

TOP PRACTICES

DEDICATED TO YOUR SUCCESS

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What is a coaching call and why should I care?

By Rem Jackson, CEO Top Practices



Webster's online defines a coach as "one who instructs players in the fundamentals of a competitive sport and directs team strategy."

This works for me for two reasons—the first reason is, **GOOD COACHES ALWAYS STAY FOCUSED ON THE FUNDAMENTALS.** Whether you are a football or basketball player or a podiatrist running a small business (which is what your practice is), you need to keep focused on the fundamentals if you are going to be successful. There is simply **NO ALTERNATIVE.** Well, there actually is an alternative—stressful and long days, lack of weekends because you are working, worries about cash flow, payments, non-payments, and not enough new patients. This list is endless.

Even Michael Jordan Needed a Coach

The wisest athletes and the wisest podiatrists know that talent can only take you so far. It isn't possible to keep your body in shape or your mind in shape if you aren't regularly exercising it. (Working excessively hard doesn't count as exercising your mind, in fact, it simply makes you less effective.) You see, Michael Jordan knew he needed to work with his coach to become and to stay the best player in the game. I work with doctors every month as their marketing and business development coach and I am always intrigued to find that the Top Doctors are the ones who stay connected through attending the group coaching calls (or listening regularly to the CDs sent to them in the mail). They are also the doctors who make their individual coaching calls with me and never miss them. These doctors could teach others how to market their practices, but they stay con-

nected to their coach (me) to keep them fit and focused on the key fundamentals of business success.

The doctors that don't get coached on the "small stuff" continue to struggle with the "big stuff" and tell me that they feel like they just can never get ahead of the business side of their practice. They would love to just see patients and be a doctor. Unfortunately for them, the world just doesn't work that way.

It's not just the fundamentals that require coaching, it is STRATEGY

The definition of coach also includes a coach directing the team's strategy. This is a key role I play with all of my Top Practices members. There IS a better way to market and build a practice and it is my key focus, in my role as coach, to my members. My job is to engage with my members to craft their personal strategy that is based on the Top Practices methodology. A key point here is that our methods change as technology changes and as the group learns. Top Practices is a Learning Organization with a central communication method—coaching calls.

Put Yourself in the Game

Whether you use a Mastermind Group like Top Practices, or you find another way to get coaching, it is an essential business activity that you simply can't put off until later or ignore. Everyone needs a coach. I have a coach, too. The alternative is just not acceptable to the winners. And this is a huge competitive edge for those of us who "get it".

Dedicated to your success,

Rem

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Tips from Nicole



Referrals just happen, right?

A lot of practices assume that referrals just happen by chance when someone tells another person about the great experience and success they had after a visit to your office. While word of mouth has always been somewhat vague, many would agree that a referral from a satisfied patient is one of the most valuable resources they have for growing a practice.

So, how do we encourage positive word of mouth so that our existing patients become our best referral source?

First, let's take a look at the difference between these two things. What is the difference between a referral and "word of mouth"? While referrals and word of mouth can both help to grow your practice, we believe referrals go further, by allowing your happy, existing patients to actually get new patients walking through your door. This role may include a face-to-face, telephone, or email introduction, or an exchange of the information premium your patient has to lend to the potential patient (a.k.a. your book). And, although a referral begins with word-of-mouth, word-of-mouth does not always generate a referral. Make sense?

Successful referral lead generation starts when we start doing things differently than our competitors—recognizing the referral potential available through a warm lead. A warm lead includes patients, other doctors' offices, shoe stores, friends, family members, vendors, or other businesses that we've worked with or have worked with us and with which we've had a good experience. Nurturing this pipeline, plus integrating some kind of a system, such as a book campaign, monthly newsletter, and social networking, will help us convert those warm leads into new patients.

A cold lead is an individual that is not familiar with your practice or may not need you at this time. These leads demand the most time and money. Reaching them is challenging because it requires repeated message saturation to achieve contact to achieve the desired conversion into a patient.

