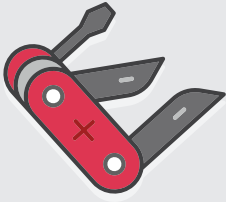




HOW TO

TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU DO
TO GAIN TRUST AND REFERRALS

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HOW DO PEOPLE GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER?

Two questions:

Question #1: How do you get to know someone?

You spend time with them.

You have conversations with them.

You take a personal interest in them and put their needs ahead of yours.

All of that takes serious focus and effort.

Question #2: How do people get to know you?

Well, if building relationships in real life take hard work, establishing one with potential patients or partners is a lot harder.

Most marketing and practice building advice you see focuses on increasing referrals and getting more patients in the front door.

But chasing after more referrals is a sure way to burn out as it can lead to running around the clinic with your hair on fire. The numbers might look impressive from the outside, but it's a hollow shell on the inside.

If you want to build a practice that has maximal impact in people's lives and personally fulfilling there is one thing to construct it upon: relationships.

Surprisingly in this age of social media, you still need quality relationships that are founded on mutual trust and respect.

Even the most introverted therapist still bumps into potential patients, colleagues or referral partners while at the gym, at school events, or at the hairdresser.

And when you do run into people and get into a casual conversation, the inevitable question always seems to come up:

“So, what do you do?”

A primary reason why many therapists don’t have a thriving practice is that they don’t have a clear and compelling answer to this simple question.

I can’t think of any more important than knowing how to explain what you do without sounding confusing, boring or like everyone else.

As a healthcare professional, you want to gain the trust and respect of potential patients or referral partners so they or someone they know may enjoy the benefits of your service.

Because most people botch their answer to the “What do you do?” question, I’ve developed this guide to help you create a response that feels authentic and memorable.

It includes five essential elements and a five-part dialogue to engage people and to grow your practice.

5 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

1. Talk Like a Human Being

Ditch the pitch. Instead of using what many people refer to as an elevator speech. Think of your answer as a “conversation starter”. Please, please please—don’t talk the way you’ve heard you should “sell” yourself.

Do you like hearing someone’s canned sales pitch? Most of us would say no. So why do it? It just doesn’t make a good first impression.

Use sentences that are easy to understand and say. Even though you’ll want to write down your answer, keep it natural and fun.

2. Cut Out the Jargon

Make sure your conversation is free of worthless jargon, even if the other person is an industry insider. If people don't understand a word, you've said you'll be a total snooze.

Plus you'll kill any chance of dialogue. So talk like you would to anyone. Skip the technical words and elaborate descriptions. Use everyday language.

3. Break It Up Into Sentences

It's easy to dump the truck only to overload people with information. You're trying to spark a conversation not give a presentation.

It's easier to process information in bite-size pieces. Break your answer up into two or more chunks of a sentence or two. Throw in a couple of questions.

Give listeners space to think and to respond with questions of their own.

4. It's a Dialogue Not a Monologue

Think of this conversation between two people who care about what the other person has to say.

First, listen to them to understand the problems and the challenges they face. Hear what they are interested in and what their needs are. Then you'll be in a better position to tell them how what you do helps with those challenges.

5. Make Two Versions

You should prepare two different versions of your "What do you do?" answer. One for laypeople and one for industry insiders.

You may need to provide a little context for the version you create for laypeople. Maybe something like this:

"I help people improve their health problems and their wellness. I started my own business because the way medicine is now I had a hard time doing that. Have you ever gone to the doctor only to get 5 minutes of his time? Doctors are so busy these days, it's hard to get them to really listen to you. The way I practice now is to focus on a small group of people and provide them one-on-one care to answer their questions and help solve their problems."

5-PART METHOD TO TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU DO

When I help my coaching clients or students in my courses identify their niche we go through an exercise something like this. It will help you clarify who you help, what you do and why you do it. Take out a sheet of paper and write down a sentence or two to the following questions.

Step One: *Who do you help?*

Describe your ideal patient in one sentence.

Why do you enjoy these patients?

What beliefs, values, experiences do you have in common?

Where do you find these people?

Step Two: *What are they asking for?*

What are their three biggest and most urgent problems?

What do they need?

What are their dreams or desires?

Step Three: *What do you do?*

How do you solve your ideal patients' problems?

How are you uniquely qualified to solve their problems?

How will you provide remarkable value?

Step Four: *How do you make peoples lives better?*

What is the number one result they will experience?

What are three biggest benefits they will receive?

What will it cost you to provide the promised results?

Step Five: *How will you test the market?*

How will you have conversations with prospective clients to test your assumptions?

How will you record and incorporate feedback?

How will you validate your service by "selling" it to a paying client?

Draft a 5-part dialogue formula.

Now it's your turn.

Use the answers to the above questions to write your "conversation starter" using the formula below. You should memorize and practice the first couple "chunks" of your part of the conversation.

Don't be surprised if you revise it several times as you talk with more people.

I HELP___(ideals clients)___ **WITH** _(the problem you solve)_, **BY**_(what makes you different)___ **SO THAT** ___(ideals clients)___ **MAY EXPERIENCE**___(results, benefits)_____.

You don't want this to be a one-way conversation so ask the listener "So, what about you? What do you do?"



CONCLUSION

As you practice your simple dialogue formula with more people, you'll notice greater clarity in your mind on whom you serve and more confidence in what you do. You'll have a greater awareness of people you don't help and work that you could do but shouldn't.

The more you practice having meaningful conversations, the more comfortable you will become and the less rehearsed it will sound. You will hone and own your core message over time.

I have discovered two resources that have been invaluable in helping therapists articulate their professional value, *The Business Model You* by Tim Clark and *Book Yourself Solid* by Michael Porter.

Each has a one-page method of preparing you to talk about what you do through a couple of exercises. If you want concrete guidance on communicating your value, buy the books and go through the exercises. I guarantee it will be time well spent.

If you would like feedback on your dialogue formula, sign up for a free strategy session on my website PaulPotterPT.com, and we can get to know each other.



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