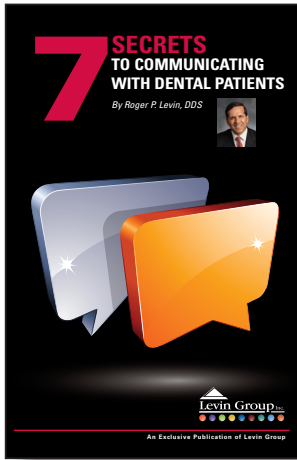


EXCERPT

From Dr. Levin's Book **7 Secrets To Communicating With Dental Patients**



Improving How You Interact With Patients

Now and again, you probably feel that some patients just do not want to see you. It is true that patients do not want to be in pain and may be a little anxious (sometimes a lot) about visiting a dentist, but it's really not about avoiding you. Patients actually want to like you as their dentist. That is a great starting point for you to improve your interactions with them.

In order for your patients to trust you, they have to feel comfortable with you. You can help your patients feel more comfortable by taking care of "The 5 C's":

"When you communicate well with your patients, they will accept more recommended treatment, comply with your treatment guidelines, and be happier to have you as their dentist."



- 1. Competence**
- 2. Caring**
- 3. Compassion**
- 4. Concern**
- 5. Confidence**

Like most dentists, you think a lot about the first "C," Competence. You spend a great deal of time working on your clinical skills, reading about new developments and tools in dentistry, and learning new techniques for improving your patients' oral healthcare.

Start by spending the first few minutes of each appointment chatting with your patient about his or her life. This is just as simple as it sounds. You will be amazed at how appreciative and talkative most of your patients will be once you show an interest in them as people.



Roger P. Levin, DDS
Chairman & CEO
Levin Group, Inc.

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**To become a Great Communicator,
you will need to hone your
skills on Caring, Compassion,
and Concern.**

When you have learned something about your patients, write it down in their file so that you can easily remember the information the next time he or she is in your office. After a short while, you will know about your patient's hobbies, occasions, celebrations, and accomplishments. Every time your patient returns to your office, you can pick the conversation back up again in a very natural way that will put your patient at ease.

Your patients will also be delighted if you pay them a compliment as soon as you see them. Look for something that is sincerely impressive to mention and be specific. Rather than saying, "You look nice today," say, "You brighten up the whole room with that wonderful yellow sweater." Giving real compliments to your patients will attract their attention and create a positive atmosphere.

It is also important that you know your patient's name and use it often in conversation. It has been said that everyone's favorite word is his or her own name. Think how much easier it is for you to recognize your name being spoken from across a noisy room than nearly any other word. Just by using their name, your patients will sense that you care and are concerned about them.

The last "C," Confidence, should be easy for dentists but they often feel uncomfortable with patients. With all of the work and the commitment you put into becoming a competent doctor, you should project a sense of confidence to your patients. Before you enter the operatory, take a deep breath and present yourself with a relaxed appearance. Also, maintain eye contact when talking with patients. This displays the honesty and self-assuredness that patients want to see in you.