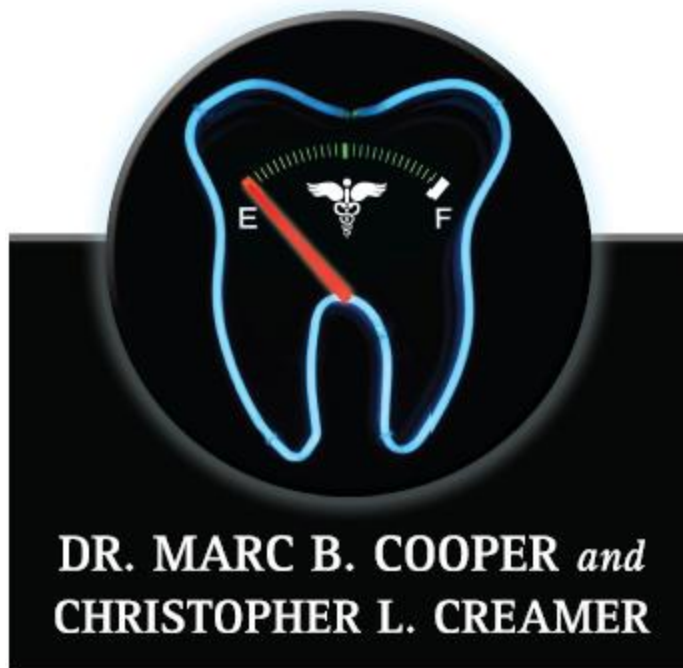


RUNNING ON EMPTY

Answers to Questions Dentists
Have about the Recession



DR. MARC B. COOPER *and*
CHRISTOPHER L. CREAMER



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Matt King edited all parts of the book, Running on Empty (2009), from which this chapter was taken.

Please feel free to forward this via email to whomever you believe would benefit.

Thank You!

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Dr. Marc B. Cooper

Christopher Creamer

2009

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NEW PATIENT REFERRALS

I live and practice in an area that has been hard hit. For the last year my new patient numbers have steadily decreased. Until new patient numbers started to decline, I used a number of marketing pieces: yellow pages, radio, mailers by zip code, and various promotions. They all seem to have stopped working. What do I do now?



Broadcast marketing is sending a message or promotion through an outside medium such as Yellow Pages, mailers, radio, TV, or biplane with a streamer off its tail. It's not you speaking but someone else speaking for you. The problem is, in the new economy, broadcast marketing doesn't deliver.

Do a simple analysis. Go back six months. List all your new patients. Make several columns, name of patient, followed by where they came from: referred by existing patient, print ad, radio, Yellow pages, and other. Then in an adjoining column enter which patients accepted treatment and finally, in the last column how much revenue the patient generated. Measure and compare.

Most likely, the column with the most patients, the column with the most case acceptance, and the column with the most money collected, belongs to patients referred by other patients.

The money you spend on brochures, radio ads, TV, Yellow Pages, magazines, sides of buses, Websites, shopping carts, tattoos or Google ads will never come close to meeting your expectations. Like it or not, between 60 to 80 per cent of your patients in a fee-for-service practice come from existing patients through word of mouth marketing. *People choose a dentist based on a friend, a colleague, someone they trust, telling them about you.*

We recommend that you become very good at word-of-mouth marketing. With word-of-mouth marketing, you come from a place of contribution. You motivate that part of your patient that wants to make a difference for others. To stimulate that part, you need to have them see the *value* in their relationship with you and the work you do. And, that if others had this *value*, it would make a real difference for them as well.

Therefore, you need to educate and train yourself and your staff to generate effective conversations that promote the patient's recognition of that value they receive. How do you do this? This can't be described effectively in the space of this book since value is a perception and is always related to experience. You can't recreate an experience by talking about it. Experience occurs "on the field," reading about it is "in the stands."

The point is to have your patients leave the office clearly in touch with the value of your office, fully in touch with the experience of being there. People share from their experience, not facts or information. It's this sharing with friends, family and coworkers that implicitly and explicitly communicates the experience and it's this shared experience that motivates new patients to call your office.

An experience of excellent customer service, outstanding patient care by a staff that listens and responds with authentic concern is the experience that will generate word-of-mouth business—in both good and bad economic times.

In our work, we develop doctors and staffs to interact with patients in a way that patients realize the value, can recreate the experience and then envision who they will recommend becoming patients in the office.



BOOKS by Dr. Marc Cooper

Mastering the Business of Practice

Partnerships in Dental Practice

SOURCE; The Genesis of Success in Business & Life

Running on Empty; Answers to Questions Dentists Have about the Recession

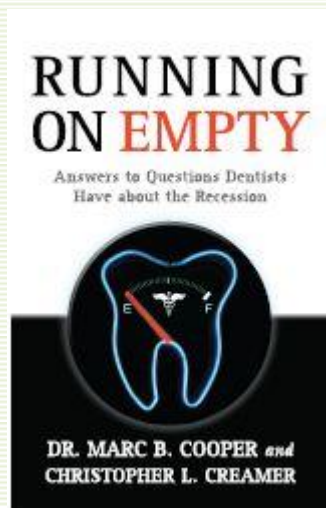
Valuocity; A Fable about Dental Practice (Fall, 2009)

Available at Amazon.com

***‘RUNNING ON EMPTY’
ORDER INFORMATION***

*The book will be available July 31st at
www.Amazon.com for single copies.*

*For 50 or more copies, please contact
The Mastery Company at (425) 806-8830*



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