Every ortho practice should have clear and challenging performance goals. This is the first step in improving the practice and reaching the office’s true production potential.

Without goals, the practice is often adrift and the team lacks a sense of true purpose. In such an orthodontic practice, the staff often experiences high stress and has one main objective — get through the day and go home.

Only by having goals and achieving those goals can orthodontists know the real meaning of total ortho success. This is truly the challenge of practicing orthodontics in the second decade of the 21st century.

Production potential
Like any business, orthodontic practices need to measure performance by establishing clear objectives. Levin Group recommends the following targets to clients to move them closer to their true production potential:

- Starts should grow by at least 10 percent or more annually.
- The close rate for new patient consults should be 85 percent or higher.
- Patient referrals from dentists should increase by 10 percent or more.
- The number of patients in observation should grow by at least 5 percent each year.
- The overdue debond rate should not exceed 2 percent.
- The collection rate should be 99 percent.
- The number of patients overdue for retainer checks should be less than 2 percent.

In the current economy, most orthodontic practices will have difficulty reaching these targets unless they have implemented document-ed management and marketing systems. Once goals have been established, the next step is for practices to create the systems that allow the office to reach its targets.

Each ortho practice has a series of major business systems that include:
- Scheduling
- Treatment coordinator process
- Patient financial management
- Insurance management
- Case presentation
- Office communication
- Referral marketing

Effective systems set the foundation for attaining superior customer service, outstanding productivity and increased production. The difference between high-performance orthodontic practices and others comes down to the efficiency of their business systems. Ortho practices with the best systems have managed — despite the economy — to meet their production targets and experience substantial growth.

Conclusion
Goal setting is critical to achieving success in your professional and personal life. Track goals weekly. Without a structured management approach in place, many practitioners are focused on day-to-day operations and fail to see the true production potential within their practices. Goal setting can help you manage your practice instead of being managed by it.

To help you meet this year’s production goals, get the proven solutions at Dr. Roger Levin’s next Total Ortho Success™ Seminar being held April 8 and 9 in Chicago. Ortho Tribune readers are entitled to receive a 20 percent courtesy. To receive this courtesy, call (888) 973-0000 and mention “Ortho Tribune” or e-mail customerservice@levingroup.com with “Ortho Tribune Courtesy” in the subject line.