



# The White Pages

## A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS . . .

### Congratulations to Jay White

The USA Section of the International College of Dentists recently awarded Jay White first place for his outstanding article, "Leadership: The Prerequisite to Prosperity," which appeared in the January-February 2007 issue of Northwest Dentistry.



Bill Stein, left, Executive Editor, *Northwest Dentistry*, presents Jay White with his first place Leadership Award.

Northwest Dentistry thanked Jay for his contribution to the journal's ongoing pursuit of topics of interest and importance to its readers.

### Jay's Story

The day had come – the red warning light on my dashboard lit up. I knew this was going to cost me time and money! I

reluctantly called the auto shop to make an appointment.

I knew there were problems when I looked up at the clock and 50 minutes had gone by. John, my mechanic, walked in and said, "Jay, could you please come with me. I have a few areas of concern that I would like to talk to you about regarding your car." I knew this was going to be expensive, and the last thing I wanted to do was spend a lot of money.

To make a long story short, John walked me to where my car was sitting. He explained the situation to me and further explained that if the problem was left untreated, further damage could occur while I was driving, and it could eventually cost me about \$1,000 in damages to the rest of my engine.

**John then did something that I've never seen another mechanic do. He reached into his cabinet of tools and pulled out a long cord with a small camera attached.** I could

immediately see what the problem was on the large video screen. And when I saw it, I believed him – he had my full attention. **THIS WAS A BIG DEAL!!!**

It would only cost me \$325 if I went ahead with the repairs right away. He explained he only used genuine GM parts. He could have saved me more money if he used other parts, but said, **"YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR."**

"You don't have to do this right now, but car problems don't fix themselves and will eventually cost you more time and money. You're gambling!" My thoughts were: "\$325 now or \$1000 later." This was an easy decision!

Does this sound familiar? It should. This story is played out every day in your dental practice. Patients walk through the doors of your practice with the same mentality that I had as I walked through the doors of the auto shop.

No one wants to spend any more time and money than they have to. Patients see the doctor's or hygienist's recommendations as a penalty. In other words, they don't see the dentistry as adding to their enjoyment of life. Overcoming this attitude requires good communication and relationship skills.

Just like John did at the auto shop, are you using your intra oral camera and your communication skills?

If your patients can actually see what you are diagnosing and what their mouth looks like while you are having a discussion with them, the battle is over. The most expensive dentistry is done on an emergency basis on patients who come to your practice only when they are in pain. What you're trying to do is add value to the patient's life. If s/he can see that having dentistry done "sooner than later" will benefit their life in some way, then getting them to say "yes" to treatment is so much easier.

Just like Jay, he needed to "see it to believe it." The patients who you see on a daily basis also need to "see it to believe it."

### **J. White and Associates Collection Contest Update**

The reason for this contest was simple: the fourth quarter of the fiscal year tends to be a slower

quarter and most patients have exhausted their dental benefits.

The art of collecting money all of a sudden takes on a new found level of importance, "**CASH IS KING.**"

"How do you get a dental practice to focus on collecting money at the front desk and what could we do to help during this typically slow quarter?" The idea of a contest was born. We succeeded beyond our wildest dreams.

Dental practices participated for first, second, and third place monetary awards based on the percentage of collection increase for the fourth quarter.

When the contest ended, the practices that placed in the top three all did several things really well when it came to collecting money.

#### **1. Financial arrangements.**

Asking patients for money is very uncomfortable. We don't want to be seen as being money-focused. The ability to make financial arrangements that will fit the patient's budget is the backbone of the collection process.

#### **2. They were consistent in using CareCredit.**

The ability to offer a no interest 18-month loan was essential. This offer was made to patients on a consistent basis as a viable

option to make payment for treatment.

#### **3. Cleaning up overdue accounts.**

Our top three practices all did this in one form or another. One practice sent a letter to delinquent patients informing them that they wouldn't be given further appointments until their balance was paid in full. Another practice sent letters offering a 15 percent discount if they paid in full.

Remember, your dental practice is not a bank!



"We are dedicated to the proactive development of prosperity in the personal and professional lives of our clients."

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