

What I ask of dental sales reps? Tell me why and how!

By Charles D. Samaras, DMD, FACD, FICD

I have lectured tens of thousands of dentists and dental students around the country and world, and I always share with them the advice I follow. Help patients enjoy dental health so they can enjoy their lives by providing clinical excellence and excellent service. I also encourage them to be part of their communities by providing dental care and service to the underserved and needy people.

To do this, dentists must follow the three principles of success. Pay your debt, live a moderate and balanced lifestyle, and save for your future from day one of practice. The fact is that as much as dentists enjoy dentistry, we all work to live; we do not live to work. By following this basic philosophy, dentists will have the means, motivation, and time to enjoy dentistry, their community, and their lifestyles. To accomplish success, dentists will make many decisions about equipment, technology, and products based on three questions. HOW will that product or technology provide better dentistry for patients? WHY is it a good business decision? And will it help to create a balanced lifestyle? It is as simple as that.

In my last article I wrote about dental sales reps establishing relationships with their dentists and teams if they want to enjoy a mutually beneficial long-term relationship. To that end, I believe every dental supply company and every dental sales rep should be dedicated to answering the above three questions and accomplishing the desired goals. When you present a new product or material, please explain WHY is it better than the product

I am currently using. Be prepared to show me the research and HOW it compares to similar products and materials. WHY is it superior? HOW will it enable my team and me to provide better dentistry? WHY is it a good business decision? HOW will it improve my practice?

Now when it comes to digital dental technology, of which I am a big fan, every dental supply company and sales rep must also answer the last crucial question: HOW will the technology improve not only the patient's lives, but also my life and the lives of my team? The dentist will make a considerable financial and time investment. The sales rep must be prepared to show HOW and WHY the dentist will receive a substantial financial, professional, and lifestyle return on that investment.

In conclusion, I recommend that dental supply companies and dental sales reps follow the same philosophy that dentists must evince very day in their practices and lives — the words of Simon Sinek. He simply and correctly stated, "People do not buy on what you do, but why you do it. When they buy, what you do serves as the proof of what you believe."

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