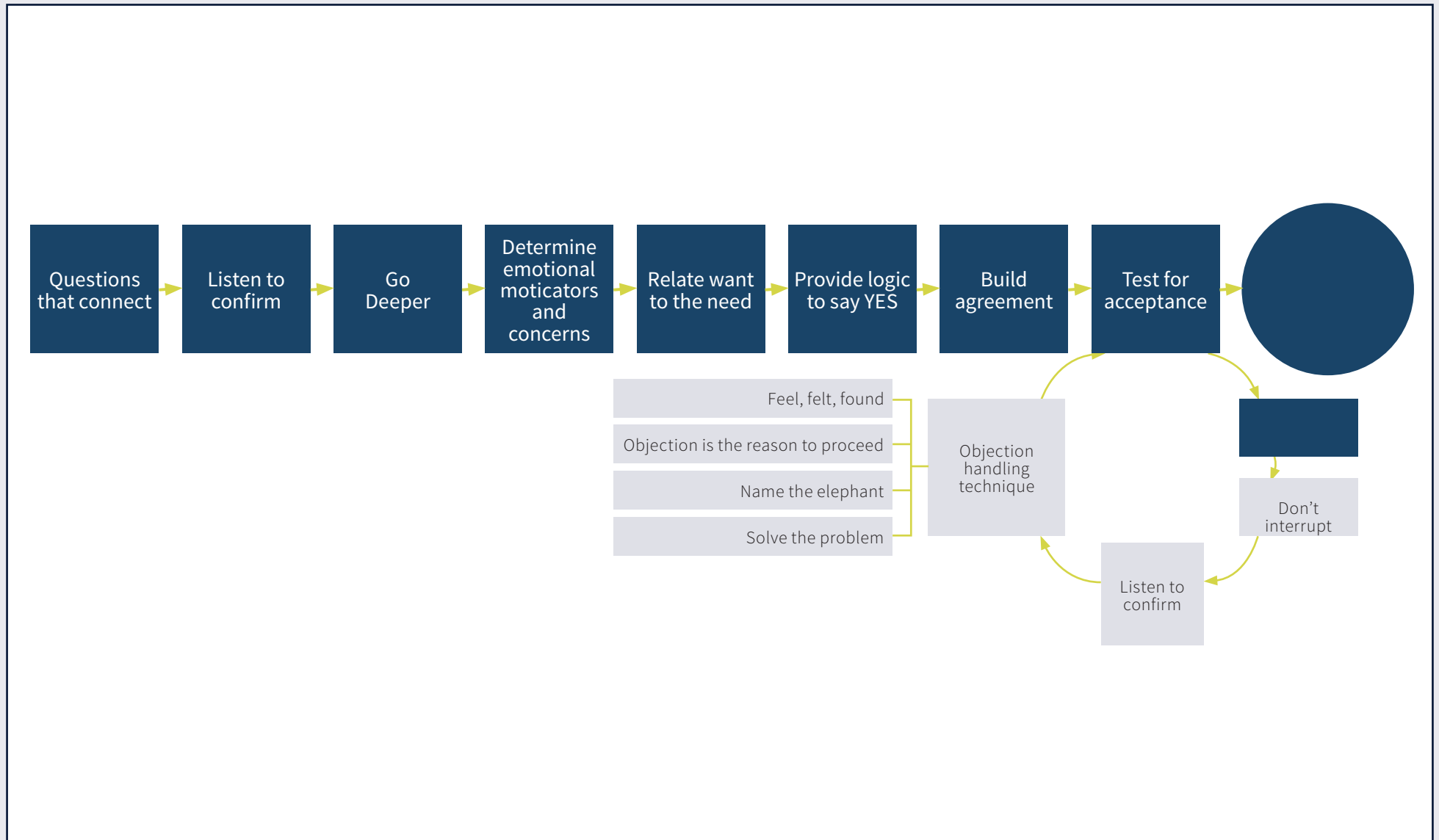


RESOURCES

PIF Review



PIF Explained

Positive Influence Formula

The Positive Influence Formula (PIF) is a communication model that helps to move away from a paternalistic model of healthcare to a more collaborative, relationship based model.

On some occasions, all nine steps of the PIF will be necessary to positively influence patients. At other times, only several steps will be required. As you become more experienced using the PIF, you will be able to determine when to use which parts of the model.

The PIF is designed to uncover what the patient really wants at an emotional level and then demonstrate how our treatment can meet that need.

The PIF gives patients the space to fully express themselves. One of the important human truths to be aware of is, people tend to like to talk about themselves, therefore it is imperative we develop the skill of asking questions, remaining present while the patient responds and, really listening intently to the answers.

Step 1: Questions that Connect

Questions that connect are designed to open the conversation and keep it progressing. By specifically including how the patient feels in the question, you're able to find out more about the patient and connect at a deeper level to get an insight into what really motivates the patient.

3 Elements of 'Questions that Connect'

1 They are open ended

These questions are designed to keep patients talking because they cannot be answered with a "yes" or "no" answer. They often start with "who", "what", "when", "why" or "how". They may also start with phrases such as "Can you tell me..."

"Can you tell me how you feel about your dental health?"

"How do you feel about your dental health?"

2 They should reveal how the patient feels

"When did you first become concerned about your broken tooth?"

