



The Leader in Dental Front Office Solutions & Training

Verbal Skills Of How To Handle Secondary Appointments Wanting Primary Times

When trying to build a productive schedule, we don't want to fill up the schedule with a lot of little appointments. By doing this, we end up with a lot of small appointments scattered all over the day and no room to put primary appointments.

With Block Scheduling or Productive Scheduling, we want to hold the blocks we have for primary appointments but that can be hard when you have a patient that needs a secondary appointment who wants that time of day or that particular day and it falls within that primary block time. It is ok to tell the patient that wants that day and time, we don't have that day/time available, but if something opens up then we will call them to try to move them.

I am not in favor of scripts or using scripts in the dental office; however, the best way to demonstrate this is to use an example. Below is an example of how this looks:

Staff: "Is there a day and time of the week that works best for you to schedule one filling?"

Patient: "I would like around 10:30 on Tuesdays or lunchtime on Thursdays"

Assuming we are still trying to hold those times for primaries, then...

Staff: "Ok - right now we don't have anything available exactly at those times, but I do have a 2 pm on Thursday? Would that work for you? I can book you at 2 pm on Thursday and if something opens up closer to lunch I can call you and move you up?"

The idea here is assuming you don't want to put a small appointment in a large block that would be good for a primary appointment block. Usually when patients say they want a certain time, they usually can be flexible up or down a little bit.

The next vital step to make this work is to put a note in the appointment of what day/time the secondary patient originally told you because if you end up having an opening at lunch, as you fill the schedule with primaries, you are now a hero. You can call them and say, "I worked hard to find a way to make it happen for you and we now have a noon appointment on that same Thursday and I wanted to call and offer it to you first."

Notes: