

Opening a New Practice

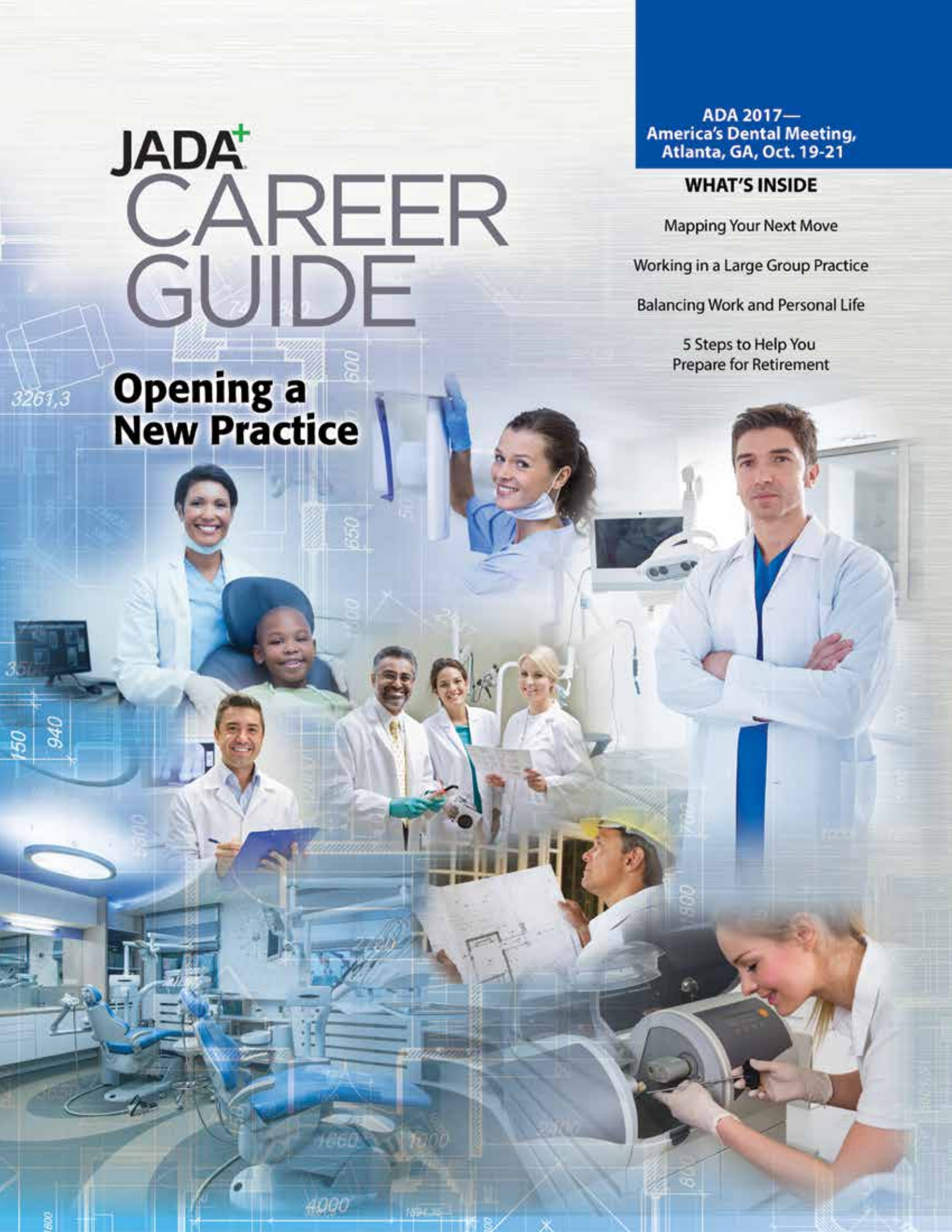
WHAT'S INSIDE

Mapping Your Next Move

Working in a Large Group Practice

Balancing Work and Personal Life

5 Steps to Help You Prepare for Retirement



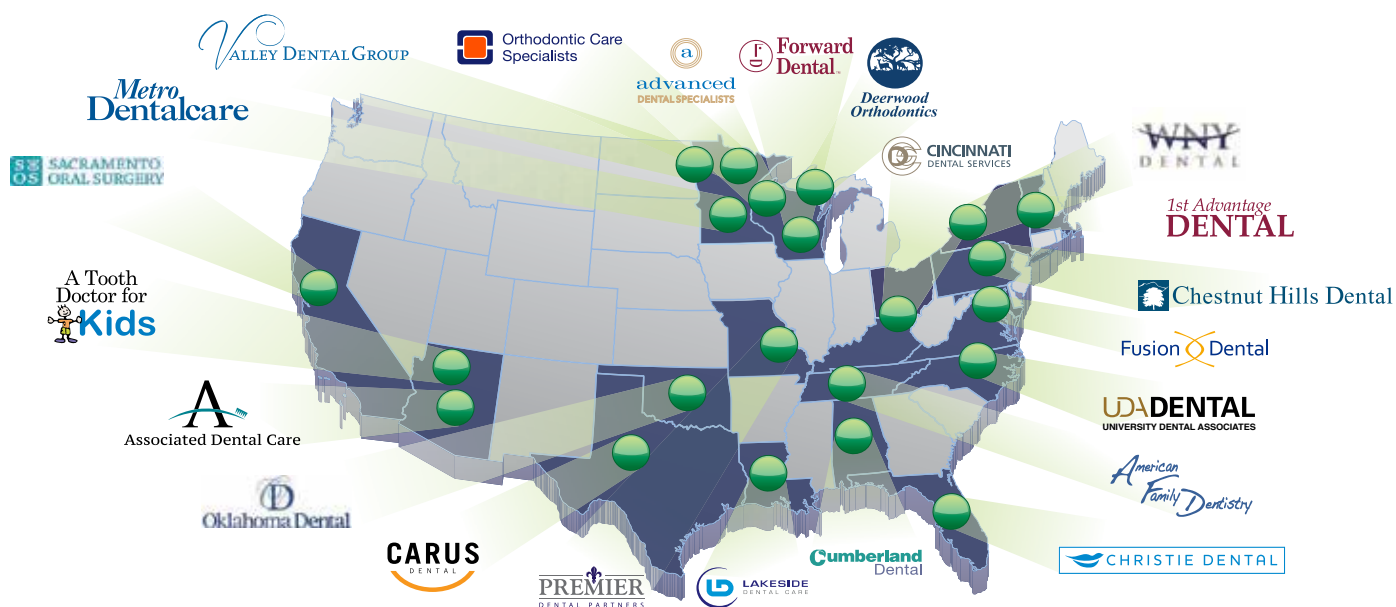


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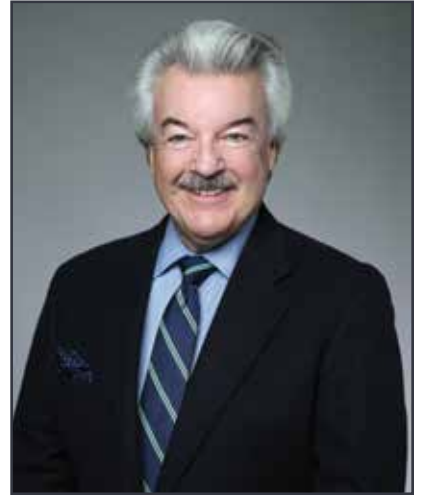
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Welcome

About JADA+ Career Guide 2017

Welcome to ADA 2017!

We are pleased to present ADA meeting attendees with this special JADA+ Career Guide — a publication designed to offer tips and resources for enhancing your career in dentistry whether you are just starting out, in mid-career or looking ahead to retirement.

This edition of the JADA+ Career Guide offers helpful information from the ADA Center for Professional Success and Dental Practice Success, a quarterly digital magazine produced in cooperation with the CPS that features articles from practice management experts on a variety of dental practice issues.

This guide covers tips on opening a dental practice, mapping out your future, a first-person experience about working in a large group practice, balancing work and personal life and preparing for retirement. We hope you find this useful.

You can find more information about these topics at the ADA Center for Professional Success website, Success.ADA.org, and in the current and past issues of Dental Practice Success at ADA.org/DPS.

Michael D. Springer,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael D. Springer". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "M" and a cursive "Springer".

Senior Vice President, Business and Publishing
American Dental Association



3

Welcome

Michael D. Springer,
Senior Vice President,
Business and Publishing
American Dental Association



10

Mapping Your Next Move:
New Dentist Strategies
for Success

8

Opening a New Practice:
What Dentists Need to Know
Arlene Furlong



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Contents



14

Working In a Large Group Practice: A New Dentist Blogs About Her Experience

Dr. Bianca Velayo



18

Separation Anxiety: 5 Tips for Balancing Your Work Life and Personal Life

Dr. Lisa Knowles

20

The Art of Transitioning Well: 5 Steps to Help You Prepare for Retirement

Dr. William van Dyk



Schulich Dentistry at Western University, one of Canada's leading research-intensive universities, is seeking applicants for a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Dental Materials Science. In accordance with the regulations set for Tier 2 Canada Research Chairs (<http://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx>), the candidate will be an excellent emerging researcher who has demonstrated research creativity and innovation with a track record of publication in leading peer-reviewed journals, and the potential to achieve international recognition in the fields of biomaterials science, regenerative medicine/dentistry, implantology or oral reconstructive surgery. The CRC position is for a five year period, with the possibility of renewal for one additional term.

