



Building Raving Fans

By David Kent, LMT, NCTMB

Keeping It Simple Series

In my March article, “The 80/20 Rule: Maximizing the Return on Your Investment,” I talked about how to use the 80/20 rule to produce a better return on your investment of time and money in your clinical, chair, outcall, or spa massage practice. I discussed focusing 80 percent of your efforts on the 20 percent of the tasks that matter most, and I stressed the importance of thanking your clients for their business. I also touched on the importance saying thank you to those professionals and others who refer new business. This month, I’d

or from a patient that you referred to another health care provider? It doesn’t take much to say thank you; yet, simply acknowledging someone’s efforts on your behalf can go a long way.

Get clients involved.

When new clients are checking out, I hand them a blank note card and ask them to write a simple thank-you note to the person that referred them. The message is quite simple: “Dear _____, Thank you for referring me to David Kent’s Muscular Pain Relief Center. Today I received my first treatment and

Send personal thank-you cards to first-time referral sources.

It’s not just up to your client to thank the referral source, especially if you want that source to continue sending clients your way. Create or buy some massage-specific thank-you cards, and send them every time you receive a referral from a new source. Make sure that you personally sign the card, too. I sign every thank-you card to new clients, referral sources, and people that have inquired about or ordered my products.

Make a statement.

While it’s probably not necessary to send a thank-you card every time you receive a referral from the same source, you should make a point of consistently acknowledging that person’s contribution to your practice. Do special things throughout the year for your referral sources—not just on holidays or special events. They will appreciate and rewarded your actions with more referrals. I stand out by thanking my referral sources in unique and personal ways.

Some ideas include:

- Offering chair massage for everyone at the referral source’s office or business;
- Dropping off a basket of healthy snacks, fruit, nuts and bottled water (with several business cards attached, of course);
- Offering discounts for sessions;
- Giving away samples of topical analgesic and lotions; and

A word about samples. Everyone loves free stuff, and free samples are an easy way to build raving fans



It only takes a minute to write a thank you or pick up the phone to show your appreciation and build a raving fan.

like to expand on this idea with a few simple “20-percent actions” that will set you apart from your competition and help you build “raving” fans.

Saying “thank you” to someone for referring a new client isn’t just the polite thing to do—it’s a means of maintaining relationships and building new business. When was the last time you got a “Thank You” from your health care provider

I already feel much better! Sincerely, _____.” This simple action only takes a few minutes, and most clients will be more than happy to write a thank-you note, especially when they have just received a treatment that has relieved their pain. This simple gesture makes everyone involved feel good and strengthens the relationships. Make it easy on the client: Provide the envelope and the stamp, and mail it for them.





while producing extra income. I use certain topical applications on my clients during treatment; then I show clients' how to apply them for self-care between sessions. I explain how these topical aids can work in conjunction with stretching, rest, ice and exercise. I also make the analgesics available for purchase at the clinic. Clients often ask for samples to pass out to family, friends and coworkers, many of whom later become my clients. One large company offers two samples with your name and telephone number printed on a product brochure. They'll even ship it to you for free.

Office visits, distance and timing.

To maintain my relationships with the referral sources in my area, I make occasional personal visits. Some of my referral sources have relocated over the years, but they still refer clients to me from time to time. A doctor who was once very close to my office is now almost an hour away. But I still take the time, on occasion, to drive out to see him. Just because a referral source has moved away doesn't mean he or she will stop referring. Remember,

the world is still a small place! While making personal visits is a good method of maintaining your relationships, it's also important to time your visits with discretion. Some referral sources may work odd shifts or weekends, such as a walk-in clinic. I work those visits into the different 20-percent parts of each day during the week. My sources often appreciate that I took the time to stop in and say thank you.

Personalize your visits.

Each meeting is an opportunity to strengthen your professional relationship. If, for example, I am stopping in to a doctor's office, I will take some time to learn about the doctors, nurses and staff members so that I can personalize my visit. During one visit, I learned that a doctor only ate organic food. On my next visit, I brought in some organic fruit and snacks. He appreciated that I took the effort learn about his eating habits and then responded with a customized gift.

Become a support system for your referral sources.

When people need help, they call the people they know and trust. Many

clients call our office asking if we can help people they know. And they want to know whom we recommend if we cannot help. Take care of the referral sources that take care of you.

Maintain consistency.

Rarely will a single conversation, meeting, personal gift or thank-you note build a relationship or produce long-term results. Plan some 20-percent time every week to say thank you so that you can maintain your current relationships and build new ones. For more ideas, check out my past articles at www.massagetoday.com. For more practice building visit www.KentHealth.com, and drop me a line with your great ideas.

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