

MANAGEMENT & MARKETING

The Management & Marketing column has been one of JCO's most popular features since it was inaugurated in August 1991 by the late Dr. Melvin Mayerson. As Dr. Mayerson noted in that first installment, "The basic premise of this column is that there are orthodontists throughout the world who are not only adept clinicians, but also innovative and knowledgeable enough about management and marketing to operate highly successful practices." That remains the goal today.

Subsequent JCO Management & Marketing editors have included Dr. Howard "Skip" Iba and Dr. Robert Haeger. With this month's issue, we are pleased to name another distinguished clinician to that position. Dr. Ann Marie Gorczyca has practiced orthodontics in the Bay Area of California for more than 30 years. A graduate of Wellesley College, the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, and the Harvard School of Public Health, she finished her orthodontic residency and earned a master's degree in oral biology at Northwestern University. Her first orthodontic position after residency was with the leg-

Dr. Gorczyca is the Management & Marketing Editor of the *Journal of Clinical Orthodontics*; the author of *It All Starts with Marketing: 201 Marketing Tips for Growing a Dental Practice* (2013), *Beyond the Morning Huddle: HR Management for a Successful Dental Practice* (2015), *At Your Service: 5-Star Customer Care for a Successful Dental Practice* (2017), and *Take Action: Treatment Coordination for a Successful Dental Practice* (2020); and in the private practice of orthodontics at 5201 Deer Valley Road, Suite 1A, Antioch, CA 94531; e-mail: amgortho@aol.com.



endary Dr. T.M. Graber. The recipient of numerous awards in education and dentistry, she is a frequent speaker at meetings of the AAO and other local and national organizations. She's also an accomplished pianist and flutist.

Perhaps most important for JCO readers, Dr. Gorczyca has published four books on practice management, including *Beyond the Morning Huddle: HR Management for a Successful Dental Practice*. For her first Management & Marketing column, we asked her to outline her philosophy and tell us what to expect in future issues. We look forward to her contributions and welcome your questions and suggestions.

RGK

The Practical Side of Dental Practice Management

ANN MARIE GORCZYCA, DMD, MPH, MS

As practice owners and leaders, orthodontists encounter practice management challenges throughout their careers. As in a game of chess, your strategic knowledge and tactical choices will determine your success. The better understanding you have of your practice options, the better your chances for bottom-line success.

While gaining management skills as an orthodontist, you will find yourself achieving expertise in the Six Key Areas of Dental Practice Management. As outlined below, these will be the basis of our new JCO Management & Marketing column.

Marketing

- Internal marketing: gaining referrals from your existing patients
- External marketing: managing public relations and Internet referrals
- Relationship marketing: gaining referrals from dental and medical colleagues

Human Resource Management

- Recruitment: adding new team members
- Integration: developing teamwork during the first 90 days of employment
- Team management: establishing organizational clarity and conducting reviews
- Distribution of resources: managing team costs
- Separation: understanding legal commitments
- Employment law: following the rules of employment

Customer Service

- Culture: nurturing an environment focused on serving the patient
- Care: managing your patient experience
- Climate: creating the positive environment of five-star customer service

Treatment Coordination

- Engagement: building a positive influence with new patients
- Conversion: moving new exams to starts
- Delivery: creating systems for profitable orthodontic services and new-patient referrals

Teamwork and Leadership

- The team: maximizing energy, focus, and the discipline of working together
- Organizational clarity: communicating the goals, vision, and rules of the orthodontic office
- The leader: establishing vision, courage, communication, and the candor to lead

Management Systems

- Daily actions: team and doctor duties, roles, responsibilities, and tasks
- Weekly actions: team meeting, key performance indicators, and goals
- Monthly actions: goal achievement and review
- Annual actions: planning for the year ahead and beyond

Discussion

During my career of more than three decades, I have found that everything an orthodontist does as the owner and leader of an orthodontic practice falls into one of these six categories. With disciplined management comes verification through numbers, the language of business.

I look forward to exploring these areas with you in the coming months. If you have questions about orthodontic practice management, send them to amgortho@aol.com or editor@jco-online.com. We will explore the strategic and tactical solutions to your questions together and with other business experts. To that end, two of our regular features will be called Ask Ann Marie and Ask an Expert (both debuting in future issues).

Dental practice management is not theoretical. It comes from experience in the trenches and application of best practices. We're all in this together, this wonderful thing called dentistry. Much of an orthodontist's success and happiness is based on excellent dental practice leadership and management. Here's to your success. ■