

Rehearsing Consultation Scenarios: Exercise 2

A consultation is a tremendous opportunity to build a practice-patient relationship that results in a successful LVC. This involves creating the infrastructure needed (effective call processing and patient tracking, a welcoming practice environment, staff support and training) and effectively handling the consultation.

Purpose: This exercise is intended to give your team the opportunity to practice the skills they will need to be most effective in a consultation. Remember, practice doesn't necessarily make perfect, but it does make permanent. So it's important to practice top-notch skills and to actually do the exercise as if it were a real consultation.

Materials:

- Timer
- Cards with a single phrase that describes a prospective patient's motivation, objection, or situation

Examples of phrases:

Afraid of doctors

Wants to have the procedure next week

Needs technical information

Wants to correct their vision before upcoming wedding

Not sure they can afford the procedure

Can't wear their contacts due to dry eye

Fear they will not see well after the procedure

Their best friend just had the procedure at your office

Instructions: Choose roles for each staff member who will normally participate in a consultation. One staff member should play the role of the patient. Have a timer handy so that you can keep track of wait times. If you can, assign a person to observe. This person would write down how the consultation goes and what information is gathered. This is also a good person to track the wait times. Make sure that each staff member gets a chance to practice multiple roles, and to have fun.

Present the patient with a card that has a phrase written on it that describes either their motivation, objection, or situation. The practice staff don't see this card. One of the objectives of the exercise is to see if they are able to discover this information.

Afterward, discuss what challenges and successes your team encountered. Identify problems, new ideas, action plans, project volunteers, target dates, and whatever else you need to implement what you have learned from the exercise. Follow up with an e-mail summarizing your accomplishments in the rehearsal, and set a date for a follow-up meeting with the group to evaluate implementation of action plans and make adjustments as needed.