Tier 2 Chairs are intended for exceptional emerging scholars (i.e., candidates must have less than 10 years of experience as an active researcher in their field at the time of nomination). Applicants who are more than 10 years from having earned their highest degree (and where career breaks exist, such as maternity, parental or extended sick leave, clinical training, etc.) may have their eligibility for a Tier 2 Chair assessed through the program's Tier 2 justification process, please contact [Research Development Western](#) for more information.

Please consult the Canada Research Chairs website for full program information, including further details on eligibility criteria: http://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/program-programme/nomination-mise_en_candidature-eng.aspx#s3

The successful candidate must have a DDS and PhD or equivalent with at least 3 years postdoctoral research experience and will be appointed in a Probationary (tenure-track) position at the level of Assistant Professor. Consideration will be given for an appointment at the rank of Associate Professor in a Probationary (tenure-track) or Tenured Appointment, depending upon qualifications and experience. Compensation for this position will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. Ideal candidates will also possess qualifications in one of the dental specialties identified above. Preferred applicants will have demonstrated experience in translational dental research.

Western University recognizes alternate career paths and/or career interruptions can impact research achievements. Candidates are encouraged to explain in their application, circumstances of how different career paths and/or career interruptions may have impacted them.

The successful applicant will be appointed to an appropriate Division in Schulich Dentistry. In addition to the CRC, Dentistry plans to recruit two additional research faculty to complement existing research interests that include wound healing and tissue regeneration, fibrosis, oral pathology as well as salivary biology and proteomics. The Oral Biology laboratories and offices are well equipped and provide access to state-of-the-art instrumentation including advanced imaging, gene array facility, real-time PCR, mass spectrometry, micro-CT imaging, biomaterials synthesis and characterization, advanced protein and peptide purification and identification instrumentation such as HPLC, FPLC and nano-HPLC.

It is expected that the successful candidate will lead a new area of oral health research in regenerative medicine/dentistry and form appropriate collaborations with clinicians and basic research scientists in Dentistry and the School. The successful candidate will also participate in the teaching and service activities of Schulich Dentistry, and be considered for a cross- appointment in an appropriate basic science department within the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry.

Western University is a research-intensive university that graduates students from a full range of academic and professional programs. For additional information about: the University please see: www.uwo.ca; Schulich Dentistry, see www.schulich.uwo.ca/dentistry; and the city of London see <http://www.ledc.com/resources>.

Please send a detailed curriculum vitae, a brief description of research accomplishments and future plans, copies of representative publications and the names of three referees to:

Dr. Rick Bohay
Chair, Tier 2, Dental Materials Science Selection Committee Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
1151 Richmond Street
Western University
London, Ontario CANADA N6A 3K7
selection.committee@schulich.uwo.ca

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Review of applications will begin after October 15, 2017. Anticipated start date is January 1st, 2018 or as negotiated.

Please ensure that the form available at the link below is completed and included in your application submission:

<http://www.uwo.ca/facultyrelations/faculty/Application-FullTime-Faculty-Position-Form.pdf>

Positions are subject to budget approval. Applicants should have fluent written and oral communication skills in English. The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Western is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from women, members of racialized groups/visible minorities, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, and persons of any gender identity or gender expression.

In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process. If you require accommodations for interviews or other meetings, please contact Brigitte Neale at Brigitte.Neale@Schulich.uwo.ca phone 519-661-2111 ext. 82698.

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School of Dental Medicine

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine is inviting applications and nominations for a full-time faculty member at the Associate Professor or Professor level for the Chair of Department of Comprehensive Care. The Department includes the Divisions of Operative Dentistry, Medicine, Inter-professional Education, Nutrition and Oral Health, and the Emergency Clinic. The department, through its group practice structure, is responsible for the oversight of all clinical education within the DMD program.

The chair is expected to demonstrate experience and excellence in curriculum development and implementation in both clinical and didactic predoctoral education, administration of faculty and staff, mentoring of junior faculty, scholarly activities and research, public health/community outreach initiatives, leadership and communication skills.

The successful candidate will also need to demonstrate a vision for innovative approaches to pre-doctoral dental education and have highly developed academic leadership skills, outstanding academic credentials and have established a significant professional reputation.

QUALIFICATIONS

Requirements include a DDS/DMD degree or equivalent. An advanced degree and eligibility for licensure in Massachusetts are preferred.

Salary and academic rank will be commensurate with the candidate's qualifications and experience.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Interested parties should submit their current curriculum vitae along with a statement describing vision and philosophy in creating an environment that would advance learning, patient care and collaboration, as well as scholarly and clinical accomplishments and interests. In addition, please provide names and contact information of at least three references. Please submit application documents electronically using the "APPLY NOW" button below.

