

Speak To Lead

Mastering Effective Communication
Strategies for Dental Leaders

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Welcome to Leadership Forum



Rich Evans, The Digital Growth Ninja, is a nationally recognized marketing leader known for his expertise in public relations, crisis communications, and digital demand generation. A 2019 eHealthCare Leadership Award winner, Rich drives revenue and engagement through omni-channel campaigns using data-driven consumer insights. With over 20 years in marketing, from journalism to leadership in non-profit and healthcare sectors, he also writes horror fiction in his spare time.

Learning Objectives



UNDERSTAND

First, to understand why communication is crucial in dental leadership.



EXPLORE

Second, to explore and practice key communication strategies.



APPLY

Third, to apply these strategies through interactive activities.



CULTIVATE

Finally, to learn how to cultivate a culture of effective communication within your practice.

**THESE OBJECTIVES WILL GUIDE OUR TIME TOGETHER,
ENSURING THAT YOU WALK AWAY WITH
ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS.**

The Role of Communication



The Recipe For Building Trust

Sincerity: Being genuine fosters an environment of respect, making others feel valued and more likely to trust you.

Reliability: Consistently following through on promises establishes dependability, deepening trust.

Commitment: Showing dedication to the relationship or task reassures others that you prioritize their needs.

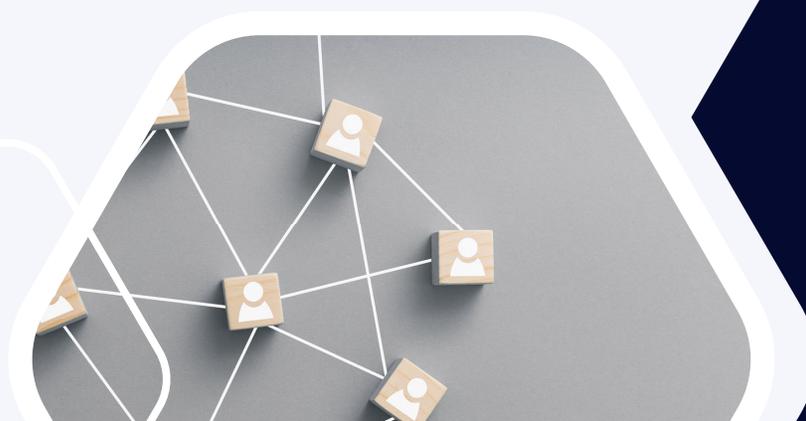
Integrity: Upholding ethical standards and being transparent reinforces trust and earns respect.

Competence: Demonstrating relevant knowledge and skills instills confidence in your abilities.

Consistency: Maintaining a steady approach helps others feel secure and reinforces trust over time.



Communication Strategies



ACTIVE LISTENING

This is about truly hearing what others are saying, not just waiting for your turn to speak. It builds trust and ensures that your responses are thoughtful and informed.



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Understanding and addressing the emotional needs of your team and patients is crucial. Empathy allows you to connect on a deeper level, making your communication more impactful.



CLARITY / CONCISENESS

In a busy dental practice, time is of the essence. Clear and concise communication helps avoid misunderstandings and ensures everyone is on the same page.



ASSERTIVENESS

As leaders, we need to assert our ideas and decisions confidently, without being overbearing. This balance is key to maintaining respect and authority.



ADAPTABILITY / FLEXIBILITY

Every situation is different, and so are the people we interact with. Being adaptable in your communication style can help you connect more effectively with others.

Overcoming the **Four** Most Common Communication Barriers



LANGUAGE BARRIERS ◀◀

Differences in language or jargon can cause misunderstandings

PHYSICAL BARRIERS ◀◀

Environmental factors like noise or distance hinder clear communication

CULTURAL BARRIERS ◀◀ PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS ◀◀

Cultural differences can lead to misinterpretation or offense

Stress, emotions, or biases can distort messages



Non-Verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is often estimated to account for about 70-93% of communication, depending on the context. This includes body language, facial expressions, gestures, posture, and tone of voice. The exact percentage can vary based on the specific situation and the way messages are conveyed.



The Impact of Technology on Effective Communications

EMAIL

Pros: Enables detailed communication; provides a written record; allows for thoughtful, asynchronous responses.

Cons: May cause misunderstandings due to lack of tone; can overwhelm; delayed replies impact urgency.

TEXT

Pros: Facilitates quick, real-time communication; encourages informal collaboration; allows immediate clarification.

Cons: Can be distracting; risks misinterpretation without non-verbal cues; may fragment conversations.

ZOOM

Pros: Enhances understanding with visual and auditory interaction; allows for real-time engagement; builds relationships.

Cons: Technical issues can disrupt; may cause virtual fatigue; requires effort to include all participants.



Interactive Activities

GROUPS OF FOUR



One participant will play the role of a dentist who needs to communicate a change in office protocol to a team member who is resistant to change. The other participant will play the role of the team member. The goal is to practice empathy, active listening, and adaptability in delivering the message and responding to concerns.



Let's pair you up and ask one participant to share a recent challenging experience in their practice. The other participant will practice active listening techniques, such as summarizing what they heard, asking clarifying questions, and validating emotions without interrupting. This exercise helps you to focus on understanding rather than preparing your response.



Imagine you have 60 seconds in an elevator with a potential investor who could help expand your practice. You need to clearly and concisely communicate your practice's unique value proposition. In this exercise, each participant will prepare and deliver a short pitch, focusing on being clear, concise, and persuasive.

Resolving Team Conflict

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SCENARIO 1:

You're leading a dental practice, and a conflict has arisen between a senior dentist and a dental hygienist over treatment plans. The dentist feels the hygienist is overstepping by suggesting treatment options, while the hygienist believes their input is valuable. How would you mediate this situation to resolve the conflict and maintain team morale?

- Discuss the scenario and come up with a communication strategy to resolve the conflict.
- Focus on active listening, empathy, and setting clear boundaries.
- Prepare to share your solution with the rest of the group.



Navigating a Difficult Conversation with a Patient

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SCENARIO 2:

You have a long-term patient who's dissatisfied with recent care, citing long wait times and feeling rushed. They've hinted they might look for a new dentist. How would you approach this conversation to address their concerns while maintaining a positive relationship?

- Discuss how you'd handle this delicate conversation.
- Consider empathy, active listening, and offering tangible solutions.
- Prepare to share your approach with the group.



Leading Through Change

SCENARIO 3:

Your practice is implementing a new electronic health record system, and some long-time team members are resistant to the change. How would you lead your team through this transition, addressing their concerns and ensuring a smooth adoption of the new system?

- In your groups, discuss how you'd approach leading this change.
- Focus on clear communication, providing support, and involving the team in the process.
- Prepare to share your leadership strategy with the group.

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Interactive Activities - Debrief

1. What communication strategies did you find most effective in resolving the scenarios?
2. How can these strategies be adapted for different situations in your practice?
3. What insights did you gain about your own communication style during these exercises?

These activities highlight the importance of practicing communication skills in real-world scenarios. The more we practice, the more natural these strategies become, making us more effective leaders."



Building a Culture of Effective Communication



LEAD BY EXAMPLE:

Model the communication behaviors you want to see in your team.



CREATE OPEN CHANNELS

Ensure there are open and safe channels for communication, where team members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns.



ENCOURAGE FEEDBACK:

Make it a habit to seek and give constructive feedback, fostering an environment of continuous improvement.

Thank You For Your Time!

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EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION

