

Patient Relationships and Communication

Some Keys to a Successful Dental
Practice

Why do patients Stay?

- DOCTOR SKILLS 25%
- DOCTOR IS FRIENDLY 35%
- DOCTOR DISCUSSES
TREATMENT OPTIONS 40%
- STAFF/TEAM 70%
- OFFICE ENVIRONMENT 50%

Why do patients Stay?

- COST OF TREATMENT 30%
- DOCTOR IS FRIENDLY 60%
- ORGANIZED OFFICE 60%
- PROFESSIONAL 40%
- LOCATION 70%

Why do patients Stay?

- Number one reason:
- EVERYONE IN THE OFFICE CAN COMMUNICATE
- WITH THE PATIENT

90%

Why do patients stay?

- Communication
- Convenience
- Competence
- Connection
- Competition

Why do patients leave?

- Communication
- Convenience
- Competence
- Connection
- Competition

What is Communication?

- Sharing of information, ideas, feelings and intentions among humans
- Managing messages for the purpose of creating meaning
- SAY WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY.....
- SAY WHAT YOU MEAN TO SAY.....

Face to Face Communication

- The verbal component (what you're saying) = 10-30% of message
- The non-Verbal component (how you're saying it) = 70-90% of message

Communicating to our patients

- How do you describe the disease?
- How do you describe your therapy?
 - Active
 - Post operative
 - Continuing care
- How do you treatment plan?
- What about billing, insurance?

Communication examples from a few clinic sessions:

- “I can’ t see you for 6 weeks.....”
- “I”ll just send the study model; the lab can figure it out”
- “I don’ t know if you can afford this”
- (Patient):“That procedure really hurt.” (Student):“Oh, don’ t worry about it.”
- (Patient):“The best time for me is Friday afternoons.”
- (Patient): “when is my next cleaning, my teeth stain easily?” (Student): “well, our policy is to see you in 6 months.”

Communication examples from a few clinic sessions:

- (Patient): “I’ m a lot of pain because my tooth broke.” (Student):“OK, let me get my attending professor.”
- (Patient): “Why do I need a crown? Can’ t you just patch my tooth?”

Communication examples from a few clinic sessions:

- “I just want a cleaning”
- “What do you mean I have periodontal disease? My previous dentist didn’t mention it.”
- “Are you qualified to do that procedure?”
- “What do you mean I need a root canal? My tooth doesn’t hurt.”
- “Why do I need a crown? Can’t you just patch my tooth?”

Communication examples from a few clinic sessions:

- (Me): 'It would be great to reduce the occlusion a bit more on your prep. (Student): "OK, doc. I'll knock some more off that lingual cusp."
- (Patient): "I'm a lot of pain because my tooth broke." (Student): "OK, let me get my attending professor."

Interesting WORDS we use

- Numb you up
- Patch
- Dental Work
- Bombed out
- Endo
- Perio
- Pros
- Watch

Reception D2000

Elevators
Waiting Room
Restrooms
Clinic B



What we Communicate

- Organized
- Friendly
- Competent
- Service
- Money-centered
- Caring
- Trustworthy
- Quality minded
- Efficient
- Anxious
- Hurried

What the patient Communicates

- Cooperation
- Compliance
- Calm
- Interest
- Comfort
- Satisfaction
- Understanding
- Trust

What the patient Communicates

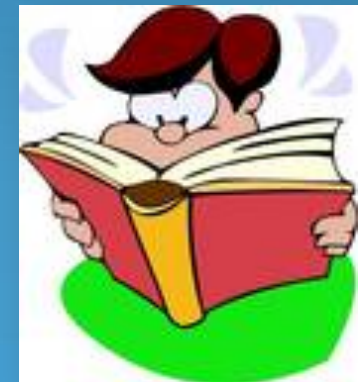
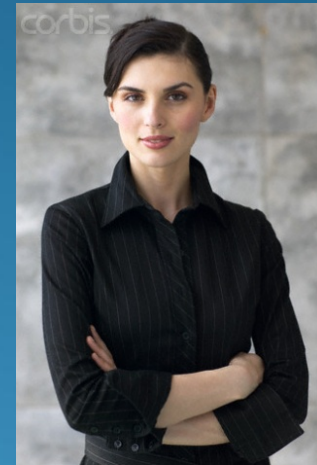
- Defensiveness
- Aggression
- Fear/Anxiety
- Disinterest
- Confusion
- Distrust
- Dissatisfaction
- Pain/Discomfort

You've got a ***GREAT***
Personality!

Know Yourself

Know your
patients
Know your team

Who Are You?



Who are you and what can you be?



The DISC Profile

FOUR aspects of normal behavior:

- Dominance----Driver
- Influence----Intuitive
- Steadiness --Stabilizer
- Conscientiousness --Calculator

The DISC Profile

- Developed in 1928 by William Marston, a psychologist.
- A self-assessment insight into your own behavior as well as that of others.
- Non-judgmental, and can be FUN.
- Can help you understand communication and interpersonal relationships.

Look at your total points

- “a” points are for DOMINANCE
- “b” points are for INFLUENCE
- “c” points are for STEADINESS
- “d” points are for CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

DOMINANCE (Driver)

- Assertive, Aggressive, Pragmatic, Gets to the point quickly.
- Competitive, Demanding, very active in dealing with problems and challenges.
- LOW: conservative, low-keyed, cooperative, cautious, mild, agreeable, modest, peaceful.

INFLUENCE (Intuitive)

- Influences others through talking and activity and tend to be emotional.
- Enthusiastic, optimistic, friendly, performing, persuasive, popular, warm, demonstrative, trusting.
- LOW: reflective, factual, skeptical, logical suspicious, pessimistic, critical.