For further information, please contact Monika Bankowski, Faculty Affairs Officer at 617-636-2165 or via email at monika.bankowski@tufts.edu

Visit our website for more information about the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine <http://dental.tufts.edu/>

CONTRIBUTOR: ARLENE FURLONG

Opening a New Practice: What Dentists Need to Know



Practice ownership is an achievable path for many doctors. However, because of its complexity, dentists often wonder where to start. What will make you happy? What will make you proud? Understanding core dreams and hopes for the future is the first step in the planning stage of opening a new practice.

“It’s the big door that swings off a little hinge. It’s called vision,” said Jayme Amos, a practice management consultant specializing in practice ownership success. Mr. Amos adheres to a 13-stage method to help dentists open new practices to their greatest advantage. The stages occur within four categories: planning, construction, implementation and completion.

Through the years he has learned that vision is crucial, “Because it is forever bound to a practice’s success and trajectory,” he said. That’s why he encourages investing plenty of time and effort to learning what makes you tick.

Developing vision may sound like an abstract, playful exercise. But it’s not. Nor is it forgiving. All subsequent decisions are contingent on its content. “Crystal clear vision in three areas — personal, financial and clinical — goes a long way in ensuring practice success and fulfillment down the road,” he said.

Consider three dentists: dentist A is interested in serving a metropolitan market; dentist B wants a fee-for-service practice that will allow early retirement; dentist C plans to sell to an associate in 10 years. Each doctor’s scenario

requires different financial planning, floor-plan design, site selection, demographics criteria, equipment, construction and marketing. Amid each of those three scenarios, there are varying factors that will forever affect clinical potential, financial potential and personal satisfaction.

Following a step-by-step process in opening a new office in sequence is necessary because each decision is dependent on the choices and outcomes of those previously made. For example, site selection should be made after demographic choices or the dentist may end up with a patient population different than the group he or she intended to treat.

Will you treat entire families? How about seniors? Preferred provider organization or health maintenance organization—covered groups? Demographic and site analyses can help your practice attract more patients you enjoy treating at a lower marketing cost.

The planning stage also impacts office design. Will you treat a lot of children? If yes, you may opt for more than one operatory with nitrous oxide. Your site selection should lead you to a city that allows for simple permitting of that and a building that allows for it to be done cost effectively and on schedule.

While the checklist of “things to do” during each stage should be customized to your individual vision, some “musts” will be on everybody’s plan. During construction bidding, for example, the correct contract provisions hold

the construction team accountable for delays or going over budget.

"The low bid can quickly become the high bid," cautioned Mr. Amos.

Where can you save? Who should you trust? Who should you hire? What should be covered in your contracts?

Mr. Amos says practice ownership is the right professional choice for many. "During the past few years, I've seen a surge of interested dentists from across the country. Through practice ownership many doctors find greater clinical freedom, financial rewards and the opportunity to make a difference." ■

Mr. Amos is a dental practice consultant specializing in ownership success and the host of the Ideal Practice Weekly Podcast, found on iTunes. Products and service information is available at www.howtoopenadentaloffice.com.

Ms. Furlong is a Chicago-based freelance journalist specializing in practice and research news for dental and medical professionals. Her article originally appeared in the Summer 2015 issue of Dental Practice Success, a quarterly digital publication that features advice on a wide range of topics for your practice and work-life balance from well-known dental practice management experts. Read the current issue at ADA.org/dps.

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Mapping Your Next Career Move: New Dentist Strategies for Success



Transitioning from dental school to the job market can be tough, but having a plan may make the leap to a career less scary. Paying down this kind of debt can be difficult, but not impossible. There are several options for you to save money and make a dent in your student debt load. To pay down debt quickly and efficiently, here are some practical steps that health care professionals can take.

First, have a vision for your next five years. Of course, these plans may change, but having a blueprint for the life you want may help you make decisions. The answers to these questions could drastically alter your destination in the first few years out of dental school.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Where do you want to live?
- How important is work-life balance?
- Do you want to be in a private practice?
- Do you want to enter into a partnership?
- Might you work in corporate dentistry?
- Does working in the public health sector interest you?

If you are looking to join a practice as an associate or an employee, a sterling resume and cover letter could give you an advantage in a competitive market. This may often be your first impression to some potential employers. Usually one to two pages, a resume should include name and contact information, education and work experience listed chronologically. The main purpose of a resume is

to get an interview. Hiring managers review hundreds of applicants so your resume should be concise and clear. A polished resume is a first chance to make a good impression on potential employers.

Don't confuse a resume with a curriculum vitae (CV). Applicants for fellowships, grants, scholarships, or jobs in academia generally use a CV instead of a resume. The CV should be fairly detailed and cover your life's accomplishments including teaching and research experience, publications, awards, presentations, and affiliations. You should also include academic areas of interest, education, employment experience and professional references.

