



TIPPING POINTS: Episode 5, Patient Referral

CHALLENGE

When you do your job well in helping each patient that visits your practice either through improving their hearing health or providing them superior customer service, it can be relatively easy to parlay your effort into a limitless stream of new customers. This process is the basis of AHAA's Patient Referral program.

SOLUTION

The two most important things to keep in mind as you build and maintain an effective referral process are:

1. **The fact that every patient is a resource for referrals:** Ask everyone, everyday. If you're proud of the care and service that was delivered to a patient, why wouldn't you ask them?
2. **You have to ask for referrals to get referrals:** Hard work and dedication don't automatically lead to referrals – even from your most satisfied patients. You might be surprised at how willing and happy they'll be to give you one when asked.

A referral program should at least begin as a scripted process, but you'll soon become comfortable in asking for them under any circumstance. A few ways objections can be handled or avoided include:

- **Don't surprise them.** Inform the patient at the start of the visit that you'll be asking them for a referral before they leave for home.
- **Educate them.** Are they aware that 70-75% of the hearing-impaired population goes without treatment? Let them know that they'd be making an effort to change this.
- **Direct them.** Take the pressure off by brainstorming with them. This could be as simple as offering them a scenario such as a friend or loved one that has recently shown indications of having a hearing loss.

Finally, remember to thank the person who referred them to you – your show of appreciation will promote future referrals.

RESULT

Practices that implement this program experience an average increase of six units a month over pre-referral program results. Larger practices — those selling 30 or more units a month — can experience increases of 10 or more units per month.

TIPPING POINT

Tipping Point

- (tip-ping point) noun
1. a time when important things start happening in a situation.
 2. when a significant change takes place.

Our Associates often share with us the moments when they became fully committed to AHAA's business model All The Right Things, and began to believe in and realize great success, aka, their tipping points.

We have started to share their stories with you, and through this interactive series will introduce more in the coming weeks. Make sure to explore the entire page for links, interviews, and downloads! And don't forget to re-visit the first episode too.

- Episode 1: All The Right Things
- Episode 2: Block Scheduling
- Episode 3: 3rd Party Attendance
- Episode 4: Out of Warranty Sales
- Episode 5: Patient Referral
- Episode 6: Professional Development
- Episode 7: AHAA Convention

Call your Associate Manager or AHAA at 800-984-3272 for more information. Or if you prefer e-mail, contact Inside Sales at insidesales@ahaanet.com.