STEADINESS (Stabilizer)

- Wants a steady pace, security, and doesn't like sudden change.
- Calm, understanding, relaxed, patient, approachable, systematic, predictable, helpful, dependable, amiable, even-tempered, consistent.
- LOW: restless, demonstrative, impatient, eager, impulsive

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

- Likes to adhere to rules, regulations, structure
- Logical, precise, reserved, organized, prepared, careful, cautious, exacting, neat systematic, diplomatic, accurate, tactful.
- LOW: stubborn, arbitrary, careless with details, opinionated.

D

- A “Driver,” great **crisis manager**.
- Can be very demanding **task master**.
- Tend to disregard time, family, other obligations.
- Prime fear: ***Being taken advantage of***



- A **people pleaser**; focus is on people and relationships.
- Sometimes unable to **separate** out business and personal relationships.
- Can create **anarchy** through **democratic decision-making**.
- Prime fear: ***Rejection***

S

- Driven by **responsibility, obligation, and duty**.
What **should** be done.
- Can create a resentful staff or team who see the S person as the **all-knowing parent**.
- Needs to preserve the status-quo.
- Prime fear: ***Loss of security.***

C

- Need for **perfection**.
- Can make staff or team intolerant of anything less than being perfect.
- Expects all to share the same **workaholic philosophy**.
- Prime fear: ***Imperfection***

D

- **Values:** superior skills, grace under pressure, risk-taking action.
- **Need recognition for:** responsiveness, cleverness, ingenuity.
- **Form of recognition:** Unusual reward for successful and risky action.



- **Values:** commitment, passion, independent thinking, sincerity and kindness.
- **Need recognition for:** idea, uniqueness and personal contributions, championing change.
- **Form of recognition:** Anything social.

S

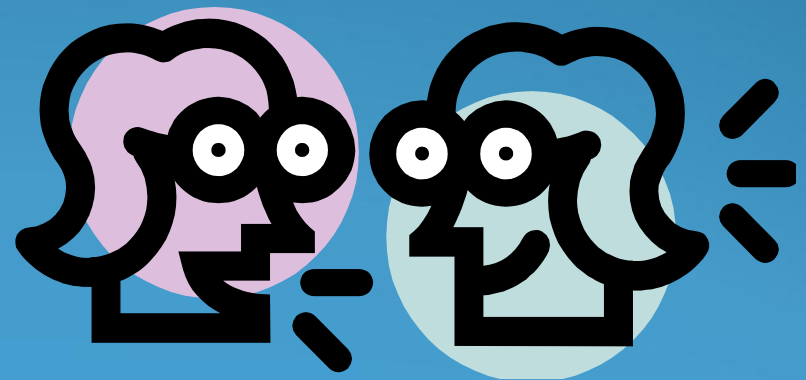
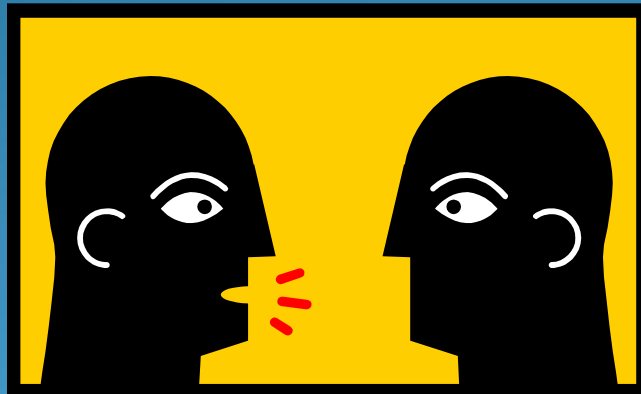
- **Values:** dependability, responsibility, stability.
- **Need recognition for:** follow-through, adherence to rules and policies, dedication and loyalty.
- **Form of recognition:** Tangible thanks for steady work.

C

- **Values:** intelligence, competence, tireless effort.
- **Need recognition for:** knowledge, ideas, competence.
- **Form of recognition:** Freedom to learn or explore a challenge.

Communication

- Communication tips for the different personality styles



Communication Tips (Dominance Personality)

- Be clear, specific, brief and to the point
- Be prepared with support material in a well-organized “package”

Communication Tips (Dominance Personality)

- Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:
 - Talking about things that are not relevant to the issue
 - Leaving loopholes or cloudy issues
 - Appearing disorganized

Communication Tips (Influence Personality)

- Provide a warm and friendly environment
- Don't deal with a lot of details (put them in writing for later review)
- Ask “feeling” questions to draw out their opinions or comments

Communication Tips (Influence Personality)

- Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:
 - Being curt, cold or tight-lipped
 - Controlling the conversation
 - Driving on facts and figures, alternatives, abstractions

Communication Tips (Steadiness Personality)

- Begin with a personal comment – break the ice
- Present your case softly, non-threateningly
- Ask “how?” questions to draw out their opinions

Communication Tips (Steadiness Personality)

- Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:
 - Rushing headlong into business
 - Being domineering or demanding
 - Forcing them to respond quickly to your objectives

Communication Tips (Conscientiousness Personality)

- Prepare your “case” in advance
- Stick to business
- Be accurate and realistic

Communication Tips (Conscientiousness Personality)

- Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:
 - Being giddy, casual, informal, loud
 - Pushing too hard or being unrealistic with deadlines
 - Being disorganized or messy

How can we apply this?

- Yourself
 - Learn your chief characteristic and remember its attributes.
- Your patient
 - Non judgmentally assess your patient and remember the values and fears of his or her profile.
- Your team
 - Hire and place people for a good 'fit' for different tasks and jobs.

Be aware of your
personality, and
then hone your
communication
skills

