



Do You Know What Your Most Important Task Is as a Chiropractic Assistant?

By Nancy Singleton

Your job as a chiropractic assistant is an important one! The clinic cannot run without you and without all that you do.

But what is your most important task? Is there one thing you do that is more important than the others?

Well, certainly taking care of the patients and making sure that they not only get the care they need, but also that they are handled with “tender loving care” is of up-most importance.

However, could it be that one task should be on your mind more than any other?

After more than two decades in this industry, I have observed that there is, in fact, one thing in your job that you can do that is more important than any other thing—helping to grow the practice.

Now, that sounds like a pretty overwhelming task, doesn't it? Shouldn't it be the job of the doctor or the business owner to grow the practice? I would argue that it should be the top priority of every single person who takes a paycheck or has a financial interest in the practice. So how can you grow the practice?

Well, there is an easy answer to that, and it is best

answered by first asking a question. What is the most important thing in any business? I submit that it is marketing! That is advertising, which amounts to growing the business.

Name a successful business. What came to your mind? How about Nike, Apple, Marriott, or McDonald's? We've all heard of these companies, right? So if we already know about these companies, why do they continue to market and advertise? They advertise because they realize that their number one job is to continue to grow their business, and that is accomplished through constant advertising and marketing.

While you don't have the advertising and marketing budget of McDonald's, job number one for you is also to advertise and market your practice. But how can you be expected to do that? Well, the good news is that everything you do is marketing!

So, what exactly is marketing? Marketing is the action or business of promoting and selling products and services.

Everything you do affects how the patients feel about the practice, and all customers buy on emotion. So it absolutely matters how they feel about everything in your practice.

You might argue, “Our patients come to us because they are injured, or because they are in need of the care we offer.” I wouldn’t disagree, but the fact is that patients have many options of which chiropractor they can visit. Why will they choose your practice over another practice?

They’ll more than likely choose your practice because of the way they feel while in your practice. Everything you do affects the way they feel about your practice.

They’ll choose your practice because you realize that everything you do matters, and because you realize that every little detail is helping to market your practice. Everything is marketing, and marketing is everything. In other words:

- Having a visually pleasing office is good marketing
- Having an office that smells good is good marketing
- Having a clean and organized office is good marketing
- Wearing clean uniforms or business attire is good marketing
- Providing the best possible care is good marketing
- Having professional and error-free forms and paperwork is good marketing

Yes, everything is marketing, and marketing is everything!

Take some time to look at your office through the eyes of your patients. During some downtime when you aren’t seeing patients, change into casual, “non-clinic” clothes and be processed through as a new patient. How are you treated? How does everything look to you? What makes you feel good? Is there anything that makes you feel uncomfortable? Did you understand the process? What changes could be made?

When you see your practice through the eyes of your patients, you’ll begin to realize that everything is marketing and marketing is everything.

So, is that it? Is that all you have to do? Just do your job to the best of your ability and in a setting that is organized, clean, neat, and feels good?

No, that is not all. You have to be proactive when it comes to marketing. Certainly, the doctor or business manager will have a marketing budget and marketing plan going on at all times. Nevertheless, you have another very specific marketing job in addition to everything else we’ve just covered.

You need to ask your patients to help share your message! Why? Because chiropractic can make a huge difference in the lives of people who seek care. Patient referrals cut the marketing budget in half and are an incredible practice builder.

When you are extremely passionate about chiropractic, it will be easy for you to ask for referrals. So the first thing you need to do as a professional chiropractic assistant is to learn everything about chiropractic and the services your doctor offers. You need to take advantage of those services and see how your life improves. Once you know the incredible benefits of chiropractic firsthand, you'll be able to share your enthusiasm with your patients.

This leads us to the original question asked at the beginning of this article, "Do you know what your most important task as a chiropractic assistant is?"

The answer is, "Asking for and obtaining referrals." That's the most important thing you can do. Everything else we just talked about also has to happen. You must provide great service, you must have a great clinic that feels and looks good, and you must make sure your patients have an incredible experience. If you provide that for them, then you have earned the right to ask for referrals! If you don't do that, you simply can't.

There is an easy way to set this up. It should begin on the first day of care and continue as your patients go through care. During the first visit, there will be paperwork, forms, and office policies to review with your patients. You need to have a conversation that reviews what they can expect from you and what you expect from them.

Your conversation with the patient can be as easy as saying, "You can expect to get the very best chiropractic care available here in our office. You'll soon learn how your life will improve because of your treatments here. When you see that improvement, what we expect from you is to share your success with people you know. We are on a mission to get this message out and help more in our community, and we need your help! We will appreciate you spreading the word about the wonderful care you get here!"

On subsequent visits, your job is to look for improvements with your patients and be ready with cards, letters, fliers, and other tools to help your patients spread the word.

Check with your state boards to see what you can and can't do to help incentivize patient referrals. When people are excited, they'll want to share!

You will be a catalyst to growing an incredible practice by implementing an internal referral system. In my opinion, that is your most important job!



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