

Navigating the Dental Consulting World

By Sandy Baird

"Hello, my name is Dr. Jones. I am not sure if you are the person I need to talk with, but I am hoping you can point me in the right direction. I have a very successful practice that my father started in 1940, which I took over in 1970. I have practiced for 40 years and am ready to retire. I need someone who can help me find a buyer. Can you help me?"

Dr. Jones had done exactly what he should have done, reached out into the world of dental consultants for help. What many dentists and teams don't realize is how specialized each dental consultant is. After explaining I was a practice management consultant and what he needed was a transitional consultant, we had a wonderful chat and then said good-bye.

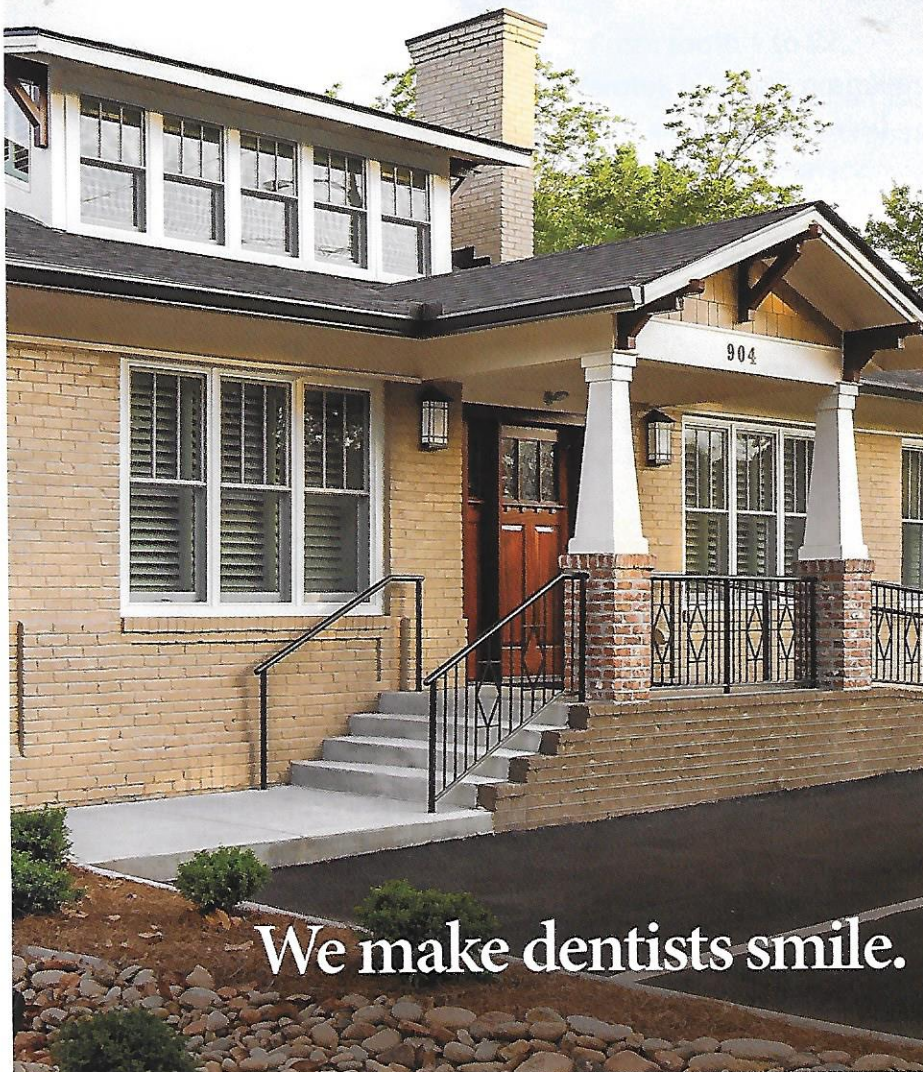
If you google dental consultants, you will find hundreds of them. What you can't often see is what type of consultant they are. Consultants come in many styles and flavors in order to meet your specific needs. Some call themselves, coaches or advisors, some focus on transitions or financials; regardless, they all belong to the big world of dental consultants. This wonderfully wide world is most useful, but can also be confusing to navigate. To help, I am providing you with some general direction signs to aid in finding the expertise you may one day seek.

