

Meeting The Need: Building a Successful VT Practice



VIRGINIA VISION THERAPY CENTER, INC

Tod R Davis, OD, FCOVD

Amy E Carlyle, OD, FAAO

Greg Johnson, OD

Meeting the Need

Vision Therapy Has A **Public Awareness Problem!**

We are experts in human vision performance,
yet VT services largely unknown!!



Doc, we never heard of vision therapy!

Meeting the Need

A public awareness problem

- ✓ In spite of strong responses to OEP and Sanet courses.
- ✓ In spite of externship programs
- ✓ In spite of improved clinical care
- ✓ In spite of rapidly expanding social media

*Vision Therapy Parents Unite: **12K** members*

Meeting the Need

A public awareness problem
because we are not meeting
*the **DEMAND** for our services*



Meeting the Need

What is the demand for our most common patient age group, ages 6 to 17 ??

Population between ages 6 & 17: **54 million**

Estimate 50% affordability, availability:

27 million

From current US Census Data

Meeting the Need

Common conditions treatable with VT:

Amblyopia (3% of population): approx. 700,000

CI (8% of population): approx. 2 million

Number of VTODs USA to meet this demand?

OEP membership: 800

COVD membership: 1300

WAG Estimate: 1000

Meeting the Need

Ratio of VTODs to **amblyopia** demand:

1 in 700 if 1 treated per vt office

1 in 70 if 10 treated per vt office

Ratio of VTODs to **convergence insufficiency** demand:

1 in 1200 if 1 treated per vt office

1 in 120 if 10 treated per vt office

THE PROBLEM

*Most VT offices treat **less than 50** VT patients each week.*

Meeting the Need

The solution besides more VT doctors??



IDEA

designed by freepik.com

Each VTOD **expand** VT services

Meeting the Need

10 years ago,

I set out to develop a

VT-only, private pay optometric practice.

And no limits on growth



Meeting the Need

Encouraged by

E-Myth Revisited

by Michael Gerber,

Good to Great

by Jim Collins,

Unique Services And Your Success

by Paul Harris, OD

VTODs with large VT practices

And others including COVD.



Meeting the Need

Today,

We treat about **300 patients** each week
in **4 different offices** in Northern Virginia

Our staff consists of:

3 Developmental Optometrists

3 calls in one year from new ODs seeking VT employment

14 Vision Therapists, including **3 COVTs**

7 Admin including an **Operations Manager**
and a **Contract CFO**

Meeting the Need

To keep up with growth this past year 2017,
we spent majority of our profit on:

Doubling size of 2 offices,
Increasing staff,
Adding one doc

In 2019 we plan to open another office

And we have fun! *Docs who hate practice!*

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#1 Understanding the 3 personalities

THE PRACTICE DEVELOPER (PD)

Strategist.

Loves to generate ideas.

Sees opportunity.

Drives staff nuts!!



The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

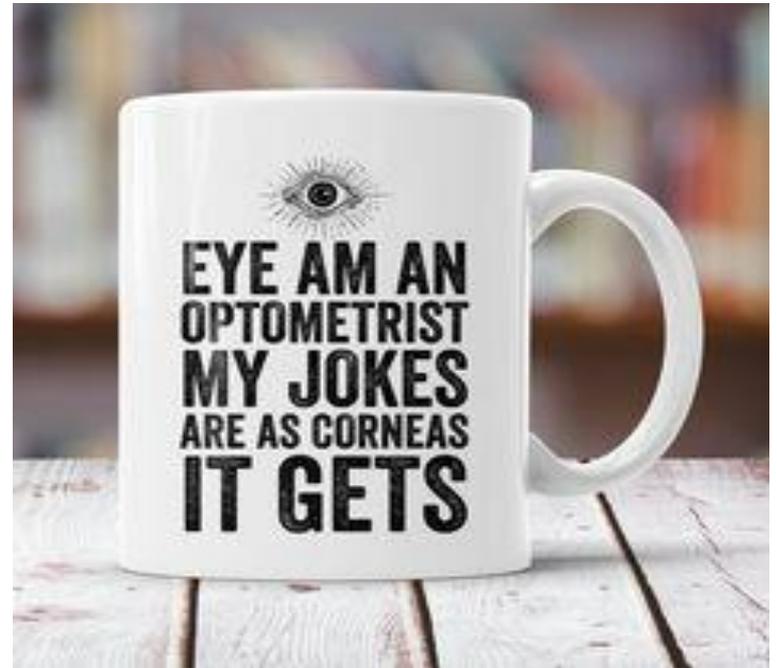
Understanding the 3 personalities

THE OPTOMETRIST

No dreaming, just do!

If you want it done right,
do it yourself!

