



By Ash Vasanthan, DDS, MS  
Associate Editor

## Consultant: the guide by your side

Our *Nugget* Editorial Advisory Board meets about three times a year and one of the meetings is to plan the focus of each issue. As we were discussing several topics, there was a general interest in “consultants.” It was interesting to take on the topic, as I was in the middle of trying to identify one for my office.

Early last year, I bought my practice and was learning the ropes of running a practice and felt a little overwhelmed. That’s when my CPA advised me that I should seek the help of knowledgeable resources and probably hire one. Like all young and ambitious entrepreneurs, I felt I could handle it myself, but one thing he said connected with me. He said, “You are the captain of your team now and you must have a coach who will bring your team together and train you all as one team.”

It occurred to me that we’ve always had a coach or a person to guide or teach us, right from kindergarten to dental school and even in the early days of private practice. Once I became a practice owner with decision making authority, my confidence went up and I felt I could do it on my own. Having the authority doesn’t automatically mean that we will make sound decisions. Hence, I decided to look for a consultant, and just like how we search for most things in life these days, I googled “dental consultant.”

I was amazed to find out that it was a whole industry with individuals and groups spread all over the country. Being confused, I decided to take the word-of-mouth approach and called on a few of my dental friends to ask them if they have used a consultant in the past. I found out that every single one of them had used at least one consultant,

and each one of them had differing opinions about the process and the person.

I hope that this issue will give more clarity to some of the questions many of you may face or have faced in the process. I’m excited to present interesting articles with specific recommendations on what to look for in a consultant and how to be prepared for one. Based on my experience, I believe it helps to have someone to get advice on issues, have an external set of eyes looking at your practice, bring their wisdom and experience in training you to hone your skills as a leader and be an extended part of your team. My opinion is—though it is interesting to hear a “sage on the stage,” you are more confident when you have a “guide by your side.” ■

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*Dr. Ash Vasanthan is a board certified periodontist practicing in Roseville. He is a visiting assistant professor at Department of Periodontics at the University of Missouri Kansas City.*



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nwells@wellconstruction.com

www.wellsconstruction.com

