

# Innovating Your Medical Practice

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Our seven-step *Formula for Market Dominance* initial action is called *Deserve the Business*. This means in order for a medical practice to implement the most effective marketing strategy, it first must ensure it provides a service that is the better choice. A practice's advantage must be in terms of one or more of these five areas:

- quality of care,
- customer service (patient relations),
- convenience (waiting time, location, parking, etc.),
- consistency
- insurance contracts

## Quality of Care

Surveys show that consumers have a rough time judging whether a medical or dental practice provides high quality care. Rather, people tend to judge a doctor's or dentist's competence based on communication skills and presence (charisma). Thus, in order to separate your practice from your competition in terms of quality of care, you must first educate people how to judge competence. Criteria to evaluate capability could include education, board certifications, patient testimonials, medical staff memberships, malpractice lawsuits (whether any exist), and continuing education. Next, compare how you stand up to the criteria you identified. If you hold up exceptionally well to these gauges, prospective

patients will more likely choose you.

## Customer Service, Convenience and Consistency

The approach for these criteria is somewhat different. First, you must determine the emotional hot buttons for each criterion. Once you have identified the hot buttons, you can figure what actions you can take to separate your practice from your competition. You do so by initially holding a brain-storming session.

In this meeting, let your ideas flow freely without any constraints, including budgeting and personnel requirements. Come up with dozens of ideas until you've completely exhausted your imagination. Then determine which have the most potential and feasibility for success. Once you've selected one or more ideas you wish to implement, check to see if your competitors have already put your ideas into place. If they have not, you have one or more innovations you can implement and promote. Next, create promotion that focuses on your innovations.

For an example of innovating a medical practice, read the Case Study.