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Practice Management Consultants

Practice management consultants typically focus on the team, leader, practice, and operational development and growth. They train and teach ways to attract and retain new patients, more productive ways to schedule, how to operate more efficiently, how to reduce stress, how to run on schedule, and how to get more referrals. They prepare you for transitions, implement checks and balances in your financial systems, find and repair money leaks, and develop systems that are proven to work effectively.

Practice management consultants answer questions like these:

- How can I be more productive?
- How can I make my team members more accountable?
- Where am I losing money?
- How can I set up a bonus system?
- Why is my schedule driving me crazy?

Transitional Consultants

As the name implies, the consultant is the one you should be reaching out to when there is a significant transition within your dental practice. Transition consultants focus on selling and buying practices, creating partnerships and associateships, and real estate.

Transition Consultants answer questions like these:

- How can I find a buyer for my practice?
- How can I find an associate and eventual partner for my practice?
- How do I contract my new associate or partner?
- How can I make a partnership work?

Marketing Consultants

Marketing consultants focus on designing the best external marketing plan for your practice(s) to attract more business; your internal marketing is usually handled by Practice Management Consultants. A marketing plan is an interactive combination of marketing techniques such as mailers, social media, search engine marketing, search engine optimization, email marketing campaigns, radio and TV spots, blogging and others. A marketing consultant will propose plans, recommend messaging, and then manage the implementation of the marketing efforts (or help you hire someone who can). They will help you track your marketing ROI.

Marketing consultants answer questions like these:

- How can I maximize my marketing dollars?
- What are the most effective advertisements to attract new patients?
- I am opening a new practice, how do I let my communities know about my practice?
- How should I be using social media to build my practice?

Financial Consultants

A financial consultant can provide you with the guidance you need to reach your financial goals and even act as a CFO for your practice. They can help you and your employees with personal financial planning, tax planning, budgeting, and pension planning strategies.

Financial consultants answer questions like these:

- How much do I need to save to retire at 58?
- How can I minimize my federal and

state taxes?

- What types of insurance should I be carrying?
- How much should I be putting aside each month for retirement?

Compliance Consultants

When running a dental practice, there are a lot of rules and regulations that are in place to protect you, your employees and your patients. Many of these rules and regulations can be overwhelming and confusing. Compliance consultants understand the ins and outs of these rules and help practices reduce their risk.

Compliance consultants answer questions like these:

- Where is my practice not in compliance with OSHA?
- How do I protect my practice against any potential HIPAA violations?
- How can I manage all the OSHA and HIPAA required documentation?
- How can I manage all the Human Resource required documentation?

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NPT NATIONAL PRACTICE TRANSITIONSSM



Practice Appraisals & Sales



Pre-Transition Consulting



Associate Placement



Practice Protection Plan

- ♦ Free Practice Appraisal & Legal Drafts
- ♦ Face-To-Face Consultations & Practice Showings
- ♦ Structuring of Sale to Minimize Tax Liability
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Clinical Consultants

The clinical consultant helps you improve or expand your clinical skills, techniques, and technology. They answer questions like:

- How can I integrate lasers into my practice?
- How to offer implant surgery in my practice?
- How can I increase the success of my endodontic treatments?
- How can I achieve the highest level of aesthetic services in my practice?


This list is not complete, by any means, but will get you started finding the consultant to address your unique needs. It is helpful to know that there are also some consultants who have the ability to cross-over into the other areas with the broadest reach usually lying in the Practice Management Consultants.

The American Dental Management Consultants (ADMC) organization is a great place for any dentist to go when looking for a consultant. Besides requiring experience and expertise to belong, each member consultant has a page where they discuss their services and expertise. It is a quick and easy way to browse for the best of consultants.

It is difficult enough to juggle being a dentist, boss, leader, and business owner. To expect yourself to be an expert in each area is asking the impossible from anyone. Dental consultants can fill in your expertise gaps as well as implement systems and processes to take the responsibility off your shoulders. Use these 6 directional signs to lead you to the right expert for you.

Sandy Baird founded Baird Dental Business Concepts in 2005, since then she has trained, coached, advised, and partnered with a wide diversity of dentists and their teams. With an MBA focused on dental management and more than 30 years of working in a general dental practice.

With a combination of education, experience, and having lived with a dentist for over 40 years, she can offer practices a broad selection of management services as well as objective advice. She understands your practice from the viewpoint of an owner, dentist, team member, and toilet-bowl cleaner. Her passion is to help you and your team conquer your challenges and achieve your goals. Learn more about Sandy at BairdConcepts.com.



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