Setting yourself free
Simon Hocken shows how you can increase your success with a personal and professional vision

E
verything that exists is created twice: once in the mind, then again in the outside world. In fact, nothing can be created without being envisioned first. Just as a mountain climber can hold in mind the image of standing on the peak, hands on hips, or an Olympic runner pictures himself crossing the finish line, the vision begins at the end of the adventure, when your goal has been realised.

Understand your goal
Once you know what you want to accomplish, you can then determine more effectively what has to be done on the way. The most innovative leading coaches in dentistry use this strategy to help principals and their teams reverse-engineer their success, because it facilitates the decision-making process: when you know where you want to be, the decisions you make along the way become so much easier. You simply ask yourself, whenever you reach a fork in the road: which path will take me closer to my goal? The difference a vision makes can be equated to the difference between meandering around a maze, or crossing along the highway.

When it comes to helping a client develop his or her own unique vision, the coach might well begin by asking the three-year question:

“If we met in three years’ time, and looked back over the last 36 months, what would have to have happened, both personally and professionally, for you to be happy with your progress?”

Coaching is all about giving clients the skills, knowledge and confidence to realise their visions – to take the image out of their head, and into the world. With the right marketing structure, and robust, efficient working systems, increased profitability can be reliably achieved – even in the current financial climate. In fact, now is the time to up your game, rather than hunker down; the constructive forward-thinking you do now will put you in a stronger position when the market improves. Otherwise, you might simply find yourself with less of a business!

Make time work
By having the right team around you, you can free yourself up to focus on the treatments you are passionate about. Your coach will also help you make time work for you, not against you, reducing your clinical hours without reducing your profit. With the extra time available, you can monitor your team more effectively, appraise the performance of your business, and respond to new opportunities quickly. You don’t see the captain of the ship sitting with the crew, rowing; he’s the one with the telescope, scanning the horizon, or studying the treasure map, and giving orders.

This efficient use of time lets dentists enjoy a happier home life, with more holidays, more dinner with friends, more visits to the cinema...