



**Name:** Amit Patel

**Age:** 44

**Job title:** Specialist in Periodontics & Implant Dentist

**Where did you qualify?** University of Liverpool

**How would you sum yourself up in just 3 words?** Enthusiastic, professional and caring

**What time do you usually get up on a weekday and how far away from work do you live?**

I usually get up at 6am and work just 30 minutes away, which is perfect. I usually start early as I need to catch up with paper work and letters to dictate and plan implant cases.

**What are your favourite areas of dentistry and what do you find most challenging?**

My favourite area in the field is periodontics and implant dentistry, but if I were to do it again I would have loved to do composite restorations in the way it's done now with more finesse and artistry.

**What appealed to you about a career in dentistry?**

I wanted to leave school at 16 but stayed on as my friends stayed to do A-levels, then a teacher suggested I should do dentistry so I did. No planning or no visiting dentists to see what it were like. Crazy when you think about it now!

**Who were some of your influences that you looked up to during your childhood?**

I didn't have any external influences, apart from my parents who are working class people. When I was younger I loved to watch TV and read comics, which I still do. When I was younger I never saw someone and thought to myself I wanted to be like him or her. I think this is very much a phenomena of the 90's.

**Is there any one particular patient who has most stood out for you during your career so far?**

This is a very good question. I don't have one but I do love spending time chatting to my patients and learning what they do or what they did. I do have fun and a laugh with them, which for me is the most important thing to make my day go well.

**Do you express an interest in business? Do you think there is enough in the undergraduate dental curriculum about the business side of running a dental business?**

Yes, I am passionate about business and own my own business in Birmingham, Birmingham Dental Specialists. I've had this

business for the last 4 years and it's been hard and stressful, but very rewarding.

I can push the business in the direction I want to take it in so that my patients can get the best treatment I can provide. I really do feel undergraduate training should have a business module, its important for all to be aware of the importance of running a business so we can all make an informed decision about the direction we all wish to go in.

**Tell us more about your longer-term ambitions?**

That's a tough one! I want to be better than the average periodontist and implant dentist I must admit. I don't think I'll be the best as I feel we should all be striving for that goal. I would like to spend less time at work and more time traveling the world and exploring new experiences and adventures. I've even thought about how great of an experience it would be to take a year off and travel the world one day.

**What did you find most challenging during your undergraduate studies and what pieces of advice would you give to younger students now entering the profession?**

I must admit that I found undergraduate studies tough; I wasn't the brightest and was always scraping through. I did not find the course very interesting so to keep going for 5 years was difficult. I realised quite early that general dentistry wasn't for me.

**What do you believe will be the biggest change we face in field of dentistry over the next 20 years?**

I personally think that the NHS will disappear, or be a small service, which helps, a small proportion of patients get out of pain. Future dentists need to be able to think outside the box and be able to choose to do the type of dentistry they want to do. I really feel we, as clinicians, should be more consumer focused with Brexit looming over us, as patients will want more for their investment. In my opinion this is not an easy task within the NHS as its very much target driven, as I understand it. ■