

PRACTICE RESOLUTIONS: WHERE SHOULD YOU PLACE FOCUS IN THE NEW YEAR?

New Year's resolutions for your practice from the pros.

WITH WENDY LEWIS; DAVID EVANS, PHD, MBA; AND MARA L. SHORR, BS, CAC XIV JAY A. SHORR, BA, MBM-C, CAC XIV

Tis the season for making (and of course, breaking) your New Year's resolutions. Make 2020 the year that you take your practice to the next level. The good news is that none of these expert-approved New Year's resolutions will break the bank.

IF YOU'VE STILL GOT IT, USE IT



In today's digital environment, each practice has the ability to connect and engage with existing patients or with prospective patients using a variety of resources that require limited investment.

Virtually every practice has a list of patients' contact information. This database is a great place to generate patient flow and develop new revenue with minimum investment. Dormant patients should be reminded about how long it has been since they have visited your practice. Woo them back with a newsletter that promotes new technologies or services and special offers.

Many vendors offer supporting materials and/or marketing budgets that are up for grabs. These marketing materials, particularly educational videos, should be included on your website, social media posts, and in your newsletter. In fact,

company-allocated marketing funds may support a separate procedure-specific website. Some shrewd practices developed websites specifically for CoolSculpting early in the market-acceptance timeline. These websites often ranked well for local search terms, such as "Cool Sculpting in San Diego" and drove many new patients to the practice. The best part? The vendor paid for these websites.

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JUST SAY NO



Resolve to delegate more and micromanage less in 2020. Hire good people, train them well, invest in them so they will stay with you. Then step back to give them room to grow and shine.

There are many things that you may not actually be the best at in your practice, such as scheduling consults, screening aesthetic patients, quoting fees, or creating Instagram

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posts. The new year is an ideal time to take an objective look at what you can safely take off your plate so you can do more lucrative, enjoyable, and rewarding tasks. Make a list of tasks that bug you the most and then tick off those that could be delegated and to whom. Even checking off one or two things can make big difference in your workday and your outlook. The added bonus of this key strategy is that your staff will feel more challenged and trusted, which tends to instill loyalty so they will stay with you instead of fleeing to your competition. Give them a chance to show you what they've got. They may just wow you.

Secondly, it's easier to say, "Yes" than to say, "No." You know that feeling when you look at your calendar and think to yourself, "Why did I agree to do that?" (I certainly do.) For 2020, try saying, "no" more often to meetings you really don't need to attend unless you're desperate for CME, inconvenient conference calls that don't produce results, and/or patients you can never make happy.

Managing your time more effectively is one of the pillars of success in any business. Your time is very valuable; in fact, just put an actual dollar amount on your hourly rate and see what I mean. It all adds up. So, unless you really want to do something, or have to do it for CME or to help out a colleague, scale back. Freeing up your calendar from burdensome obligations can be a life-altering exercise. You can use that newly found time to teach, conduct a clinical study, start a podcast, or spend more time with your family.

Lastly, take a good look at your practice and make a short list of the things that really need improvement. Examples may include updating your website, trading up that clunker of a laser, or hiring a marketing manager or consultant who can help promote your services and improve your bottom line.

Make 2020 the year you take a giant leap toward modernizing your practice to stay current and competitive!

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PICK UP THE PHONE

We're seeing two big issues right now: practices are ignoring the low-hanging fruit in their sales cycle, and they are struggling with

human resource management issues.

To tighten up your practice's follow-up campaign, call back:

- Patients who had a consult for a surgical or non-surgical procedure and never booked. (Don't be afraid to dig through your books to locate these patients.)
- Neurotoxin patients who haven't been to the office in three months or more.
- Patients who came in for one procedure, spoke to your team about another, and then "had to think about it."
- Patients who are six weeks out from their most recent skincare purchases to find out how they're liking it... and if they are ready for a refill.
- Patients who haven't been back in one month for their facial or peel.

We also encourage practices to not only tighten up their hiring practices and protocols, but to establish strong onboarding processes for new team members. Couple this with ongoing, strong training moving forward—think local conferences, webinars, and vendor training on a monthly basis.

Finally, make sure to establish your practice's culture. For example, the drama, eye rolling, swearing, tardiness, hair flipping, and silent treatment days need to end. The more you tolerate, the more contaminated your team will be.

Starting with the basics will make sure you head into 2020 with a solid foundation! ■

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