

SELL ME THIS PEN

*How to Make Treatment
and Cost Applicable to
Your Patient*



MEMBER ARTICLE | BY DANIEL SCHRIFTMAN, FAADOM

It seems that it can be easy to create a treatment plan for a patient, know the procedure, know the cost, and assume that everyone can be sold with the same pitch. However, in my many years of experience, I find nothing to be further from the truth. Each patient has their individual life and financial circumstances. They have their own desires, cosmetically as well as functionally. One of these desires likely outweighs the other, and the opposite can be said about different patients.

An old interview technique for sales positions is to ask the new potential employee to sell the interviewer a pen. Many candidates explain the benefits of the pen on the basis of color, shape, appearance, longevity, or a plethora of other functional or appearance-based benefits. It would be very easy to think some combination of these descriptions would be the expected response!

Even so, the way to sell that pen may be simpler than you imagined. The answer is actually posed as a question. "What kind of pen are

YOU looking for?" By addressing the needs of the person who needs to be sold, you can determine HOW they need to be sold. If I have determined what my interviewer needs in a pen, I can far better sell them what they're looking for.

The same can be said about sales of a treatment plan. In my office, a doctor will sit with a patient and determine what the patient's desires are for treatment. Are they looking to get the bare minimum treatment or are they looking to get their whole mouth reconstructed? Do they want removable dentures or do they want implants? Do they want a crown and bridge or would they prefer an implant? So why is it that I see so many treatment plan coordinators and office managers treating each patient as if they have the same needs when it comes to accepting the plans presented?

Here are some helpful tips to use in the "coordination" of payment processing:



If the patient has insurance, can they spread the benefits of their treatment over this year and next?

For example, we are a fee-for-service practice and I am often able to sell the patient a major treatment if it is being started towards the end of their benefit period. Will they start the treatment if it means they get back \$3000 from their insurance over two benefit periods instead of \$1500 over one?

Does the patient need financing?

Understanding your financing options and being able to explain them to your patient is the most important part of this process.

[SELL ME THIS PEN CONTINUED | PAGE 49](#)

...SELL ME THIS PEN CONTINUED

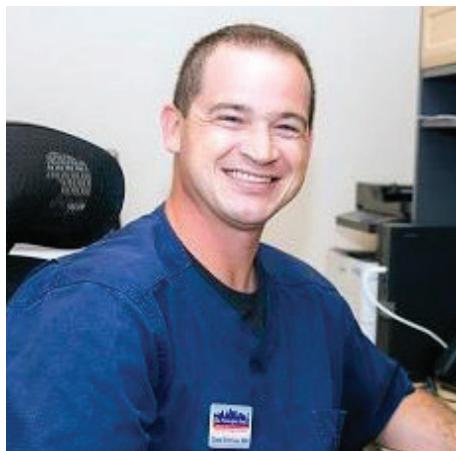
If I have a \$10,000 treatment plan and the patient needs to be sold on the benefits of a 12-month interest-free plan or a 24-month interest-free plan or an extended plan, make it make sense to them.

Look for indicators in the patient's responses.

If my patient is telling me the payment is too high on a 12-month interest-free plan, they are often just looking for an option that will cost them less monthly. Explain the benefits and monthly cost of a longer interest free program or an extended plan with interest. A common mistake is the assumption that the patient is objecting to the

treatment or the treatment cost, when in reality they just want an easier way to fit the payment to their budget.

Treat each patient as an individual. Determine their financial needs the same way you would their clinical needs. Find out what each is looking for and sell them THEIR pen. ■



MEET THE MEMBER

Daniel Schrifman, FAADOM is a Business Manager and Coach. He has his MBA with a focus on Human Resources. In addition to being the business manager of his practice, he also coaches dental practices to more efficiently run their fee-for-service business models. Daniel is the innovator of The Philadelphia Dentist, P.C., an emergency dental practice serving the local community 365 days per year. He is also a founder of Unicorn Dentists, a burgeoning organization seeking to improve all aspects of the dental employer, employee, and patient experience.

Daniel is a lifetime AADOM member and received his AADOM Fellowship designation in 2020. He is currently pursuing his AADOM Mastership, (MAADOM), and is scheduled to be inducted in the 2022 class this September.



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