In today's market, higher advertising costs, increased competition, and lower ROI are making many practices take a second look at referral marketing as an alternative to traditional advertising methods that just don't seem to bring the results they used to. When statistics show that up to 45% of practices are chosen based on the recommendations of others, why do we still continue to throw hard earned marketing dollars at a cold lead?

The good news is we can actually do something about the rising costs of traditional advertising and marketing. At Top Practices, this is a major focus—making every marketing dollar count. Targeted Marketing works better and costs less!

Here are three great ways to reap the benefits of all your referral potentials:

1. Improve patient retention and facilitate the referral lead generating process.

Satisfied patients are often one of our best, and least utilized, resources for generating new patients! Nurture them by creating a great experience for them every time they come in to the office. Stay connected with them via a monthly newsletter, emails, postcards, book offers, and social media. Let them know what's happening.

2. Testimonials. Video is awesome!

Take advantage of every satisfied patient by making it a priority to request a testimonial from them right after you've provided excellent service. The best way to get a great testimonial is to first make sure that your patients are completely satisfied. Consider telling patients up front that your goal is their complete satisfaction in hopes to get a great testimonial from them once their treatment or visit is complete. It's very hip to take video testimonial in the office. They'll feel like a celebrity if you post it on your social media sites.

3. Nurture existing referral sources and create new ones!

You cannot do enough for the referral source that sends a steady stream of new patients your way. Take care of them!! We teach you, step by step, how to create new referral sources and what to do to nurture existing referral sources so the new patient numbers they are sending you don't slow down. Ask us, if you feel you need help with your referral business.

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Nicole Tully is the Director of Member Services at Top Practices. For more information on any of Top Practices services, please contact her at 717-824-6553 or email Nicole@NicoleTully.com.

How Does Top Practices Work?

I get asked this question a lot and the answer is simple. You become a member of the Top Practices Mastermind Group by filling out the application. When it is accepted, you are in until you want to leave. No contracts, no minimum requirements – nothing. If you are getting value, you stay; if you aren't, you leave. Easy.

Then you participate in regularly scheduled phone calls or webinars that are very focused on marketing and business development. They are scheduled far in advance and all calls are recorded and archived on the Top Practices Website and the key calls are burned onto CDs and shipped to you each month. So you

Don't Give Up Too Soon

By Jay Henderson



I was in Washington DC recently for an annual 'pump 'em up' sales convention. I got to sit up close and personal, right on the front row, to listen to some great speakers.

One was Commander Mark Kelly. He's an astronaut who has been to the space station more than any other pilot in the world. His wife is Gabrielle Gifford, the congress women who miraculously survived that terrible shooting in Arizona last January.

As a child, Mark actually had set a goal to go to Mars! His dad was a police officer in New Jersey. After serving as a police officer himself for a time, he entered the Air Force to become a pilot.

We laughed as he ruthlessly made fun of himself for being the worst pilot the Air Force ever had. He was dead serious, though. You wouldn't expect to hear that from someone with his level of experience. He flunked many of the tests they gave him and said he was actually shocked when they gave him a plane to fly on his own with no co-pilot. He wasn't sure if they trusted him, or if no one else would fly with him.

I once read a research study saying, if people are not automatically good at something, they feel they don't have any talent and quit too soon. With this paradigm, they may never get good at anything. Sports Psychologist Bob Rotella asks, "Do you have to win in order to know you can win?" Great question and one's answer is revealing. Again, if you have to win before you can know you can win... you might be in trouble.

That same research also indicated those who started something, believing it takes time to build proficiency will ultimately develop the necessary self-

efficacy, belief and skills to get really good. Reminds me of the 10,000 hour rule – this rule says real pro-level skill is developed with about 10,000 hour of practice or experience and knowledge.

That's how pilots and astronauts become great too. We've heard, for years, about the virtual flight techniques the military uses to build flying skills in pilots. It's not a good idea to hand someone new to the flight program a \$30 million jet to practice with.

Commander Kelly's story caused me to think of our efforts to develop marketing and management skills for our practices and businesses. It's easy to get discouraged trying to learn a new skill especially when we're so busy. But when you do get discouraged, remember Commander Mark Kelly who ultimately became one of the best in the world at what he does. Remember too, he set a goal to go to Mars. He may never reach that goal – but he did make it to the moon!



