



5 Secrets to Perpetual Referrals

While networking is the key secret to continued referrals, incredible customer service is a necessary prerequisite. Word-of-mouth referrals are typically the largest contributor to new clients at private practices. To receive those word-of-mouth referrals, your customer service must be stellar to keep your current clients coming back and talking to others about your business.

1. *Delight Your Clients*

One study reviewed customer experiences (Crosby and Johnson, 2006). The vast majority of companies believe they provide superior customer experiences. However, only 8% of their customers actually agreed with this belief. As therapists, we understand this “Fundamental Attribution Bias.” As a private practitioner, it is important to assume that only 8% of your customers are satisfied. Continually look for ways to bring outstanding customer service. This will ensure “Customer Delight” vs. “Customer Satisfaction.” Customer Delight is more affective and memorable, than customer satisfaction. Customer Delight requires out-of-the ordinary experience. Customer Delight will bring you endless word-of-mouth referrals. Genesis Assist can help you find new and creative ways to “win with every client, every time”.

2. *Make Free Lunch a Reality*

My respected colleague Dr. Eric Scalise, Ed.D/LPC used the “free lunch” approach to launch his practice. He spent 6 months taking pastors out to lunch. He was soon booked and needed to hire additional counselors. 18 years later, the practice continues to receive regular referrals from those same pastors.

3. *Write and Distribute a Private Practice Announcement*

Send to local MDs, schools, churches and other community organizations. Postcards with great graphics are eye-catching and don't have to be opened and read like typical letters.

4. *Open House Lunches*

Genesis Counseling Center regularly invites pastors, teachers and referral sources to our lunch team meetings to “meet and greet” our clinicians. Referral sources appreciate being able to refer to someone they know, like and trust. It also gives the client confidence when the referring provider can say, “I met Dr. Jones and she specializes in this area.”

5. Thank your Referral Sources

Consider a phone call or sending a brief hand-written note on your practice stationery each time another professional makes a referral. One psychiatrist wrote me such a note years ago, and ended with the line “It’s a pleasure to serve this remarkable young man with you.” It spoke of the psychiatrist’s compassionate attitude toward our client. I have never stopped referring to that psychiatrist.

6. Look for Ways to Give to Your Potential Referral Sources (Bonus Secret!)

By finding ways to add value to your potential referral sources you demonstrate that your focus is on truly helping others versus just asking them for help by referring clients. For example, share new findings in research that help demonstrate the value of therapy and/or other services you provide to their clients.

As your private practice partner, Genesis Assist can help you develop simple and effective marketing plans that work for you to help you build and grow your referral sources.

Visit us on-line at www.GenesisAssist.com



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