

Staff Training

# Six Selling Strategies

A half-dozen clever ways to train your staff on the right skills to help them sell

Every practice has its own scenario for training staff. For some, it's informal. For others, it's a strategic process. For most, however, the reality lies somewhere in the middle.

We've invited three staff training experts to offer ways your own staff training can help increase sales success: Patti Thomas, a Clarks Summit, PA-based consultant; Mary Walker, executive director of business development for Vision Associates, a NJ-based dispensary management consultancy; and Mary Schmidt, ABOC, president of EyeSystems, Pleasant Hills, CA.

Everyone on your staff is, in some way or another, involved in selling. So these tips can be applied to most patient-facing interactions at your office.

## #1. ENGAGE CUSTOMERS

"Many successful businesses train salespeople to use the Rule of 3. That is, ask three engaging questions before you begin the discussion regarding their visit." —Patti Thomas

## #2. BEYOND DISPENSERS

"Many people attracted to health care—often including assistants or front desk staff—prefer to 'help' rather than lead, so selling is not comfortable for them.

They will need training on how their behavior and the information they give benefits the patient, not the financial goal of the practice." —Mary Schmidt

## #3. REQUEST FEEDBACK

"Special tools are available to help employees learn and practice their selling scripts. Practicing with webcam recordings allows for easy feedback from managers and trainers."

—Patti Thomas

## #4. TECH TALK

"One of our first questions with a patient is, 'What do you like most about the eyewear you're wearing today?' And then, 'What do you like least?'"

"By uncovering their favorite part, we are able to compare today's technology to what they are wearing. By understanding where their glasses aren't working well, we can explain how we'll solve that problem with today's technology." —Mary Walker

## #5. CONVERSATIONAL FOUNDATION

"Help dispensing staff build a vocabulary beyond 'This one is my favorite' or 'Your insurance will cover this.' Based

on the patient's priorities, dispensers will at a minimum need to have a conversational foundation for dealing with fashion, technology, and price."

—Mary Schmidt

## #6. PATIENT INTERACTION

"One of the more important things we teach is to be quiet and listen. Even if I explain technology and solutions in simple language, the patient needs time to process and ask questions. Never assume you know what the patient will say before they say it."

—Mary Walker

Whether they are welcoming patients, examining eyes, or presenting frames and lenses, everyone on staff is selling visual solutions, superior service, and, of course, the practice itself. —STEPHANIE K. DE LONG