

## **Building A Successful Practice Through Professional Relationships**

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Over the years many practice consultants have espoused different methods to develop a successful practice. I've personally tried many including mailers, spinal screenings, newsletters, radio and TV, yellow page advertising, patient appreciation days, public lectures, sponsorships and so on.

While each of these activities can and have been beneficial for some, it's my opinion that you must "own" and be comfortable with the methods that you use and that they suit your personality.

Quite frankly, performing a spinal screening at a mall or flea market, or giving a "wellness workshop" at a drug store is not how I've wanted to build a practice or portray myself in the community.

Those venues and endeavors can be "home runs" for some, as they provide access to many, who previously may not have been espoused to the benefits of chiropractic care. Whatever your technique or marketplace, building a successful practice involves time, talent, treasure, effort and energy.

Personally, I've been most comfortable and successful by developing professional relationships while being involved in community activities. Being engaged in clubs, joining organizations and initiatives which are important to the betterment of my region has been the cornerstone and success of my practice. Whether serving on a Chamber of Commerce committee, walking neighborhoods with a political candidate, building a Habitat for Humanity House, or volunteering to aid the needy, each of these activities has provided access to like minded and diverse individuals who I've nurtured and established long standing relationships with and who've played a part in my success.

These relationships have been built on trust and communication and by consistently saying what you'll do, and then doing what you say. By doing so, you build credibility, support and an environment for sharing as well as friendships.

As I look back, and reflect on the "ways of the world" relationships assist in all businesses and organizations.

My first job as a child as a babysitter was as a result of a referral from a family member. Students often obtain letters of recommendation for colleges and fraternities of their choice from those who have been a part of those institutions in the past. Employers frequently fill "prized" job positions with those that they know or through recommendations of those that they trust. Building bonds of trust generally takes time and is also about sharing common interest and values.

Most advisors and consultants will recommend that whatever your project, whether building a practice, club or organization ....have specific goals. Know where you will want to go.

It may be simple or include very specific steps, but having a clear picture will assist the process. Reaching out to those who we know and those who have knowledge of our talents is a great place to build and cultivate professional relationships. These supporters can further your development by specific referrals and by also introducing you to their network of friends and colleagues. And don't forget, it's a "two way street" of assistance and that ever important ... THANK YOU to those who assist along the way.

Building a practice is much like any important aspect of life. It takes time, effort and energy. Building relationships is based on mutual trust, doing the right thing and communication. It's been a productive mode for me as it's been fulfilling both from a professional and personal perspective. Whatever your method, work hard and be dedicated to your practice, patients and profession.