Recipe for success
To develop and grow your practice, you’ll need to adopt the mindset of an entrepreneur as well as a scientist, insists Dr Bhavna Doshi, senior dentist at The Perfect Smile Studios.

Most dentists want a successful and thriving dental practice. So why aren’t there more of them around? The problem lies in the fact that when you feel like things are going your way, suddenly you face difficulties. Perhaps the number of new patients entering your door reduces or patients fail to continue with your recommended treatment. So why does this happen?

Boosting clientele
The main purpose of any business, whether it’s a general dental practice, a cosmetic practice or a business in any other industry, is to create and keep patients. Too often, dentists are preoccupied with the basic functioning of a dental business, so they may forget to plan for their success. All functions of the practice should be seen to be different.

Business expansion
– A practice remains stagnant and exposed to the risk of being overtaken.
– A practice may increase its market share.
– A practice would be able to survive and secure your business intact; and also increase revenues because you are seen to be different.

1) Master plan
This requires having a vision to be successful and setting yourself goals to acquire that vision. Without this strategy in place you may find yourself easily swayed from your mission and you may drift into oblivion. You need to know exactly where you are aiming, how you intend to get there and what kind of assistance you are going to need to reach your targets.

2) Management structure
It is vital to have a good management structure in place to motivate, organise and monitor your team to be able to achieve practice growth. This involves creating an exciting motivated and inspired team. Requirements of a great team:
– To provide the best customer service to your patients.
– To build relationships with your patients by listening and understanding their needs.
– To understand all the facets of helping patients to decide to accept recommended treatment.
– To assist in the functioning of the practice systems so that the business has maximum growth and optimal revenues.

It can often be the intervention of a team member, which could become the influencing stimulus for any patient to accept recommended treatment. This is often because our team members are the first point of contact any patient has prior to being seen by a good a dentist you may be. In fact, it is ex- pected of anyone to know exactly how good you are until after they have been decided to go ahead with a recommendation. So patients use other information to help them decide if they are right to establishment for them.

3) Fresh innovations
One major way of developing a growing thriving practice, is by the introduction of new innovations and breakthroughs.

4) Marketing agenda
Marketing is a critical element in the success of any practice or business. No practice would be able to survive for long without a correct marketing agenda on how to accomplish the aims of a flourishing business.

Working in harmony
If you are to be maximised to their full potential, it would be difficult to ensure success across the dental practice. Most practices concentrate on linear growth and only achieve improvements in certain areas. This will often be in an area, which is the main topic of the time or what everybody else in the industry is doing. This way, a practice will only achieve marginal improvements over a short time period. Eventually, budgets may not allow for further growth in this area; you may have reached your full capacity to grow in that area or you will have expended so much energy that you will simply give up the notion.

If you would like further information on any other business growth strategies, email bhavna@theperfectsmile.co.uk.

About the author
Bhavna Doshi is a senior consultant at The Perfect Smile Studios. She has a special interest in smile design dentistry and focuses on practice produc- tivity, management and finance. If you have enjoyed this article and would like further information on effective time man- agement or any other business growth strategies. Please email me at bhavna@theperfectsmile.co.uk.