



# Ask the Experts

What are the key things my staff should be saying/doing when a potential new client calls the clinic?

**T**he most important thing to realise is that this first call is all about building an initial relationship with the caller, so the first impression that they receive is key.

Here are a few things I would recommend that you train your staff to do when picking up the phone to a potentially valuable new client. Please notice I said 'train' your staff – you cannot expect staff to respond the way you would like them to if you are not prepared to spend some time training them.

- Your call handler needs to physically smile when answering the phone – the smile will come across in the tone of their voice.
- Get your staff to introduce themselves by their name as well as the practice, it can be really frustrating and impersonal when you have to ask whom you are speaking with later in a call.
- Ask the caller's name at the beginning of the call, then use it when appropriate to help to build the relationship from the outset.
- Encourage your staff to become great at listening, ensure that they have time to do this effectively as this will be key to building relationships.
- Your staff should be able to discuss your USPs (unique selling points) with your caller. By this I mean that they should be able to credential you as the practitioner, the

practice and the treatments that you offer, differentiating you from your local competition.

- Make sure your staff understand the value of a new enquiry and that they need to be able to collect the caller's contact details. If the caller isn't ready to book an appointment yet, it is good to be able to send follow up information such as newsletters.
- It is vital that you can capture and evidence every enquiry that comes into your practice even if the caller has refused to leave any details – otherwise how will you truly know how effective your frontline call handling is?
- Remember that your staff are there to promote the consultation with you, not the treatment, after all you are the expert/practitioner. Consultation, consultation, consultation!
- The use of language on the phone is very important, especially asking open questions instead of closed. A good example of this is that once your call handler has spent the time building a relationship with the caller they need to initiate the booking of the appointment – to do this they need to ask the client 'when' is a good time to come in – not 'if' they want an appointment.

I have kept these effective tips to a few simple essentials in the hope that, if you are not already doing them, you will find them quick and easy to implement with your staff." **AM**



**Gilly Dickons** is the business development director and founder of Aesthetic Response. Gilly's extensive insight into the aesthetic arena arises from a career spanning 23 years in client servicing, with both TMG and Allergan. With a passion for delivering excellent customer service, Gilly's expertise in call handling management is proving instrumental in aiding aesthetic practices in growing their businesses. Based on the principle that first impressions are the starting point for building a successful and profitable client/practice relationship, Gilly has equipped her team with the skills needed to focus on maximising new client opportunities across all of the aesthetic practices they service.

## DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS TO PUT TO OUR EXPERTS?

Send your question about absolutely anything to do with running an aesthetic business to [vicky@aestheticmed.co.uk](mailto:vicky@aestheticmed.co.uk)