Before you land your first job as a dentist, you'll want to brush up on terms and provisions usually found in employment agreements, including:

- The differences between employees and independent contractors.
- Explanations of salary, commission, bonuses and benefits.
- What a non-compete clause is and how it differs from non-solicitation.
- How mediation and/or arbitration can resolve disputes.
- Points to consider when hiring a lawyer to review the employment agreement.



If you are looking to start your own practice, there are a multitude of things to consider. You will be your own boss, but that freedom comes with major responsibilities.

The ADA Center for Professional Success offers ADA members the free publication [Dentist Employment Agreements: A Guide to Key Legal Provisions](#) that features information on all of the ins and outs of employment agreements.

If you are looking to start your own practice, there are a multitude of things to consider. You will be your own boss, but that freedom comes with major responsibilities. The Center for Professional Success also has helpful information for this endeavor. If you are looking to open your own practice, [A New Dental Practice Checklist](#), a resource available to ADA members, may be of some assistance.

Having a goal will help you formulate a plan for achievement. The ADA Center for Professional Success has resources to help you develop that plan. Visit the site today and get started on building the future you want. ■

*The ADA Center for Professional Success is an interactive Web portal that provides practice management content and decision support tools with the goal of helping members practice successfully, learn conveniently and live well. Visit the Center for Professional Success at Success.ADA.org. This article originally appeared in the Spring 2017 issue of *Dental Practice Success*, a quarterly digital publication that features advice on a wide range of topics for your practice and work-life balance from well-known dental practice management experts. Read the current issue at ADA.org/dps.*

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Working in a Large Group Practice

A New Dentist Blogs About Her Experience

From working and shadowing in a number of different dental practices throughout my schooling, I had an idea of what I wanted out of my first job. I wanted to work in a modern office utilizing the technologies I learned in school. I wanted to be able to do quality dentistry that I could stand behind. I wanted a mentor who could help me become more clinically competent and business-savvy. I also wanted to live in a big city and escape New England winters.

While I was in dental school, the concept of “large group practice” had a negative connotation among dental students, often viewing it as a “last resort.” Some of the stigmas that I’ve heard about dental support organizations (DSOs) are that the dentists are forced to see more patients than they can handle and expected to fulfill outrageous quotas set upon them from “non-clinicians.” I stayed open-minded, especially as I read about DSOs in dental magazines as being a trend of the future.

I was also able to meet and speak with dentists supported by Pacific Dental Services (PDS) when I attended the American Student Dental Association National Leadership Conference in Chicago during the fall of my third year. The dentists I spoke with who were working in PDS-supported offices seemed genuinely happy in their current positions and felt that they were able to achieve their professional and personal goals faster with

the support of PDS. What I really liked about the PDS business support model is that all of the supported offices are equipped with the latest technologies, including digital X-rays, intraoral cameras, and CEREC CAD/CAM. Lastly, knowing the pressures that dentists face regarding stagnant insurance reimbursement rates and increased overhead made me want to be supported by an efficient business model.

As the first person in my family to become a dentist, I didn’t have any strong dental connections. I reached out to recruiters of various DSOs and requested to meet with supported dentists and set up shadow days. One of the recruiters connected me with an owner dentist in Las Vegas who enjoyed mentoring new grads. I flew out to Las Vegas during my winter break and spent two days shadowing PDS-supported owner dentist, Dr. Cody Mugleston.

Walking into his office, I didn’t get a “large group practice” vibe. It looked and operated like any private practice I’d ever explored. I sat in on all of the new patient exams he performed that day and we were aligned in our diagnoses. Dr. Mugleston enjoys working with young dentists to help them ramp up and become acclimated to real-world dentistry. I felt that this was the perfect environment for me to learn and grow and it fulfilled everything on my “want” list.

Many of my peers are aware that I'm working in a practice supported by a DSO and have reached out to me for advice and feedback. I've been sharing my experiences and clearing up some of their preconceived notions regarding DSOs. The biggest relief working in a PDS-supported office is being able to work in a patient-centric environment that puts me as the clinician solely in charge of diagnosing and treatment planning. There is no push to produce or to conform to expectations from non-clinicians. My peers have also been amazed to know that the PDS support model offers abundant continuing education opportunities, and I am able to enjoy benefits such as 401k, malpractice, disability, health insurance, life insurance and more. I've also been very fortunate to be part of a tight-knit network of PDS-supported dentists in Nevada who have been invaluable resources for clinical and business advice.

This past year working as an associate and transitioning into ownership has reassured me that I made the right decision to work in a PDS-supported office.