3 Contain "You" or "Your"

The premise is to personalise the questions and put the patient "in the frame". It ensures that the focus remains on the patient.

"How do you feel about the condition of your mouth?"

Exercise

List examples that can be used in your practice.

1

2

3

Step 2: Listen to Confirm

The purpose here is two-fold. The first is to let the patient know they have been heard and the second is to confirm your understanding of what the patient has said.

The process for listening to confirm is shown below.

INTRO

“It sounds as though ... “

+

FEELING

“...y ou’re worried ...”

CONTENT

“ ...a bout missing work for your dental appointments ... “

+

PAUSE

Example:

Patient – “OK I will book to start but I can only come in the afternoon. I can’t possibly miss work.”

Dentist – “It sounds as though you’re worried about missing work for your dental appointment ...”

You may have interpreted their answer correctly or you have misinterpreted their reply. Either way you will be certain by the end of it.

Exercise

Listen to confirm each of these situations by recording an Intro, Feeling and Content.

Patient:

- 1 “My daughter-in-law read an article about implants and she said most of them don’t work.”
- 2 “My health fund told me that you’re an expensive dentist.”
- 3 “It costs that much?!”
- 4 “I don’t want to see that dentist again. His hands were too big and he was rough.”

Remember, there are many ways to be right! There is more than one way to listen.

Team Member:

1
2
3

Step 3: Go Deeper

In order to uncover as much about the patient as possible it is important to keep them talking. We really want to understand how the patients feel about any of the problems they present with as well as the implications of these problems from their perspective.

We can keep patients talking by:

- Asking deeper questions
- Linking questions together
- Further listening to confirm
- Exploring each topic until its natural conclusion

Here are some examples of deeper questions:

“How has this affected you?”

“How does that make you feel?”

“How often does that cause ...?”

“So what are the implications if this problem is not addressed?”

“Can you tell me more about that?”

“What does that result in?”

“What impact has this had on ...?”

“What has prevented you addressing this problem until now?” (To be used if the problem has persisted)

Step 4: Determine Emotional Motivators and Concerns

Determine what the patient wants at an emotional level or what concerns they have that may prevent them proceeding with a “yes” decision.

Motivators	Concerns

Step 5: Relate the Emotional Want to the Need

Once you know more about the patient and what they want from their treatment, the aim is to relate their emotional motivators and concerns to the observed clinical need.

This is achieved using a ‘Want – Need’ statement.

Using a Want – Need statement recognises purchasing decisions are made emotionally, and subsequently justified with logic. This type of communication allows the patient to be ‘right’ because they have already told you what outcomes they want

Whose idea is the best idea? Mine (patient).

Want / Need Statement

Want – “Because keeping your teeth is important to you”

Need – “I would suggest crowning the lower right molar tooth”

Note - Like most people, patients want to know what’s in it for them. By stating the want first, you focus their attention on the positive.

Motivators / Concerns	Want	Need
Longevity of restoration	So that you can keep your teeth forever	I suggest replacing the missing tooth with an implant
Cost	In order to save you money in the long term	
Aesthetics	Because having a nice smile is important to you	
Function	So that you can chew your food properly	

TIP – Any emotional want can be related to any clinical need or procedure.

Step 6: Provide the Logic to Say 'Yes'

Although we make decisions emotionally, we rationalise these decisions with logic. Without logic, it is highly possible the patient will experience buyer's remorse. The features of the proposed treatment provide the logic necessary for patients to proceed.

Motivators / Concerns	Want	Need	Logic
Longevity of restoration	So that you can keep your teeth forever	I suggest replacing the missing tooth with an implant.	Implants are a predictable and durable long-term solution.
Cost	In order to save you money in the long term		Because an implant will last so much longer than other treatment options it will save you money in the long run.
Aesthetics	Because having a nice smile is important to you		An implant will look like a natural tooth. No one will know it is there.
Function	So that you can chew your food properly		An implant allows you to chew like you would with natural teeth.

Exercise

Have some fun creating Want - Need -Logic Statements!

Motivators / Concerns	Want	Need	Logic
Money		Braces	
Time		Morning Appointment	
Function		Crown	
Pain		Wisdom Tooth Removal	
Appearance		Floss Every Day	

Step 7: Build Agreement

The aim of this step is for your patient to understand what's in it for them and to begin them on the process of saying "yes". Building agreement comes after the logic statement.

Examples:

- "How does that sound to you?"
- "Would that be of help?"
- "How would that work for you?"

Step 8: Test for Acceptance

This step is to assess if the patient is ready to proceed. Testing for acceptance allows the patient to picture themselves getting the necessary dentistry to achieve their goals. Testing for acceptance involves guiding the patient to make a choice of either:

Proceed or Speak Up.

There are many ways to ask questions that test for acceptance. However, there are three dominant methods.

1 Peas or Beans Method

This method assumes the patient is proceeding and the only decision that remains is how to start.

- "Would you like to start on the crown on the upper right or the one on the upper left?"
- "Would you prefer a morning or afternoon appointment?"

2 Minor Point Method

Again, this method assumes the treatment is proceeding but there are a few minor details to sort out first.

- "Would you prefer to watch a movie during treatment or listen to music?"

3 Objection Finding Method

This is a "speak now or forever hold your peace" scenario.

- "Before I ask Sally to schedule an appointment for you, what questions can I answer for you? "