



## Telephone Call Guidelines

### Step One - Attraction

- A. You have about 7 to 17 seconds to make your first impression and establish a positive relationship with the prospective patient. If you don't connect with the prospective patient within this time period, you've lost him/her and nothing you can say later in the conversation will change that.
- B. Above all, SMILE. Make your SMILE travel down the telephone line and be felt by the prospective patient. Try putting a dispensing mirror next to the phone so that you can make sure you're smiling while you're talking to each prospective patient.
- C. Make sure you say your name, welcome him/her to the area, ask where they moved from and get their name. You need to start using the prospective patient's name in the conversation as soon as you can and should continue to use it whenever you can. Make sure they get the message that you are VERY INTERESTED in having them become one of your patients.
- D. Be enthusiastic about meeting them, the practice and having them become one of your patients.
- E. All of this can be accomplished in 7 to 17 seconds if you concentrate on your smile, your tone of voice and your enthusiasm. It's like dating. First you have to make the practice attractive to the prospective patient -- the meaningful conversations can come later.

### Step Two - The Meaningful Conversation

- A. If you've successfully attracted the prospective patient, you have another 3 to 5 minutes to have a "Meaningful Conversation" with the prospective patient. Use the time to educate the prospective patient on the advantages of becoming a patient of your office.
- B. Your time is limited. So, take charge of the telephone call and take the conversation where you want it to go instead of just answering whatever questions you are asked.
- C. If the prospective patient asks how much an eye exam costs at your office, don't just give them the price and wait for their next question. Instead, use it as reason to describe the huge difference between the "Comprehensive Eye Examination" that he/she will receive at your office and the "Simple Vision Screening" that they may receive somewhere else. This approach will also help You cut off the "why your eye examinations are more expensive than others that they see advertised in the newspapers" discussion before it gets started.



- D. Your office provides all of its patients with a "Comprehensive Eye Examination", which consists of the following 4 elements:
1. A battery of preliminary tests using state of the art optometric equipment. Avoid using the term "pre-test". Tell the prospective patient that your office uses preliminary tests the same way a surgeon does when preparing for an operation. If you're comfortable talking about a particular piece of equipment that carries a high "WOW" factor, by all means tell the prospective patient about it.
  2. A complete vision test and a detailed evaluation of their ability to see under various conditions. Make sure they understand that the vision test that your doctor conducts is much more precise than the simple vision screening they may have received somewhere else.
  3. A thorough examination of the health of their eyes. They need to know that some very serious vision problems (pick your doctor's favorite example or specialty) don't always show up in a vision test -- even one that's as thorough as the one your doctors perform. That's why your doctors go beyond a vision test and also conduct a detailed examination of your eyes. If detected early, even serious vision problems can be treated and corrected.
  4. A detailed review of their medical history and how it impacts on their ability to see clearly and the future health of their eyes.
- E. Once you've described the "Comprehensive Eye Exam", you can quote the price. Ideally, you'll tell them that "For all this, the price is only \$\_\_\_\_\_".
- F. Once you've quoted the price of the exam, don't wait for another question. Instead, start talking about the professional qualifications of your doctors. Don't be afraid to brag about them. Make sure you have up to date information on the qualification, specialties, awards, etc. for each doctor in the practice.
- G. Once you've bragged about the doctors, make sure you do the same thing about his staff. There are two goals here. First, you need to communicate that the staff is made up of knowledgeable professionals who have been highly trained to take care of all their eyewear needs. Second, you need to let the prospective patient know that the rest of the staff is just as friendly as you have been during the call and make them believe that they will enjoy being one of your office's patients.



- H. One effective approach is to say something like: "Many of our patients tell us that we give them more knowledge about the health of their eyes, higher quality eyewear, more lens options and a better understanding of their vision needs".

### **Step Three - Make the Appointment**

- A. Somewhere near the end of the "Meaningful Conversation" you should shift the discussion to scheduling an appointment for your new patient. Don't wait for the prospective patient to ask about an appointment. Instead, you should take the initiative and ask them when they would like to come in.
- B. Don't be afraid to take the initiative and ask the prospective when he/she would like to see one of your doctors. Start by asking when would be the most convenient day of the week/time of day for them to come in.
- C. You may have to ask more than once.
- D. Make sure you ask about other family members. If they are new to the area, the entire family (not just the caller) will need to establish a relationship with a new eye doctor.
- E. Once you've made the appointment, why not send them a hand written/hand addressed "Nice to meet you/Welcome to the Neighborhood/Looking forward to seeing you/Don't forget about your appointment/Here's how to find our office" note? It will take only a few moments to do and will go a long way toward making sure the appointment you just made is kept.