



The Gift Of Time: Valuing Patient Time

Valuing time creates win/win. Patients feel respected, and you build life-long patient relations, earning referrals and staff loyalty. Promise to respect confirmed appointment times and, in turn, ask patients to arrive on time. Lead patients to trust you always provide safe, quality care for every patient, with the understanding a little more time may be required.

Adding procedures for one patient, then running late and **TAKING** from another, has a negative affect and is not worth the money!

GIVE CHOICES. Hesitating to give choices for fear a patient may reschedule is **TAKING**. *"Mary, Dr. Kharing asked me to apologize but he needs another 15 minutes to safely care for the patient he's with. We confirmed you for 11:00 anticipating you would not have to wait. As you know, Dr. Kharing would never rush your care or anyone else's. He respects your time and hopes your personal schedule allows you to be with us until about 12:30. If not, we understand."*

Declare your intention to estimate time and stay on schedule. *"Mrs. Lim, the time for most dental procedures is usually predictable and if patients arrive on time, we stay on time. Please feel free to call before you leave work and we will be happy to give you an update. We know your time is valuable and every minute counts."* Promise patients you estimate arrival and exit times, so they can plan their days.

Avoid clinical team's discussing appointment lengths. Reply to patients who complain the doctor said it would only be an hour, not an hour and a half, by saying: *"Mrs. Lim, Dr. Kharing is great about estimating your actual treatment time. If everything goes perfectly, and you don't have questions, it is very likely you will get out early, so please confirm an hour and a half with us, and hopefully you will be leaving earlier."*

We know longer visits are more productive and enhance acceptance of complete dentistry by minimizing trips to the dentist. The reality is patients don't care about the length of their appointments as long as they are not kept in the office more than 15-20 minutes longer than estimated and they **EXPERIENCE THEIR TIME IS RESPECTED.**

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