Happy when in control
of work flow, the schedule.



The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

Understanding the 3 personalities

In Reality, we are all 3!

We do **dream** about “what if”.

Each of us **likes order**,
likes organization.

The **OD side of us** can't stand not seeing
patients, needs to do the work.



The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

Understanding the 3 personalities

If balanced,

PD free to **innovate** and forge ahead,

Manager organizes the innovation,

the operations,

OD does the vision care work.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

Understanding the 3 personalities



In a VTOD-driven Practice, OD in control:
Unaware of major needs because
TOO BUSY & EXHAUSTED seeing patients.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

Time **NOT** spent to think of the **BIG PICTURE**,
envisioning the practice from **TOP DOWN**



*Works **IN** practice, not **ON** it!*

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#2 Take the time to create, to dream.



Whether new or established for 30 years,
regularly get away to ask the important questions:

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

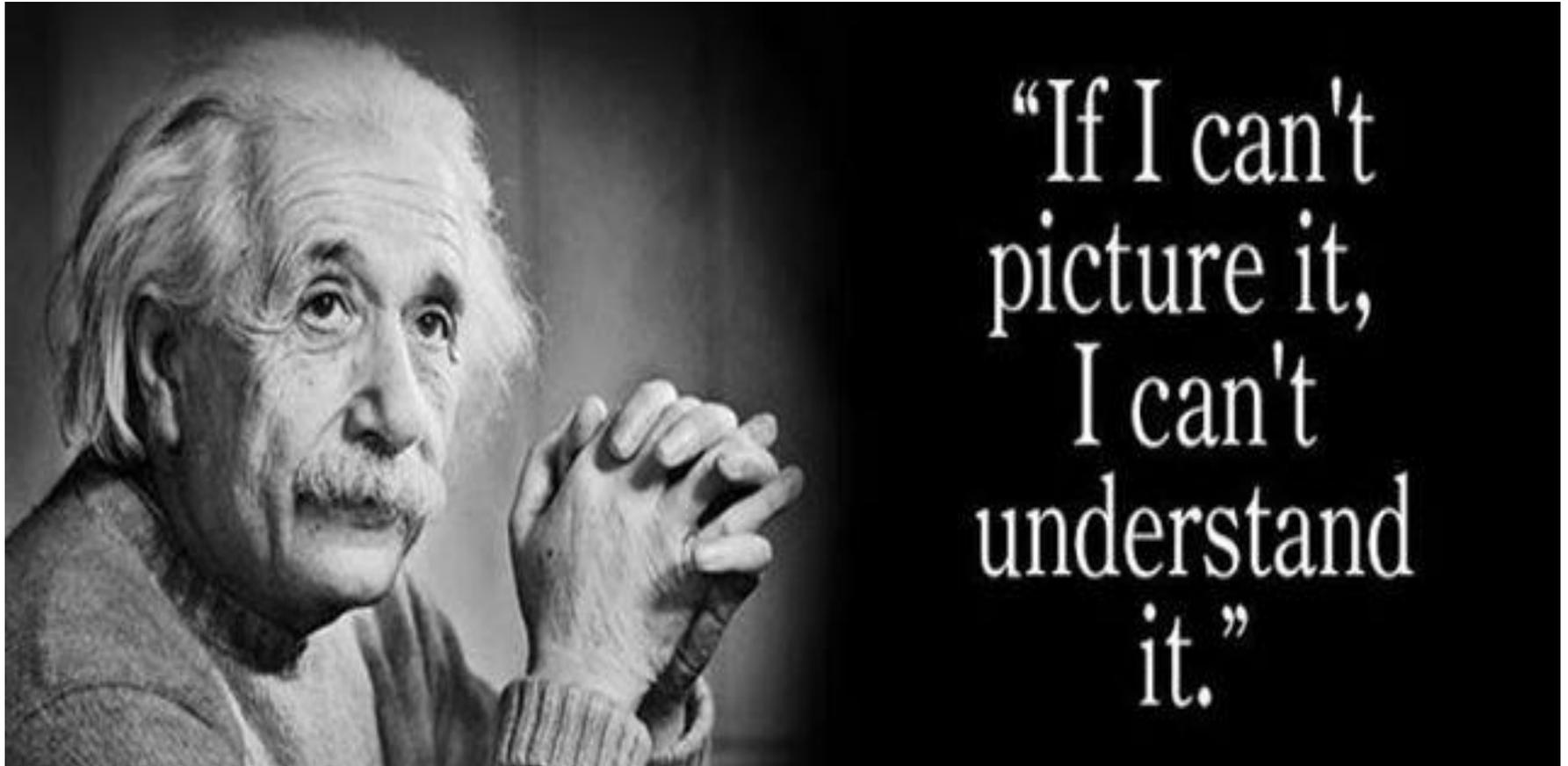
What your practice *should* look like.

