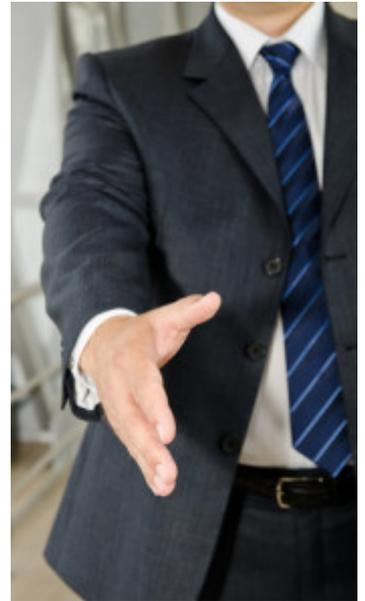


# Introducing Yourself And Your Dental Practice To The Community



*Part of our ongoing series on careers in dentistry. [Charlotte Dentistry®](#) encourages young people to consider the dental profession and welcomes any questions you may have.*

Hurray! You've started your new dental practice, and your shiny new office is open for business. You're starting at a fairly empty appointment book.

It's time to make sure your community knows you're there and accepting NEW patients.

Actually, you should start thinking about this well before you open the doors to your practice. And it will take some significant effort on your part to make sure that people around your new business know about you and what you do. It will also take some investment.

Every day, the average consumer is exposed to about 10,000 messages, ads, news reports, texts, phone calls,

conversations, billboards, mailings, websites, etc. On average, people remember six.

Six.

So with all this clutter, it's no wonder that you have to work to make sure peoples know about something new. Here are some ways to do that.

- Get out and meet people. Go to chamber of commerce meetings, local business group lunches and other community events. Carry a stack of business cards, and let people know you're starting a new practice. You'll get people wishing you luck—and a few asking about how you might could help them.
- Offer services for free to get started. This may include volunteering at community health fairs, or going to a large local employer and offering to help employees better understanding their dental insurance. You'll get back more than you give.
- Use low cost tools like public relations and social media. It doesn't cost a lot to write a news release about your new practice for the local paper and to start a Facebook Page or blog. But it does make sure a lot of people know about you.
- Be smart with signage; if your practice is on a busy street make sure you take advantage of it with professional attractive signage. People don't think about a dentist every day; they usually only pay attention if they have a problem or it's time for a checkup. Being visible when their awareness goes up is a good way to get a call for an appointment.
- Make sure your website reflects the quality of your business. More than 70% of initial meaningful contacts between a business and a new customer now come thru a website.
- Invest in smart advertising. It's much easier to target advertising today, especially with online services and

direct mail. Work with professionals to target key demographics for your practice. You'll save money while building business.

Are you a new dentist or considering a career in dentistry? Are you looking for sound business suggestions?

Would You Like To Know More? Use our "[Ask the Expert](#)" feature of our website to get questions answered.

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## Starting A Dental Practice: General Or Specialist – Which Is Best For You?

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As they start looking at their careers (and how they want to develop them), many dental students begin weighing whether or not it would be better to have a general dentistry practice or to concentrate on a specialty.



There are advantages to each option, and it is important to study each one in order to have a solid plan before starting a dental practice.

The demand for general dentistry continues to grow, and many new dentists will find they can be successful in general dentistry from the moment they leave school. Developing a practice in general dentistry is aided by the fact that virtually everyone needs general dental care, and even in cities with established dentists, there are locations where a new dentist can do well. General dentistry requires less training than a specialty, and graduates can get through school faster and begin earning an income to pay off school loans more quickly.

Specialties, however, are more lucrative in the long run. Currently, the American Dental Association recognizes nine specialty areas of practice: Dental Public Health, Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics, Prosthodontics, and Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics.

There is more training involved with specialties, both in dental school and in keeping abreast of new procedures and technologies after graduation, but specialists typically have patient loads that compensate for the extra investment. Many of their patients are referred by general dentistry practices.

Many practices may ultimately combine both options, as Charlotte Dentistry does with general dentistry, where our general practice dentists have successfully completed extensive specialized training in Orthodontics, Prosthodontics and Endodontics. This has allowed us to continue building our practice and given us opportunities to better serve patients who need specialized care at one familiar location.

If you would like to learn more, use the "[Ask the Expert](#)" feature of our website.

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# Growing Your New Dental Practice



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Starting a dental practice is an exciting (and a little scary at times) as we remember when Charlotte Dentistry was founded some 35 years ago. Building a practice takes an investment in time, in people, in business resources, and especially in today's world, technology.

People are the first key to success. For a new dentist to be successful, he or she first must find skilled, professional people who also build the practice by providing the proper support, patient relations, and effective office skills. Many talented dentists fail in their own practices simply because they don't have the support they need for the business side of the operations. Charlotte Dentistry has been blessed with dedicated professionals on the business side of our practice (many of whom have been with us for many years). They make it possible for our dental professionals to concentrate on giving patients the best possible care.

Investing back into the practice is the next key to success. It's tempting for a young dentist, who may be just getting married, starting a family, and establishing a home to take home many of the profits from the business. But the dental professionals who succeed are the ones who put money back into their businesses to make sure they have the right equipment and people to keep the practice moving forward. It's an ongoing process: Charlotte Dentistry continues to invest back into the practice, because we know our business is continually changing, and we have to keep up.

