

Ophthalmic Merchandising (CE= 1 hour)

Course Level (Basic)

Date: 2/16/19

Live Session – Presenter Format

Description

Merchandising involves the presentation of products and services to consumers- and can be used to educate patients AND make them more likely to follow product and treatment recommendations. This course provides concrete examples of how Optometric practices can position products and services in ways which will increase patient demand/desire for ophthalmic solutions.

Learning Objectives

Staff will be able to define the concept of merchandising and its role in creating consumer desire. Understand the links between consumerism and patient compliance to health recommendations. Demonstrate actionable concepts that can be used to increase patient compliance to recommendations.

Specific Skills

Learners will be able to effectively identify and deploy merchandising in their practice to educate patients not only in the dispensary, but throughout the journey through the office.

Course Outline:

- I) What is Merchandising? (10 min)
 - A) Merchandising vs. Marketing
 - B) Examples of Merchandised Environments / Categories
 - i) Supermarket
 - ii) Retailers
 - iii) Auto Dealerships
 - C) Optometric Practices typically lack effective merchandising
 - i) Average Optometric visit takes 45-90 minutes
 - ii) Product/Service presentation almost always begins in the final moments of the experience
- II) Merchandising Principles & Their Application to the Optometric Practice (30 min)
 - A) Time is Money
 - i) The longer a consumer spends in a retail environment, the more s/he spends (on average).
 - ii) Time spent waiting negatively effects service perception.
 - iii) Solution- Convert all moments the patient spends waiting in the practice into merchandisable moments.
 - B) Men are from Mars...

CPC Course Outline

- i) Women view shopping as a hobby.
 - ii) Men view shopping as a “mission”
 - iii) Solution- Provide staff to engage women in conversation- provide brochures / literature to engage men.
- C) The Right Message at the Right Time
- i) A consumer on a “mission” will not mentally engage.
 - ii) Most patients have spent 45 minutes in the practice before arriving in the dispensary (at which point, their mission is to return to home or work).
 - iii) Solution- Present products/services (merchandising) throughout the visit so the dispensary merely becomes the fulfillment location (like Ikea).
- D) When You Have Nothing Else to Do, You Will Read ANYTHING!
- i) Americans spend 1,000s of hours reading cereal boxes every morning.
 - ii) Ophthalmic products are often technical and require explanation.
 - iii) Solution- Engage patients in product / service education in areas where they are likely to be waiting during their visit.
- E) The Endowment Effect
- i) Possessing something causes one’s valuation of the object to rise.
 - ii) Patients typically have very short exposure time to frames/lenses.
 - iii) Solution- Expose patients to frames EARLY in the visit (perhaps while waiting for the pre-exam tech), and ensure they have the frame with them for the entire visit (raising their valuation of the eyewear).
- F) Humans Have Two Hands
- i) In the US, our purchases are limited by how much we can carry.
 - ii) Frames are awkward to carry.
 - iii) Solution- Jeweler’s trays make it easy for patients to experience the frame during the entire visit.
- III) Putting it “Into Practice” (20 min)
- A) In a properly merchandised environment
- i) The practitioner is not “selling” anything.
 - ii) The consumer is encountering products and services as they have been trained to do since birth.
 - iii) The dispensary becomes a “fulfillment center.”
 - iv) Product / service awareness is dramatically increased.
 - v) Compliance to recommendations is increased.
- B) An honest self-assessment of the practice will provide a scorecard regarding the quality of merchandising.