Creating a Vision for Your Practice

by Jay M. Geier

Creating a vision for your practice is one of the most important strategies for your practice's growth. All great organizations have a clear vision that is communicated to the entire organization. If you want to have a successful practice, there must be a clear vision.

Your role as the doctor and practice owner is to provide leadership. Great leadership is the ability to guide and inspire your team with a vision and transform that vision into reality. You must set the tone for the future and establish what that future will look like. A vision is not what you're going to do tomorrow, a vision is much bigger. It's the plan for months and years ahead and it's to be created within your imagination. It's perfectly normal for there to be a large gap between where your practice currently is and your vision for its future. That's what keeps you driven. There probably are a lot of unanswered questions between your circumstances today and what your vision looks like. That's okay. Vision is something you work toward.

Communicate Your Vision

Your team must know and understand your vision for the practice. If you have a clear vision, but no one knows what it is, it's purposeless. Many people never communicate their vision for fear of what they'll face when they do. All visions involve things that do not exist. So when you start talking about your vision, you'll get both positive and negative reactions regarding its plausibility.

You must get your team to see it and believe it to really be able to sell it. You have to accept that all visions initially begin as something that doesn't already exist. You must be comfortable selling something that does not exist... yet!

When communicating your vision, do not allow for Q&A and do not start by talking about how the vision will benefit you. That is not how you sell a vision. You sell the vision by first talking about how it's going to meet the needs of your patients, and second what's in it for the staff. Third, be clear about what's expected of the staff and what their role is in carrying out your vision.

Own Your Vision

You must passionately own the vision. In the book, Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill, there is a quote that reads, “Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, it can achieve.” You must believe you can achieve your vision. And you must get your team to believe it with you. Make the decision that you will bring your vision to life no matter what obstacles are thrown your way. Do not give yourself the option to quit. No excuses, no equivocations. Believe you can do it, decide you will achieve it and commit to fulfilling the vision.

Drive Your Vision

You must relentlessly drive your vision to completion. Life is about persistence. It is tremendously valuable when you do things, make mistakes, learn from them and correct what you do.
going forward. Mistakes are the greatest learning opportunity. Unfortunately most people working toward a vision have a tendency to start making an effort, reach some resistance and quit. You must not give in to that type of behavior. Fulfilling a vision requires your dedication to the learning process.

**Align Your Goals with Your Vision**

You must constantly refresh your goals to be aligned with your vision. How many times have you refreshed your vision? Typically once most people accomplish something there is a slight reversal in progress because they start to take it easy. They relax too long, their drive diminishes and they do not create a new vision. Unfortunately, you can’t stay still. You either fall back or push forward. You’ve probably accomplished many of your visions. I bet what you didn’t do is refresh the vision enough. You must always be refreshing and resetting your vision. Learn to enjoy the process of going from where you are to where you want to be, and constantly strive to get to a better situation.

An overall vision for your practice is made up of many smaller visions for things within your practice. Let’s look at a few areas where you should create a vision.

**Vision for Your Patients**

According to the book *The Science of Getting Rich* by Wallace Wattles, the formula to get rich is to give every person you interact with more in value than the price they pay you. So, you must have a vision for excellent patient service. The first thing you must sell your staff on is the idea that your practice will provide the best level of care and service of any office in your area. If a patient walks out of your practice and someone asks him or her about the level of service you provide, your patient should say it is unbelievable! As we all know, if you provide exceptional patient service, you will get an abundance of referrals, which will drive your practice down the path of growth on the way to the vision.

**Vision for Your Physical Office**

I don’t believe in competition, but I do believe in accurately gauging what your colleagues are doing. To create a great office, visit other offices. Take a look at the other practices in your area and make yours look and feel better. Consider hotels as an example. Think about the difference between walking into a room at the Ritz-Carlton and walking into a room at the Hampton Inn. Everything is nicer at the Ritz-Carlton – everything, not just some things. The fabric is nicer. The sheets are nicer. The furniture is nicer. The Ritz-Carlton invests in its physical space to make it the best and therefore it is able to charge higher prices because its clientele values what it has. Your vision should be to have the finest office and price will not be the factor you might think it is today.

**Vision for Your Staff**

When you envision a great office you’ll realize you must have a great team. Number one, they must smile! Number two, you are in the health-care business, so you should hire people who look healthy. This does not mean that you should discriminate in your hiring. Health includes more than looks; it also includes attitude and personality. A great team is healthy. There’s a mental difference and a physical difference.

**Vision for Your Profitability**

Unfortunately, too many people blame their troubles on the economy or some other outside force. Never say, “Times are tough, the business is just this way.” It is that way because you did not have a vision mapping out that it was going to be any other way. Realize that what you currently have is what your vision was. You get what you deserve. Now it’s just a matter of creating a new vision and following through on the actions necessary to make that vision a reality regardless of what is going on in the world around you.

**Vision for Your Marketing**

Some people have no marketing vision at all. They don’t do any marketing and then wonder why they aren’t getting new patients. Start marketing in your area and set out to be the best practice on your block. Once you accomplish that, keep working until you can say, “Wow. Now we’re the best practice in the entire zip code.” Then, the next year you realize, “We’re the best practice in the city.” Stay focused, keep marketing and your reach will continue to spread.

To sum it all up, it is your responsibility to create a vision and relentlessly keep building a better vision for all areas of your practice.

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**Author’s Bio**

Jay M. Geier is a speaker, consultant and the president and founder of The Scheduling Institute. He helps his clients reach new levels of success and create a lifestyle they dream of, using their practice as the vehicle. He has a unique ability for getting results in a practice by leveraging its current resources with a primary focus on the staff. The Scheduling Institute programs focus on increasing new patients, patient conversions, average revenue per patient and overall revenue in addition to improving a doctor’s circumstances both professionally and personally. For more information and special Townie pricing, call 877-215-8225 or e-mail info@schedulinginstitute.com.