



Getting More Out of Dentistry

A practice's success relies on your ambitions

As I mentioned last month, there are only three ways to increase your dental business: Acquire new patients, upsell a current customer, or get your current customers to buy more frequently.

This month, we'll focus on the third option—specifically, why it's so important that you and your staff are able to discuss money with customers—and the mindset required to make that happen.

I'm a firm believer that 2 out of 3 people will accept a treatment plan if it's reasonable. I don't believe in that old concept of "save teeth at any cost." I've seen a lot of patients get burned out of dentistry by that adage: They come in with 14 cavities, one tooth's in pain, they're hurting financially, and the dentist wants them to pay \$2,000 for a root canal, buildup and crown. Their dental budget for the year is gone, to treat that single tooth, and when they return the following year, the same thing has happened to another tooth, and additional ones also are hopeless and need to be extracted.

The people who sell the most dentistry get a sense of what's going on with a patient. If their budget is only \$2,000, I'm not going to spend it on a root canal, buildup and crown on a molar, if that \$2,000 could have fixed 10 other cavities and prevented future damage.

Get comfortable talking about finances

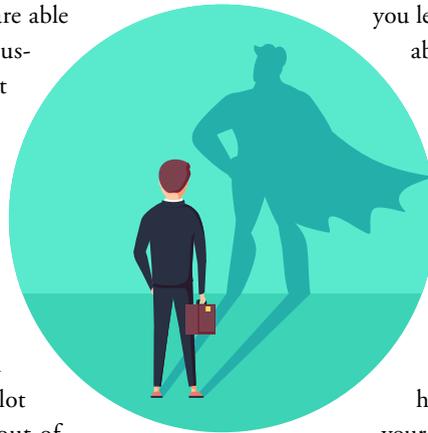
A lot of dentists, physicians and lawyers are not hard-wired to talk about money. You also weren't hard-wired for calculus or physics or geometry—and how did you ever find out the ATP result of a Krebs cycle?—but you learned it. You've got to be able to talk money—your treatment coordinator, yes, but you as well.

You must be able to sit next to a patient and say, "This tooth needs a root canal, buildup and crown, and that's about two grand, but you've got a lot going on here. I need to know what your budget would be, because

I don't want to spend \$2,000 on one tooth when you have 10 others that also need help. That could have been the money that fixed 10 cavities that next year could've all turned into root canals. What is your budget—and more importantly, if you can tell us what kind of monthly payment you could make, we could go to our outside finance people and see how much money we have to work with. We might be able to fix all the teeth."

A lack of ambition holds you back

Ninety-five percent of dentists won't do a full-mouth rehab this year. Meanwhile, 5 percent of dentists in the U.S. do a full-mouth



Spread the news about Dentaltown!

Dentaltown owes its success to registered Townies who engage on forums and message boards, contribute articles for publication, and share articles and columns via social media. Log in today at dentaltown.com to get started.

by Howard Farran, DDS, MBA, publisher, *Dentaltown* magazine

rehab not just once a year, but *once a month*. They have \$2 million, \$3 million, \$4 million practices, located in the same medical/dental building as those other dentists who'll never do a \$35,000 case in their life.

If you have a PPO-only practice and say, "Everybody's only going to take what the insurance pays in the yearly max," your lack of success is a mind game. If you believe that, I can't change your mind—but I can call you on your own hooley. The average

full-mouth rehab costs about as much as a new car—and in 2016 Americans bought more than 17.5 million new cars, at an average cost of more than \$35,000. If you tell me there's no money in your community, I'll walk out into your parking lot and say, "So how did these people buy all these cars?" America has money!

When I see dentists who are on PPO treadmills, working in dental factories, it looks like they're running up a mudslide. They're not getting anywhere, doing fillings all day long and barely breaking even, and doing cleanings for a loss. The energy just drains out of them.

> See Howard Live!

Howard Farran, DDS, MBA, is an international speaker who has written books and dozens of articles. To schedule Howard to speak at your next national, state or local dental meeting, email rebecca@farranmedia.com.

2018

MARCH 7	Brace Place Orthodontics New Jersey
APRIL 13	Townie Meeting Orlando, Florida
APRIL 20	Oklahoma Dental Association Oklahoma City
MAY 15	Riverside/Corona Study Club Riverside, California
JUNE 15	Wyoming Dental Association Jackson Hole, Wyoming

It's time to crank it up a notch

I want to talk about energy. The older I get and the more practices I observe, I've realized that people who work fewer hours are usually more productive, because they're going faster and getting more done. They *crank it out*.

Think about your pacing: If I ask you to run 100 meters, you'll run as fast as you can and do it in 10–13 seconds. But if I ask you to run a mile, your speed will be totally different ... and if I ask you to run a marathon (26.2 miles)? That's just, like, fancy walking.

If I set your work hours at 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and a half-day on Saturday, you'd pace yourself as if you're running a five- or six-hour marathon. If I said you'd work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, with lunch from noon to 1 p.m., you'd probably pace yourself more like running a 5K.

When I hear dentists say, "We're going to crank out six hours of dentistry per day," everybody there is doing the 100-meter dash. And if they're working 5½ days a week, most of them could come in and do in two hours what a typical dentist does all day Friday and Saturday.

So, get focused! Get motivated! Start selling! Are you still looking for a New Year's resolution? I want you to sell the dental equivalent of one of those 17 million new cars in America. Somebody is doing it in your ZIP code, your county, in your state, every month—it's your turn! ■