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New Year's Resolutions

By Vivian Madison-Mahoney, LMT

This year, I'll begin by touching on the questions people ask most often regarding my massage therapy practice of nearly 17 years: "How did you do it? What was the 'secret' to your accomplishments and how can I duplicate that success?"

While it used to be more difficult because there was not the kind of help that is available today, it was still easier for me because doctors were open to referring their patients outside to my establishment.

They were not yet aware of the added income they could make by adding massage therapists to their practices; therefore, the referrals were plentiful.

Over my years in practice we had prescriptions from nearly 200 different physicians from a variety of specialties largely because I was the only one with a medically oriented practice specializing in disability and auto and work-related injuries, and because I accepted insurance for reimbursement, both of which were helpful in contributing to my success. But I have some additional pointers that are key to building a successful practice.

Building a business is all about building a good reputation. Build a good reputation and your successful business will follow. How does one build a good reputation? Much of it is just good old common sense, but sometimes we need a little help to maintain quality. A predominance of the good things makes a difference:

- Maintain good and open communication.
- Keep an open mind.
- Care for your current clients knowing that "a bird in the hand is worth two in a bush." It is easier to keep your clients than find new ones.
- Be a good listener. Rather than thinking of what you are going to say next, listen like you are interested in others (This may take some practice!)

- Be aware. Look for open-door opportunities at every turn.
- Always display a happy, positive attitude when communicating with others.
- Timeliness is of utmost importance. Do not keep people waiting longer than 10 minutes.
- Show appreciation to those you are indebted to, including referrals, clients, employees, family and friends. Send thank you cards, gifts, or make appreciation calls.
- Give freely without being concerned with what you will receive.
- Show diplomacy when dealing with other professionals, such as insurance adjusters, physicians, attorneys, and, of course, your clients.
- Honor your promises or guarantees without hassles; let your word be your bond.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Be loyal to those physicians who refer clients to you.
- Regard others with privacy and confidentiality.
- Be supportive, flexible and compassionate.

We are at the point of turning the bend, and it could go either way. We could continue toward success or we could be kicked out of the "system" in the blink of an eye. We need to work hard to build a great reputation and avoid alienating others if we are to be successful in our future endeavors within the medical realm.

Here's wishing each of you and yours a safe, healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year!

Click [here](#) for more information about Vivian Madison-Mahoney, LMT.

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