My entrepreneurial spirit has been ignited as I am passionate about incorporating my personal vision in the office and establishing my reputation within the community. What I especially appreciate about working in a PDS-supported office is that every business aspect of the practice is thoroughly researched, such as location, marketing and metrics to measure quality outcomes and business success. As a dentist and soon-to-be new owner, I am glad that all the systems are in place so that I don't have to reinvent the wheel. Working in a DSO-supported practice has provided me the support and experience I needed as a new grad and I'm happy to continue my personal and professional journey as a PDS-supported owner dentist. ■

Dr. Bianca Velayo is a member of the American Dental Association, Nevada Dental Association and Southern Nevada Dental Society where she currently serves on the New Dentist Committee. Her comments from Nov. 11, 2016, originally appeared in the New Dentist Now blog. Brought to you by the New Dentist Committee of the American Dental Association, New Dentist Now features resources for new dentists and dental students as well as news and insight on the dental profession and beyond. Read more at <http://newdentistblog.ada.org/>.

Practice Settings and Job Satisfaction

A study by researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the ADA Health Policy Institute published in the August 2015 issue of The Journal of the American Dental Association found that the type of practice you work in may influence how you feel about your dental career.

In this innovative, first-of-its-kind study, "Practice Settings and Dentists' Job Satisfaction" ([http://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177\(15\)00347-5/fulltext](http://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177(15)00347-5/fulltext)) researchers examined job satisfaction of dentists group practices.

Researchers found that:

- Dentists working in small group settings reported the highest overall career satisfaction.
- Dentists working in large group settings reported more satisfaction with income and benefits than dentists in solo practices, as well as less stress.
- Dentists working in large group practices affiliated with dental management organizations were more satisfied with weekends off and fewer hours spent on nonclinical tasks.
- Dentists working in dentist owned and operated practices were more satisfied with incomes and their overall feelings about dentistry.

An HPI research brief also released in August 2015 examined career satisfaction among dentists working in two types of group practices: a dental management organization affiliated practice or a dentist owned and operated practice.

Researchers reported that dentists working in large group practices affiliated with dental management organizations were less satisfied with certain aspects of their practice, such as income and feeling emotionally drained, but were most satisfied with others, such as weekends off and reported fewer hours spent on nonclinical tasks, compared to dentists working in practices that were dentists owned and operated.

Read more from the ADA Health Policy Institute at ADA.org/HPI.

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Separation Anxiety: 5 Tips for Balancing Work Life and Personal Life

Sep-a-rate.

Just separate your work and your personal life. We say this to others and others say it to us as if we can push a button to turn it on or turn it off. To a certain extent separating is a necessity in the day-to-day life of any dentist or dental professional. We cannot think about the death of a loved one or a relationship that is ending during a crown prep or mid-extraction. It's dangerous to have our thoughts elsewhere, and it's not fair to our patients to lose focus on their needs.

So, yes, we do have to separate. But, there are down times — even if it is only during a brief hand washing between patients. There is space. There is space to think about last night's argument or yesterday's missed softball game. There is time to think about a newborn's needs or a loved one's suffering. We can separate, but it's not easy, and to think we can do it 100 percent of the time is ludicrous.

As a matter of fact, it's stressful to separate all of the time. What can we do?

After practicing for 18 years and working with others in practice, I offer my top five tips to help you deal with separation dilemmas.

As a dentist, it is difficult to find a substitute, especially if we are in a solo practice. In our minds, “the show must go on” or a lot of rescheduling has to occur. Here are ways to keep the show going without releasing too much cortisol:

1. Leave space in your schedule for medical and health appointments (or your kids' appointments if you are the one in charge of family members' schedules). Many

people wonder why dentists take a day off during the week. This is why. If the time is not spent working on the business side of our practices, it can be spent working on our health. By working 8-5 Monday-Friday, there is little time left to make it to appointments. Perhaps YOU have no appointments or health issues to worry about, but many of your team members are working moms, and they have appointments to get to or get their kids to as well. This space allows for the much needed flexibility so many of our team members need and want. Furthermore, nothing causes more stress than an unanticipated leave of absence from one of our teammates. When there is no flexibility in the schedule, team members often have to take whatever appointments are available or feel pressured to wait to go to a physician. We know what happens when we delay health care: bigger and more costly problems occur. This preventive approach to health care should be modeled in our practices to help everyone separate as needed. It's easier to focus on our work when we know we have a day to catch up on appointments, errands or wellness routines.

2. Plan ahead for absolute schedule conflicts. It is always easier to add more time back in the schedule than it is to retract a schedule full of patients. For a return from elective surgeries, maternity/paternity leaves, and family care needs, lighten the schedule as much as possible the first few weeks. Come back in after these absences on a part-time basis. Ease your way back in. As I said, it's easier to add more time than to reschedule many patients. Consider working shorter hours at first, too. Our necks



For a return from family care needs, lighten the schedule as much as possible the first few weeks. Come back in after these absences on a part-time basis. Ease your way back in.

and backs are typically out of shape after an extended time away.

