



ORTHO2

A Rude America

Maybe, but Full of Opportunity

by **LeeAnn Peniche**

As an avid Today Show viewer, my ears perked up one morning recently when I heard Matt Lauer say "... coming up next, has America lost its manners? Are we becoming a rude America?"

As a patriotic American, at first I was in denial. My first inclination was, "Absolutely NOT." I thought about it a bit longer. The night before I had traveled via plane, taken a taxi, and checked into a hotel; my experience with other travelers and customer service representatives was fresh in my mind. In answering the question Matt asked, my inner-self was screaming "YES! We are indeed living in a rude America!"

It was then I realized we are all becoming accustomed to poor service. We have accepted rude behavior from others and simply put aside common courtesies. It has become so common we not only expect it, but we accept it. This is a GREAT thing for us as orthodontic professionals! Yes, I said GREAT! Why is it great, you ask? All it takes for us to be extraordinary, is a little bit of understanding and the basic kindnesses that are becoming an endangered species in today's society. We simply need to take advantage of the opportunity presented to us. How easy is that? Pretty easy, if you have a few key ingredients to set yourself up for success!

How many of you start each work day with the very best of intentions? We are all too familiar with the old saying about the road to... well, you know where, being paved with good intentions. Being extraordinary takes more than intentions. It takes three simple ingredients, a motivated leader, the entire team and a plan.

First, our fearless leader has to be willing to "walk the talk" every day. It isn't simply enough to tell others to accomplish the practice's goals. It is our job to actively participate by "wowing" our audience every day. Set the example. Go ahead and see that patient who showed up on the wrong day at 4:00 P.M.! Express your understanding about the confusion! I dare you!!! Their reaction will energize you and them.

Second and third, gather all the members of your team and start each day with a plan. By creating a simple morning meeting agenda, you can quickly and effectively plan for a service-oriented day. If you can spot areas of concern coming, you can avert them. Therefore, maintaining that motivated feeling throughout the day. Every team member should have an area to report on each morning. Everyone participates. Discuss things like this: Is there an area in our schedule when we need to pay close attention? Are there any patients in our day who have special needs? How can we meet or exceed those needs? Make a commitment to be nice, not only to the patients, but to each other! Say "please" and "thank you"; compliment each other—OUT LOUD!! When our patients and parents hear us engaging with one another in a positive way; that positive energy will spread; compelling people to talk about your office when they leave you!! Easy, low cost marketing. You can't beat that.

Make sure the end of each day is the exclamation point at the end of a great story. Have an end of the day meeting! Everyone knows it's no fun to play a game without keeping score! How many compliments from your patients did you receive today? Count them up and share them! You'll be surprised at how good it feels to tell another person how much a patient appreciated what they did for them! Who doesn't love a compliment or a thank-you card? Leaving each day on a positive note can carry the team into the next day, ready to start again—wowing their audience. Let the cycle of success begin.

Once you have formed daily habits of meetings and internal success, take it to the next level. Have monthly and annual planning meetings. Use the skills your team has honed. Send them out into the community and to your

Reprinted from

The Newsletter for Members and Friends of Ortho2
January 2007 - Volume 25 Issue 1

referring offices. Continue the momentum. Create fun internal contests—reward your team and yourself; you will all love the best job in the world even more!! And, you will help make America a more courteous nation. ☺

About the Author



LeeAnn Peniche has 26 years in the business and more than 15 years developing Peniche & Associates—a consulting company devoted to enhancing orthodontic practices and creating service with a smile. She is a veteran in the areas of case acceptance, scripting, practice marketing, clinical proficiency, and managing a successful orthodontic practice, and she is especially proud of the proven methods of success her team has developed and implemented in over 600 private orthodontic practices. Peniche & Associates will exhibit at the 2007 Users Group Meeting.