

Dr. Jacqueline Theis: How to Find Your Niche

Thursday October 27th, 2016

Meeting Minutes:

1. Niche: an animal within their own ecosystem
 - a. Current: Sport Vision at UCB, Kaiser, SOLution (Nat'l Private Practice Leadership network), Alameda Contra Costa County Research
 - b. What is Sports Vision?
 - i. Vision care needs of athletes (most have above avg acuity so don't get proper vision care)
 - ii. Legally need to have sports Rx for college athletics
 - c. Special vision needs for Athletes
 - i. Often over-minused for contrast (essential in athletics)
 1. Not meant to be worn everyday, they need to have a separate daytime Rx (You don't wear cleats to class)
 - ii. Sports vision CL Rx: needs to be tight fit for movement
 1. Each sport has specific needs
 - iii. UV Protection and lens tinting (different tints for different weather conditions and sports)
 - iv. Nike: uses special Nike golf balls that can be seen better with purple tinted lenses
 - v. Binocular Vision: extremely important athletics
2. Ocular Health
 - a. Athletes often suffer from other ocular problems that don't get treated because of there gen. good acuity
 - i. Ex. People in their 20's with untreated glaucoma
3. Post Concussion Management
 - a. Even helmet use isn't enough to prevent concussions
 - b. 0-24 hrs. Shearing followed by inflammation
 - c. Belief used to be that Double vision and blurred vision were the only problems
 - d. Often Problems are BV problems
4. Life at Kaiser
 - a. Co-managing ocular diseases with ophthalmologists (previously ODs only did refraction at Kaiser)
 - b. Moving towards a future of Medical Optometry
5. Creating a Niche everywhere you work
 - a. Its important to push the boundaries of practice (even though COA and AOA state that an OD must not specialize)
 - b. Sometimes its also important to send patient to other ODs who do specialize in their particular condition
 - c. Knowing your limits can be the best way to serve your patients
6. Why I like forming a Niche
 - a. Especially in a saturated environment like the bay area

- b. Putting yourself in a situation where you have no competition
 - c. To become a big fish in a small pond: recognize your strengths
 - i. Knowing why you want to become an OD is a good clue to finding those answers
 - d. Being a fearless athlete: has its drawbacks: 8 concussions by senior year in HS
7. Path to being an OD
- a. After entering Bucknell, concussion problems persisted
 - i. 20/10 VA but still went to an OD, NPC = 40cm (no selfies!)
 - ii. Pair of glasses solved all her problems with headaches and attention problems
 - b. This experience helped cement her desire to become an OD
 - i. Admission to Berkeley: Orientation group by personality color= She ended up being the only one in her group (the fun, funny, creative, fearless group)
 - ii. Realization that she was different from her classmates: (that could be complimentary to within her class and not a detriment)
8. Path after Graduating Berkeley
- a. No one would be surprised about the path she chose (only perhaps that she stuck with it (although Dr. Hoff heartily disagreed))
9. Mistakes:
- a. Trying to sell the idea of Sports vision to those who didn't know they needed it and didn't know who she was.
 - b. If you are not trusted no matter how good you are, no one will know
 - i. Trust: the difference between repeat business (they see you because its convenient) vs. loyal business (patients that only want to see you)
 - c. Trust: "Years to build seconds to break"
 - i. Worked for an OD that had built years of trust and patient loyalty through personal relationships
 - 1. Building personal relationships may not always be your strong point
 - d. Gimmicks:
 - i. Discounts, don't build patient loyalty but being genuine does
10. Building Patient Loyalty
- a. Example of Liz at "Ritzy Reuben's" Hairdresser in Point Richmond with amazing yelp reviews, and great online pics (demonstrating there love of the job)
 - i. Made special hours to accommodate her busy schedule (made her feel like she was going out of her way without making it seem like an inconvenience)
 - 1. Had great personality and office atmosphere (and offered her a glass of wine)
 - b. Online glasses: you can't compete with the prices online
 - i. Also many people go online to avoid pushy sales people

- c. Ex. Online presence that offers interactive experience that enhances your IN PERSON office experience

11. Great Sources for finding your Niche

- a. Book: Start with Why by Simon Sinek
- b. Podcast: The Doctor Paradox (<http://thedoctorparadox.com/>)