

# Financial Disclosure

- ▶ I have no financial interest in this topic.

## Setting the Stage for Premium Lens Cataract Surgery

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### Concord Eye Center and Concord, NH

- ▶ Population: 43,000
- ▶ Median income for a family: \$73,457
- ▶ General Ophthalmology, Cataract, Retina, Plastics, Pediatrics, Cornea/LASIK, Glaucoma, Optometry/contact lenses
- ▶ 12 Medical Doctors, of which 5 are cataract surgeons
- ▶ 4 Optometrists
- ▶ Full-service optical shop with on-site surfacing lab
- ▶ 2 office locations

## About me:

- ▶ Ten years in Ophthalmology
- ▶ Refractive Surgery Counselor
- ▶ Marketing Manager
- ▶ Ophthalmic Photographer
- ▶ Cataract Surgery Counselor for Premium IOLs
- ▶ Technician
- ▶ Bachelors Degree from University of New Hampshire
- ▶ COA (JCAHPO)

## Suggestions–

- ▶ In order to increase PIOL conversions, you need a counselor who possesses the following qualifications/attributes...
- ▶ NATURAL FRIENDLINESS
- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Technician or someone with great aptitude for science/medicine

## Our Practice Protocol

- ▶ Two counselors; one for standard lenses, one for ‘premium’ lenses
- ▶ Doctor sees patient in exam room, determines best lens
- ▶ Sends patient to appropriate counselor
- ▶ Counselor educates and schedules A scan #1
- ▶ At A scan #1, patient meets with counselor to do paperwork and schedule surgery
- ▶ If premium IOL is chosen, patient is scheduled for A scan #2

## Sales vs. Medicine

- ▶ You should avoid a **hard sell**, but selling is part of the picture. It is good if the counselor has some selling experience, but he/she needs the aforementioned qualities as well. I would argue that those are more important.
- ▶ Overall, the lenses and the doctors’ credentials should speak for themselves.

## Sales Strategy

- ▶ The most effective sales strategy is a great message
- ▶ Research shows that the #1 inhibitor to sales achievement is “inability to communicate value message”. You need to be able to communicate why your solution (PIOLs) is different, better and **worth more**.

## Sales #1: Demonstrate Value

- ▶ Tell stories with contrast
- ▶ Tell both the “before” and the “after” story. The contrast between the two creates a powerful perception of value. The bigger the contrast, the greater the perceived value.

## Sales #2: Position and Differentiate

- ▶ Patients: “why change?” “why now?”
- ▶ The competitor here is the status quo so you need to help your patients make the decision to change **BEFORE** you help them make the decision to choose (the PIOL)

## Sales #3: Tell a Memorable Story

- ▶ Have your facts straight
- ▶ Connect with patients through stories
- ▶ Personal stories/metaphors/analogies brings your message alive better than facts and data
- ▶ Sharing stories helps relationships change

## Setting the stage

- ▶ Comb through schedules to find Cataract consults
- ▶ Send those patients a packet in the mail with a well-written letter introducing them to the PIOLs and giving fundamental information about cataract surgery
- ▶ Include relevant brochures
- ▶ Don't mention cost!
- ▶ Encourage them to call you ahead of time with questions
  
- ▶ This is planting the seed and getting them excited about the possibility of reduced dependence on glasses and giving them more freedom
- ▶ This makes them more likely to downplay the cost once they actually meet with you and the surgeon

## Setting the stage (Continued)

- ▶ Don't just tell your patients that they should get 'x' lens
- ▶ The surgeon needs to RECOMMEND the lens and plant the seed
- ▶ Believe in the technology
- ▶ The surgeon needs to answer the patient's questions about surgery and the lens, but shouldn't get into \$\$\$
- ▶ Make the recommendation then hand patient over to counselor

## Meeting the patient

- ▶ Clean off your desk; make it neat and tidy
- ▶ **DON'T KEEP THE PATIENT WAITING**
- ▶ Have brochures/literature handy (including patient financing options)
- ▶ Have a conversation and build rapport with your patient
- ▶ "I see Dr. 'X' is recommending cataract surgery, and he thinks you're a great candidate for 'X' lens. What are your thoughts and feelings about this?"
- ▶ "I know you've been given a lot of information today and I don't want you to be scared. I'm here to help you navigate this process. You don't have to make a decision on the lens today, but what has to happen today is education."

