We all know implants are the best possible option for edentulous patients. Implants clearly enrich a patient’s life, both physically and psychologically. However, let’s not forget what implants do for the practice. Implants can be a gold mine. However, like any gold mine, the gold isn’t necessarily sitting on the ground waiting for you to pick it up. It takes time and effort to uncover the treasure.

There are highly successful implant practitioners placing hundreds of implants a month — even in this economy. Yes, they are out there and Levin Group has worked with many of them. However, for every highly successful implant practice, there are others who are working hard to build their implant production but facing obstacles that hinder total implant success. Let me share with you the progress of one such practice.

Case study: Finding the hidden potential

When Dr. O first met Dr. O, he had been in practice for nearly 25 years and just built his dream home. His wife was hoping he could spend more time with her and now that their daughters had finished college and started their own careers. This was something of a problem. He didn’t want to work more hours yet he was worried about increased debt because of the new home.

On top of that, he wanted to pursue his dream of one day vacationing in the Caribbean on his sailboat. He couldn’t see any way of meeting all of his objectives. At that point, Dr. O decided that practice management and marketing consulting was the answer to help him get where he wanted to be.

Practice production had grown an average of only 2.5 percent during the previous three years. Dr. O knew that growing the implant side of his practice was a good way to increase production, but he was not sure how to make that happen. Many of his restoring practitioners never sent more than a handful of cases to him each year. He didn’t have a solution to the problem, which frustrated him greatly. Consequently, he was settling for just going through the schedule each day and hoping things would change. Upon closer inspection, we discovered it wasn’t just the low number of implant cases hindering the practice; there were other significant issues as well.

During an on-site visit, we identified root causes that limited efficiency and practice capacity. Inefficient systems were having an adverse affect on Dr. O, his team and his patients. After our on-site analysis and subsequent conversations with his consultant, Dr. O came to realize that implementing new systems would reduce stress, improve practice performance and increase productivity.

Like many implant practitioners, Dr. O had procrastinated about redesigning his systems. This is hard- ly surprising. It’s human nature to put off change when things are going fairly well. Over the years, Dr. O took the position of: “We can’t do it now, we’re too busy.” Now, he realized that he had to do something.

We recommended a straightforward way to get the most out of Dr. O’s practice and his life — an Implant Life Map.

Dr. O’s Implant Life Map™ — building the practice and creating more free time

A Life Map is a year-by-year blueprint of a practitioner’s professional and personal life, now through retirement. Having created hundreds of Life Maps for clients, we focus on key events that will affect an implant practitioner’s practice and life. A Life Map evaluates the practitioner’s age, financial position, position, lifestyle, family situation, tuition needs and large financial events over a lifetime.

What does an Implant Life Map™ work?

In 2004, Dr. O was a 52-year-old periodontist with one practice location. He was generating $700,000. He was disappointed that his practice had grown at only 2.5 percent for the past three years. As mentioned earlier, he was having difficulty paying down debt, finding more time to spend with his wife, Susan, and pursuing other interests including sailing and community activities.

Here are some of the elements that were included in Dr. O’s Life Map:

• 2004
  • Faced with a lack of growth and lower profitability than he wanted, Dr. O enrolls in Levin Group’s Total Perio Success™ Management and Referral Marketing Year-1 Programs.
  • After several in-depth conversations about the state of his practice with his management consultant, Dr. O discovers that he needs to improve case acceptance, referrals and his implant production.
  • He realizes that the internal management systems are not fully implemented because of his lack of leadership and commitment to drive change in the practice.
  • Reviewing his investment portfolio, he understands that he needs a comprehensive approach to financial independence. He decides to work with a certified financial planner.
  • 2005: Growth — 12 percent
    • Referrals increased by 35 percent.
    • This is attributed to a referral marketing program.
  • Wishing to take control of his practice, Dr. O enrolls in a second year of marketing and management programs.

Dr. O is starting to pay down the considerable debt he had accumulated when he built his dream house.

• 2006: Growth — 21 percent
  • The practice continues to experience substantial growth.
  • Implants have become a primary focus in the practice with a growth of 50 percent.
  • Dr. O elects to participate in Levin Group’s Total Implant Success™ Management and Referral Marketing Program and continue his Periodontal Marketing Program.
  • He designates an Implant Treatment Coordinator to effectively handle communication between restorative doctors and his office.
  • With Levin Group’s help, Dr. O begins a campaign of organized Lunch ’n Learns for his restorative practitioners to increase their education level regarding implants.
  • Having gained confidence in his leadership skills, Dr. O hires an office manager to help bring together the right team.
  • 2007: Growth — 27 percent

Implant referrals have increased exponentially. His restorative doctors are now sending five times as many implant cases his way. He is also beginning to get more new implant referrals — something he had wanted for a considerable length of time. With the help of his new office manager, they have assembled their dream team and Dr. O decides to participate in Total Perio Success™ Management, Year 3 so he can take his team to the next level.

Dr. O and his wife are finally able to live their dream of sailing in the Caribbean. It’s the best two weeks of their lives.

2008

Faced with much tougher economic conditions and increased opposition, Dr. O realizes the importance of the marketing program and elects to enroll in another year of marketing. The 0’s are happy and relieved that they are able to accommodate the lavish wedding plans of their oldest daughter.

How to achieve total success

Dr. O hires an associate, Dr. Adams. Dr. O hopes Dr. Adams will eventually become a partner and take over the practice when he retires.

A Life Map begins with understanding the implant practitioner’s vision and goals, which change over time. In many cases, once clients have started working with Levin Group, we see them set and reach new goals that they never thought possible. This is a process of identifying short- and long-term goals and placing these on an Implant Life Map™ to help practitioners and their spouses create a roadmap for total success.

Conclusion

Dr. O had high hopes for his practice, but he didn’t know how to turn his dreams into reality. Only after an on-site analysis, a carefully planned and implemented Implant Life Map™ and customized management and marketing solutions did his practice begin to experience the total success that he wanted. His success continues today, despite a slow economy.

As Dr. O found out, a Life Map will help you to identify and achieve comprehensive success in all areas of your life, both personal and professional.

1. Case study based on actual Levin Group client information.

Implant Tribune readers are entitled to receive a 50 percent courtesy on a Levin Group Practice Potential Analysis™, an in-office evaluation of your practice systems conducted by a Levin Practice Development Specialist. To schedule the next available appointment, call (888) 973-0000 and mention Implant Tribune or e-mail customerservice@levingroup.com with “Implant Tribune” in the subject line. Readers can also visit www.levingroupimplant.com for more information.

About the author

Dr. Roger P. Levin is founder and chief executive officer of Levin Group, Inc., the leading implant practice management firm. Levin Group provides Total Implant Success, the premier comprehensive consulting solution for lifetime success to implant practitioners in the United States and around the world. For more than two decades, Dr. Levin and Levin Group have been dedicated to improving the lives of implant practitioners.

Levin Group, Inc.
10 New Plant Court
Owings Mills, MD 21117
Call: (888) 973-0000 or (410) 634-1234
E-mail: customerservice@levingroup.com