Finally, maybe the most important key in growing your new dental practice, is investing back into the patients' and the community you serve. A new dental practice can advertise and promote (and it must), but it must also build trust with patients and people who may someday become patients. Word of mouth for a good dental reputation is the best advertising your practice can "buy".

You do that one person at a time. So build trusting relationships with everyone you come in contact with and your practice will grow quickly!

That's why we still make sure we take time to answer every question that a patient may ask. That's why we sponsor community events, and why our staff participate in scores of different community organizations. The people we serve have been very good to us. We feel a responsibility to give back. And by giving back, we make our practice that much stronger.

To any new dentist out there who's just starting out: We wish you the best of luck. It's a great way to make a living and a great way to help a lot of people.

Would You Like To Know More? Or just need a sounding board, use our "[Ask The Expert](#)" feature on our website.

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# The Process of Opening Your Own Dental Practice

*Part of our ongoing series on careers in dentistry. Charlotte Dentistry® encourages young people to consider the dental profession and welcomes any questions you may have.*

Congratulations! You've completed your dental degree and passed your licensing exam.

What do you do now?



Starting a dental practice is a daunting task, because you face the challenge of building a patient base, acquiring equipment, working with staff, and learning about the business aspects of a practice.

Many brand-new dentists choose to join an established practice while learning more about the business and building a base of satisfied patients. Over the years, Charlotte Dentistry has helped many fine professionals begin their careers this way. Some have even chosen to say to continue to contribute to our organization's growth. The big advantage of this is that you're not having to invest in a whole new office (especially on top of dental school loans), and you get the benefit of being mentored by experienced dentists who have been in practice for many years.

But some young dentists may choose to build their own dental office from day one. There are resources that can help; states or cities may provide incentives to work in remote locations where dentists haven't been available so that residents have access to care. In some cases, new dentists can work off student loan debt or get equipment by agreeing to work in these communities for a certain period of time.

Other organizations, such as the military and the Veterans Administration, may also provide incentives—and a starting point—for a dentist fresh out of school.

There are numerous ways to build a practice, and for good professionals, following good business models will lead to success and a rewarding career.

Would You Like To Know More? Or have any questions about opening your own dental practice? Use the "[Ask The Expert](#)" feature to receive sound business management suggestions from our professionals.

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## Preparing for Dental School

*Part of our ongoing series on careers in dentistry. [Charlotte Dentistry®](#) encourages young people to consider the dental profession and welcomes any questions you may have.*

We believe dentistry to be a fantastic career opportunity (in fact, experts suggest that we may have a shortage of dentists in a few years). For the right person, dental school can be a challenging and rewarding time.



How do you prepare?

If you've made the decision to go to dental school, you're already immersed in the courses you need to qualify. But it doesn't hurt to also prepare physically and psychologically for the challenge.

Like most professional disciplines, dental school demands great personal responsibility, and it's designed to weed out students who aren't willing to put in the work and focus to become a dentist.

Most dental school programs are three to four years in length. If you're pursuing a specialty like orthodontics or surgery, there may be additional years of course work to achieve these advanced degrees.

During dental school, you'll spend lots of time in lab courses, building skills in biomedical sciences AND in specific practice areas like dental imaging and dentures.

In your later years, you'll begin working with patients in clinical projects under the supervision of dentists. You'll perform treatments like cleaning and filling. And you'll be taught the business aspects of a dental practice.

Once your coursework is complete, you're ready to take the examinations to earn your license, and begin your career as a DDS or DMD. What to know the difference, click [here](#).

Would You Like To Know More? Are you in fact preparing for dental school? Please feel free to use the "[Ask The Expert](#)" feature of our website to get answers. Or check the education section of the American Dental Association website [here](#).

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## Off To College And Ultimately Dental School

Part of our ongoing series on careers in dentistry. [Charlotte Dentistry®](#) encourages young people to consider the dental profession, and welcomes any questions you may have.

So you're headed off to college, and you're considering the idea of becoming a dentist. What do you study?



There is no formal undergraduate major required for students who want to go to dental school. But most dental schools have well-defined requirements for science courses, including chemistry, physics, math, and biology. Many students considering dental school choose a science major for their undergraduate work, which prepares them for a postgraduate dental program.

However, this is not the only path to dental school. A number

of colleges offer pre-dental programs, which can accelerate the student's course of study. In some cases, instead of completing a bachelor's degree, the pre-dental program allows the student to move through undergraduate studies faster and begin graduate work at a dental school level. Such programs may allow a student to complete a dental school degree in fewer years by including courses such as organic chemistry and microbiology required by dental schools.

A pre-dental program also helps students prepared for the [Dental Admissions Test](#) (DAT) required for admission into dental school.

Either approach to undergraduate study can provide the right preparation for dental school. It depends on your personal preferences, schools you prefer to attend, and—in some cases—program cost.

Need to know more? High school guidance counselors can also provide information. In some communities, the Boy Scouts offer an Explorer program that features dentistry as a career. The American Dental Association website has a special section devoted to education, just click [here](#).

Would You Like To Know More? Use the "[Ask The Expert](#)" feature of our website to get answers. We are always happy to help!