

# Dr. O'Neil's Parting Shots

For the Class of 2021

1. Don't wait for business to get good. Get out and make business good.
2. You don't want to be the "best-kept secret" in town. Show up for everything, and make it count. The people you meet should know what you do. Get at least one of Susan RoAne's books on effective mingling. ([alibris.com](http://alibris.com) is a good source for inexpensive books.)
3. You should personally visit the referring dental offices at least every six months. Add some potential referral sources to your list, too. Don't delegate this.
4. Attend your local dental association meetings, and actively participate. Introduce yourself to those you don't know.
5. Treat "non-referring" dentists so well that they feel guilty for not sending you patients. Some of them will switch. You can count on it.
6. Find reasons to do favors for people, then do them. In the long term, life is one big boomerang...What you send out is coming back to you.
7. Affirm people when you can. It's a very attractive skill, and it's free.
8. Get involved in civic and/or religious organizations, and make a point of getting to know the members. Stay highly visible.
9. Get into the long-term habit of visiting other orthodontic offices to observe and learn. School is never out for the pro... Never.
10. Make sure that you maintain a positive mental diet with good books, CD's, Podcasts, DVD's, positive people, and other healthy brain food.
11. Learn enough about finance and money management that you can make the sensible decisions and investments that you'll need to make. Don't depend on your C.P.A. It's amazing what they don't know.
12. Your practice is almost always your best investment. Never stop teaching and reviewing things with your staff. Constantly review the six major systems: *Marketing, Treatment Acceptance, Scheduling, Clinical Efficiency, Practice Finance, and People Development.*



13. Celebrate those staff behaviors which you want to see more of.
14. When correcting staff remember to be *hard on the issues, soft on the people*.
15. Take a course on public speaking, and seize the opportunity to speak to civic, dental, and hygiene groups. Let them know that you have a presentation “ready to go” on short notice.
16. The rules of life are simple; just be nice to people.
17. Be generous when you can, but get your student loans under control first.
18. The most common complaint about new associates from senior orthodontists is that the younger orthodontists don’t do their share in building the practice. That’s when the seeds of discontent start to sprout. Have a plan and implement it on a daily basis.
19. Ask an experienced, non-competing orthodontist to be your mentor.
20. Early in your career (and maybe forever) concentrate on building your practice, and avoid other business opportunities and distractions.
21. Consider hiring a practice consultant early in your start-up years.
22. When a new patient enters your practice, it’s “show time.” They must have an excellent and memorable experience to refer to you.
23. Hire for those traits that are hard to train, such as personality and a sense of humor.
24. Say hello to every mom, every time. Remember, *visibility and relationships* drive your practice growth.
25. Ask for referrals, and train your staff to ask as well.
26. Set a daily goal for \_\_\_ number of caring phone calls and cards sent by each team member, including the doctor.
27. Call each patient who starts the night after his/her appointment.
28. Take full responsibility when things go wrong in the practice. Ask yourself what you could have done to prevent or correct the problem.
29. Seek balance in your life. Even Einstein played with his dog.