



Explode Your Case

BY WENDY BRIGGS, RDH

Did you know 65% of all production completed in the Restorative Department in a dental practice is referred from hygiene? What tools do you have for supporting Case Presentation? Are you consistently using them? How involved is the hygiene team in this effort?

The old paradigm for Case Presentation is to educate, educate, educate. Although educating the patient is important, it's also important to keep things simple. When complicated terminology is used, the patient often ends up being confused, and confused patients are often unable to make decisions about treatment. This is the last thing we want! Patients who need to check their schedules, call their insurance, or offer any number of other excuses could be confused about recommendations, overwhelmed, or both. This leads to frustration. And no decision.

Our challenge is to approach Case Presentation with the new paradigm. Following are two key rules to help you explode your Case Acceptance.

Rule #1: Simplify!

Talk in terms your patients understand. Often it's not what you say, but how you say it. In Case Acceptance, what THEY SEE is so much more important than what YOU SAY!

This is why I love to use my tools! There are several things I can't live without when talking with patients about opportunity for treatment in their mouths.

- **Diagnodent** or, as patients know it, the "Cavity Detecting Laser," helps patients see things for themselves. They hear the alarm signal, they see the number. (I have the patient hold it so they can participate, and they know without my having to say anything there is a potential problem.)
- Follow this up with another powerful tool, your **Intra-Oral Camera**. Show them exactly what that reading of 34 looks like and why you are concerned. The Intra-Oral camera allows patients to see for themselves. A cracked tooth in the mouth and a cracked tooth up on the monitor or television look like two different things. I prefer my patients see it as big as life on the screen. This way, there is urgency without my having to create it. It just is, because of how bad they perceive their teeth to be. The images from the camera take away any doubts the patient may have.

"SEEING IS BELIEVING" IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

COMMENTS FROM THE PATIENTS PROVE HOW POWERFUL THE CAMERA IS. I CAN'T TELL PATIENTS THEIR TEETH LOOK TERRIBLE, BUT ONCE THEY SEE WITH THE CAMERA, OFTEN THEY ARE THE ONES WHO SAY, "IT LOOKS TERRIBLE!"

Many practices have these amazing tools, but they sit collecting dust. Lack of systems, perception there "just isn't enough time," or lack of confidence on the part of the hygiene team often are the cause of not utilizing these valuable resources. The reality is my clients have learned that properly using these tools, and presenting opportunities with the right verbal skills, actually saves time. If you want more success with Case Acceptance, dust off the Diagnodent, take out that camera, and get going!

Rule #2: Build Value

Patients will find a way to pay for what they WANT. So we should focus on helping them want to have their teeth taken care of. Why should they want to have this done? Why would YOU do it?

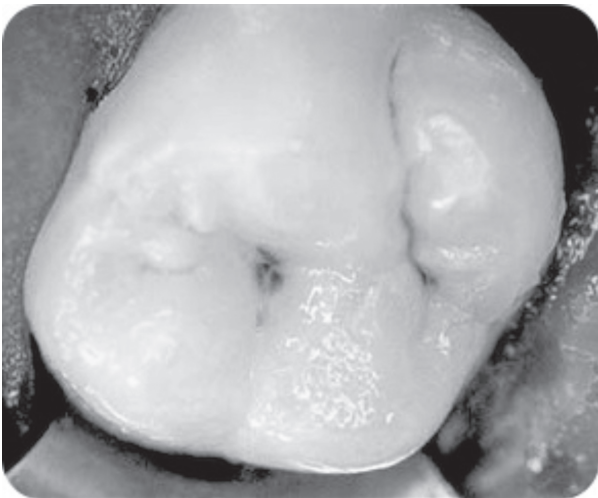
Patients value and want your opinion. So, to be more effective when talking with patients about what they need, don't be afraid to tell them what you would do. We should focus on what the direct benefits are. Instead of telling the patient how we place implants, explain the benefits of having them. For example, say: *"When we place implants in your mouth, you will be able to chew without pain, as if you had natural teeth. There will be nothing to take out and clean; you will be able to brush and floss these teeth as you did before. By the way, have I told you implants have porcelain crowns on them and look incredibly like natural teeth?"*

Acceptance!

Building value while keeping things simple can revolutionize your acceptance. Avoid your natural tendency to make things too complicated. Focus on the benefits for the patient, and they will be interested in learning more.

You will be amazed at what your patients accept when they understand what you are recommending, and when they WANT to have it done!

Intra-Oral Camera Example



Seeing is believing! This tooth had a Diagnodent reading of 44. The patient was shown an Intra-Oral photo of the tooth. The patient had no doubt that it needed to be done! Treatment accepted!



Wendy Briggs is a Registered Dental Hygienist with more than twenty years experience in dentistry. She is the President and CEO of Hygiene Diamonds, a Worldwide Practice Management Consulting Firm that excels in increasing entire practice profitability with a focus on improving hygiene systems. Hygiene Diamonds has many resources available to help dentists and hygienists improve Case Acceptance.

Visit www.hygienediamonds.com for more information or to request a complimentary DVD.