3. Practice some type of mental stillness at least weekly, if not daily.

I am a big fan of mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques, but tai chi or simple meditation are other options when trying to separate work from a stressful home life. These types of practices help us learn to stay in the moment and keep focused on what is occurring each minute rather than what happened yesterday or what could happen tomorrow. When we train our brains to focus on things we can control in the present moment, it is easier to separate from the chaos going on in our personal lives.

4. Find and maintain healthy, supportive relationships.

Our work can be stressful and demanding. We need partners and friends who understand our work environments and support our passions. In one of my practices, a hygienist had what we perceived to be unsupportive spouse. She constantly managed everything and everyone in her household. She had little energy left to give at work and had little patience left to share with our team. Small conflicts seemed like unmanageable conflicts to her. Once we talked about these concerns, she actually realized she could be more successful in both areas if she delegated more tasks and engaged her family members in the duties that she always completed. She actually had a supportive spouse and children. They simply did not know exactly how to help. Because we are health care professionals, our strength of caring for others

can become our Achilles' heel if left unchecked. We have to express our issues, recognize our inability to manage and care for everything and everyone, and ask for help when needed. If we have unsupportive family members who do not help us when asked or when needed, that can also lead to problems at our work places. Our busy home lifestyles often require additional support from children, spouses, care providers, housekeepers, nannies and other kinds of supportive helpers.

5. Allow some time to talk during work hours. This goes against every vigilant work ethic I learned about as I grew up. "When you are at work, you work," my dad would say. And, looking back, I still think this is a decent piece of advice to tell your kids as they start out in the working world. But, there is also a need for teams to get to know one another. It doesn't mean everyone stands in the break room for a half hour, but it might mean there are scheduled times to talk — like during team meetings or holiday lunches or birthday celebrations. These moments allow home and work lives to merge a bit more than when we try to completely separate the two.

Separation is difficult, and there are painful times in our lives that make it nearly impossible. Our home lives bleed into our work lives and vice versa. Being conscious of these balancing acts is one way to ensure the priorities remain in the right places and at the right times. I accept that life is never in complete balance. And, instead of fighting the imbalance with self-defeating thoughts or spending sleepless nights trying to make one area more even with the other side,

(cont'd page 22)

The Art of Transitioning Well: 5 Steps to Help You Prepare for Retirement

At some point in his or her career, every dentist will see the end of private practice approaching. No matter what the timing or the reason, there are many things the dentist can do to make the transition successful for himself or herself, the incoming dentist and most importantly, for the patients. Here are some important steps to consider on the road to retirement.

Step one. Start with a sound financial plan way in advance of retirement.

A new dentist may be mired in student debt and practice purchase expenses, but it is still important to put aside a small amount of money toward retirement on a monthly basis to simplify the financial pressures of leaving practice in the future. One of the most traumatic issues confronting a dentist in transition is the need to continue to generate income. It becomes even more traumatic if he or she wants to maintain his or her current lifestyle. The transitioning dentist should set up a meeting with a financial expert to review financial goals and objectives and set up a timetable for the future.

Step two. Plan for life after dentistry.

Have you ever connected with a former colleague who seems lost in retirement? Maybe his or her spouse is not happy with so much “togetherness.” His or her dental friends are either still working or off on exotic trips. Boredom can lead to bad habits, deteriorating health and less interest in exploring new opportunities to thrive. Meet with your family before you begin to transition to identify what your needs as a family will be in the future. Identify alternatives to dentistry that interest you. Set up a budget that gives you the flexibility to expand your

horizons. You might even realize that what you really enjoy is dentistry.

Step three. Make your practice as presentable as possible.

If you were selling your home, your first job would be to upgrade the property. It is the same with a practice. Take a jaundiced look at the facility. Does it still reflect the quality of your care? From the surrounding businesses to the building itself, does it look modern and welcoming? If not, are there changes that you or the landlord can make that will enhance the curb appeal of the facility? When you enter the waiting room, does it seem fresh and comfortable? Are the operatories state of the art, clean and inviting? Just as you would with your home, consider staging the practice to bring its best features forward. State-of-the-art does not mean everything new under the sun, but it does mean that everything looks modern and works.

Step four. Realize the team is one of the most valuable parts of your practice.

It is often said that replacing the dentist in a practice is easy, but changing the front-desk person is a nightmare. Most practices find that patients have a strong bond with the members of the team. When planning a transition to a new dentist, it is imperative that the team stays in the practice for at least 6 months after the transfer. Six months gives the new dentist an opportunity to meet most of the patients as they rotate through a recall cycle. If the practice does not have a high number of patients in regular recall, the value of the practice will plummet as the buyer realizes that he or she will not be able to create a physical bond with each patient. No matter what,



When planning a transition to a new dentist, it is imperative that the team stays in the practice for at least 6 months after the transfer.

the bond of long-standing employees with patients is valuable as a magnet to keep them connected to the practice even as the ownership changes.

