You don’t have to use the script’s words exactly—the concept is what’s important. Practices developing a neuromuscular component will find this script particularly helpful, since many existing patients will be interested in seeking those services—and will greatly appreciate being able to visit their trusted dental professional for this new level of care.

By utilizing these two concepts, the Z-Factor and the comprehensive re-evaluation, your practice can encourage significant growth while experiencing low risk. Who could ask for more?