## Engage him/her in conversation about their lifestyle!

- ▶ Start a conversation. Remember those?! The primitive version of texting and Facebook 😊
- ▶ Don't get into \$\$\$ yet
- ▶ Ask the patient what he/she likes to do for fun... what they do for work (if still working)?
- ▶ What do they have for hobbies?
- ▶ Do they have grandchildren they are active with?
- ▶ How satisfied are they with having to wear glasses?
- ▶ What is it worth to them to be relatively free from them?

## Lifestyle continued...

- ▶ Actively listen to their concerns/questions/answers
- ▶ Patient: “Well, I love spending time on the lake in the Summer”
- ▶ Patient: I am a runner... a golfer... a skier...
- ▶ CAPITALIZE on these answers!!!
- ▶ Gear the conversation toward how much they love these activities and what a pain glasses and contacts can be; always having to fumble with them, etc.

## Talking about cost

- ▶ At this point, the patient has decided that he/she WANTS this upgraded lens.
- ▶ They are aware that there is an out-of-pocket cost.
- ▶ Tell them the cost and immediately follow it up with information about “12 months same as cash pricing” (0% interest)
- ▶ Don't be apologetic about the cost!
- ▶ Patients are used to spending money for better vision
- ▶ They're also used to spending money to BUY BETTER PRODUCTS
- ▶ Remember, patients are consumers first

## Building excitement!

- ▶ Get the patient excited about how their lifestyle will be enhanced with reduced dependence on glasses due to their choice to upgrade their lens
- ▶ \*\* You still haven't talked about money! You're adding value to it first.

## Multifocal

- ▶ “Lens on the go”
- ▶ Example: Golfer
- ▶ “Golfers LOVE multifocal”!
- ▶ They can see the ball on the tee and they can follow it all the way after the shot.
- ▶ The loss of the distraction from glasses= a more enjoyable time out on the course with friends

# Toric

- ▶ Dr. “X” recommends the Toric lens for you because your astigmatism makes you a great candidate for it. The goal of the Toric lens is to give you reduced dependency on glasses for distance, but you will need readers.
- ▶ The Toric lens will give you much sharper vision
- ▶ If you can relate, engage the patient in your shared hatred of glasses and/or contacts.

# Summary

- ▶ Make these patients realize that they’ve earned this for themselves
- ▶ They deserve to enhance their lifestyle; they’re not too old
- ▶ When possible, have a family member present with the patient. Often, a spouse/child will encourage the patient that they should “go for it”.
- ▶ Don’t just schedule; build rapport
- ▶ Avoid a hard sell
- ▶ Add value to the options
- ▶ Make sure you and the surgeon have thoroughly educated the patients because education is necessary to understand the benefits
- ▶ Educate and offer the PIOLs every time to every patient
- ▶ Find your comfort zone
- ▶ Be consistent in your approach
- ▶ If a patient says “no” to upgrading; as long as they know what they’re saying “no” to... you can be OK with it!

# Examples

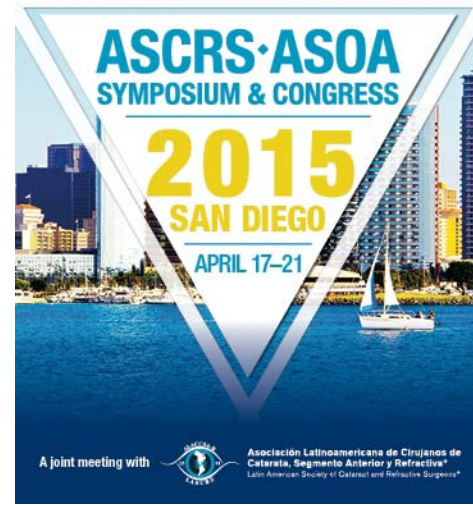
- ▶ Some patients simply aren’t into upgrading
- ▶ Maybe they can’t afford it, even with a financing plan
- ▶ I live in New England. Some of my patients are tough “old yankees” who just won’t budge. No matter how hard I work, they aren’t buying. That’s fine. You can’t win ‘em all! If an 85 year old patient tells you “I’ve worn glasses my whole life and don’t mind it one bit”.... well, that’s hard to argue with.
- ▶ If you’ve pulled out all the stops and they just want the basic lens, smile and say, “Well that’s completely up to you. Your doctor wants you to be aware of the options available to you, but the choice is yours”.
- ▶ If you feel that you’ve done your job of **educating** them and you are sure they fully understand what they’re going to miss out on... LET IT GO.

Crabby Road

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Thank you for your attention!  
I hope you have enjoyed San Diego



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