Step five. The plan for sale must offer ease of transfer.

If you list the practice for sale with a broker, he or she can give you an estimate of the value of the practice and connect you with potential buyers. You choose the broker, the finances are worked out and the practice changes hands on a specific day. If well executed, it can work for everyone. If not, the practice can disintegrate quickly as team members and patients find the exchange uncomfortable. An alternative is to bring in an associate and transfer the practice over time with the team. Finding a compatible associate can be difficult. The better the owner understands his or her practice, what it offers and what it stands for the better the chance of finding compatibility. With a good match, patients and staff members find the transfer comfortable and positive.

Here are a few things to remember:

- If the associate is hired with the plan of taking over the practice at a future time, it is important to set the value of the practice as soon as the compatibility issues are resolved. The practice will grow with a well-chosen associate who is willing to promote the practice and attract new patients. The incentive to build the practice may not be there if the associate realizes that his or her efforts are just making the practice more expensive to purchase. If the value is set early on, the new dentist can build away knowing that his efforts will be rewarded at the time of purchase. At the same time the senior dentist receives the benefit of maintaining the value of the practice even as he slows down himself.

- An associate may buy into the practice, either as a partner or over time. In either case it is important for the senior dentist to realize that it is difficult for the part owner to feel any ownership unless the senior dentist goes out of his or her way to establish that ownership with the patients and the team members. If the associate will be purchasing part of the practice now and the rest later, it is important that there be a specific future date for the remainder of the transaction to take place so that the new owner can make plans for the future.

In each one of these scenarios the success will be closely connected to the details of the transfer. The more that the transitioning dentist can be prepared in advance of the transaction, the better the buyer and seller can concentrate on the surprises that arise. For the patients' sake, the smoother the transfer of interest in the practice, the better the chance that they will continue to receive quality care. ■

Dr. van Dyk practices general dentistry in San Pablo, CA, and teaches in the department of Dental Practice at the Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry. He has been lecturing on practice management issues since 1985. He served on the ADA Council on Dental Practice and was instrumental in the development of the ADA Success Seminar Series that has been giving dental students real life information on the business of dental practice for over 30 years. He can be reached at bvddds1@gmail.com or at BVDDDS.com. His article originally appeared in the Spring 2017 issue of Dental Practice, a quarterly digital publication that features advice on a wide range of topics for your practice and work-life balance from well-known dental practice management. Read the current issue at ADA.org/dps.

(continued from page 19)

I accept that this desire to have complete work-life balance is never going to be perfect. Sometimes both places are in need, and during those times, it's important to reach out for help and delegate as many tasks as possible. Being a professional at home and at work requires planning, a willingness to let go of the desire to personally complete each task and an ability to surround yourself with an amazing support team. With these tips in mind, I hope you find more ways to manage the challenges and stressors that will surely arise while striving to be the best at home and be the best at work. ■

Dr. Knowles is practicing dentist, dental educator, consultant and speaker in Michigan. Sign up for her weekly email, Thirsty Thursdays, at <http://Beyond32Teeth.com> or learn more about her speaking options for your association, team or study club. This article originally appeared in the Winter 2017 issue of Dental Practice Success, a quarterly digital publication that features advice on a wide range of topics for your practice and work-life balance from well-known dental practice management. Read the current issue at ADA.org/dps.

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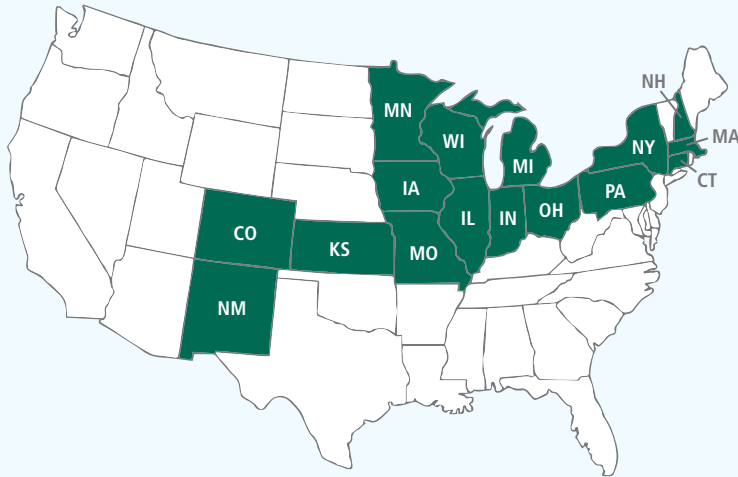
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