Commander Mark Kelly

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Jay Henderson is a people performance expert who teaches business owners how to get the best staff; hire, give feedback, hold them accountable, coach and deal with your most difficult employees all in a way that is non-confrontational, super simple and your employees will even like. Try Jay's service free – www.DPMHiring.com.

never miss a meeting regardless of your schedule. In addition, I have a 30 minute private consult with each practice each month focused on your practice only. The Top Practices website is a treasure trove of resources available to you 24 hours a day that will answer every question you have about marketing your practice. Easy.

Finally, Top Practices acts as an agency to our members, we have artists and production experts that will help you accomplish everything you need in developing the tools you'll use to build and grow your practice. We leave nothing to chance and are with you every step of the way as you change your practice marketing into a successful program that builds your new patient numbers, your referrals, and your reactivations and recalls. Easy. Just go to www.TopPractices.com to download a Mastermind Application or call Nicole Tully at 717-824-6553 or email her at Nicole@NicoleTully.com.

Nobody Cares about You

I say it all the time, "Nobody Cares about You." I am not talking about your spouse, or children, friends, neighbors, staff, or even patients. Of course, people care, generally. But nobody cares about your new digital X-Ray machine. Nobody cares about your treatment protocols for heel pain. They don't care that you are a podiatrist.

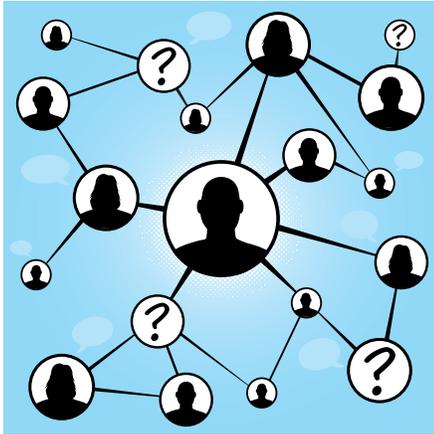
They only care about themselves. Not because they are bad people. It's because they are busy people living in this high paced modern world we all live in and they just don't have time to think about anything but their own problems, their own worries, or their own aching feet (or the feet of those they love and are responsible for).

So never talk about yourself – no one cares and no one will hear you. Always talk about them and the worries and pains that are keeping them up all night. When you do this, they will listen to you all day long and they will become lifelong patients who refer others to you.

"It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things."

– Leonardo da Vinci

REFERRALS JUST HAPPEN, RIGHT?



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Pumpkin Pie

Nothing tops off Thanksgiving dinner quite like a slice of pumpkin pie.

Please enjoy this scrumptious pumpkin pie recipe from the Food Network's Paula Deen.

Cook Time: 50 min Level: Easy Yield: 6 to 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups canned pumpkin, mashed
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg plus 2 egg yolks, slightly beaten
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger, optional
- 1 piece pre-made pie dough
- Whipped cream, for topping

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Place 1 piece of pre-made pie dough down onto a (9-inch) pie pan and press down along the bottom and all sides. Pinch and crimp the edges together to make a pretty pattern. Put the pie shell back into the freezer for 1 hour to firm up. Fit a piece of aluminum foil to cover the inside of the shell completely. Fill the shell up to the edges with pie weights or dried beans (about 2 pounds) and place it in the oven. Bake for 10 minutes, remove the foil and pie weights, and bake for another 10 minutes or until the crust is dried out and beginning to color.

For the filling, in a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese with a hand mixer. Add the pumpkin and beat until combined. Add the sugar and salt, and beat until combined. Add the egg mixed with the yolks, half-and-half, and melted butter, and beat until combined. Finally, add vanilla, cinnamon, and ginger, and beat until incorporated.

Pour the filling into the warm prepared pie crust and bake for 50 minutes, or until the center is set. Place the pie on a wire rack and cool to room temperature. Cut into slices and top each piece with a generous amount of whipped cream.