How can I get away to pursue
my relationships, my interests?

Especially *how will it serve my life?*

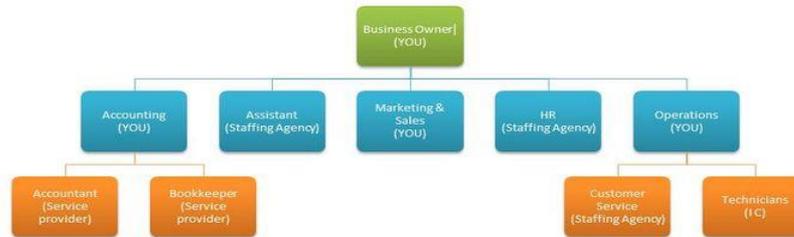
The practice is not your life!!!!

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices



The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices **#3 The Business Structure**

Organization Chart



Systems dependent, not **people** dependent.

The **position is important** and how it's carried out, **not the person**.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

All **positions**

documented in operations manuals.

All **scripts**, answers to all possible questions,

or "**elevator talk**",

documented in operations manuals.

*Operations manuals **continually** updated.*

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#4 **Delivery of vision care services **more important** than the services themselves.**

Not **what's** done in the practice but **how** it's done, ***consistently, with few mistakes.***

The **practice** is the product, not the **vision services**, although **vision service quality** is critical

Think about those businesses, health care offices that deliver consistently what they promise...

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#5 **I**nnovate

Implement,

Quantify (stats).

If it doesn't work, start process again.

Don't be afraid of mistakes!

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#6 Hiring The Right People.

“**B**uying in” to your dream, an idea worth working for.
Your mission.

Training their role from the operations manual,
what’s expected, their benchmarks.

Your people are the most important part of your
practice.

Challenge them and watch them personally grow.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#7 Virtuous Leadership.

Our behavior in the office is reflected by our staff.

If we complain a lot, they will complain

If we emphasize money, they will act selfishly.

Ralph Barstow: pithy statements on virtue

Peter Drucker: most effective CEO emphasizes virtue

Jim Collins: most effective leader is humble, serves others.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#8 Major Objective Of Practice: *Find And Keep Patients.*

The **greeting** on the phone,

The **smile** when the patient arrives,

Asking for and fulfilling **patients' needs**,

Personal and office **appearance**,

Use of **logos and color** in our business cards and
handouts,

Website design, etc. Striving for consistency.

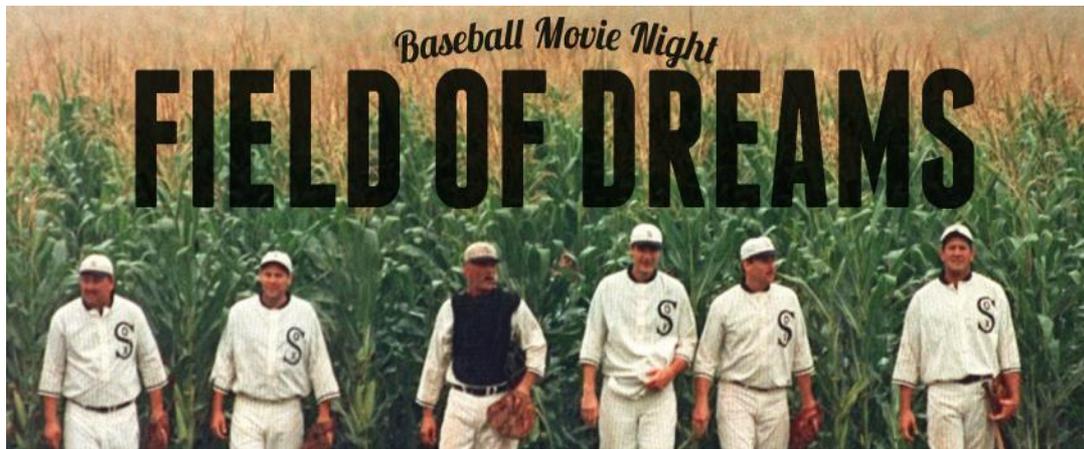
Public speaking

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#9 Not placing a limit on growth

Plan for growth. Luck is not a business strategy.

“If you (plan and) build it, they will come”.



If you are “full” or not attracting new VT patients,
word spreads fast, people go elsewhere.

The 10 Principles Of Successful Optometric VT Practices

#10 Building a legacy for future generations.

Making room for other ODs early in your practice.

Major financial loss to family
if owner passes away without
another equity holder.

Loss to community (and equity)
if closes practice without sale.



Thank You For Your Undivided Attention

