

EFFICIENCY WITHOUT RUSHING

Minor but powerful communication and workflow changes that make appointments more efficient without rushing the patient or the dentistry.

Efficiency is not only about hand speed. This guide helps you tighten the small, repeatable moments that quietly consume time - without rushing the patient or the dentistry.



SMALL TIME LEAKS ADD UP FAST

You do not need to shave ten minutes off one dramatic step. Sometimes the easier win is removing the same two-minute detour five times a day.

1

OPEN WITH DIRECTION

Skip the automatic "How are you?" or "How have you been?" when you know it tends to open a long detour. Try: **"Lovely to see you again."** Give a quick genuine compliment. This creates warmth quickly without opening a ten-minute detour. Then orient the visit: **"We are focusing on ___ today."**

2

REDIRECT WITHOUT MAKING IT AWKWARD

A friendly conversation can still need direction. Try: **"I really love chatting with you, but let's go ahead and get started. I want to make sure you are taken care of today."** Or: **"I want to stay aware of time so we can take care of everything you planned for today."**

3

STOP TURNING EVERY DECISION INTO A MENU

Patients usually need your recommendation before they need a list of every possible path. Explain the relevant choices, then say what you recommend and guide the decision.

4

POSITION BEFORE YOU COMPENSATE

Before adding another pillow, twisting your back, or moving yourself around the chair, use the chair and headrest intentionally. Small positioning problems become long days when your body keeps compensating for them.

Warm does not have to mean open-ended.

MAKE THE TRANSITION DO THE WORK

Efficiency often disappears between one part of the appointment and the next. A clear transition can move the visit forward without making the patient feel cut off.

1

CLOSE THE LOOP BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Briefly acknowledge what the patient just said. You do not need another question every time. A short acknowledgment can close one part of the conversation and make the transition feel natural.

2

NAME WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Once one part of the visit is complete, move directly into the next action. Clear direction prevents the dead space where conversation restarts simply because nobody moved the appointment forward.

3

USE TIME AS A PATIENT BENEFIT

When a conversation needs redirecting, connect time to completing what the patient came for. The message is not "I am behind." It is: **"I want to make sure we take care of what you planned for today."**

4

DO NOT REOPEN A FINISHED CONVERSATION

Once the concern has been answered and the direction is clear, resist adding another explanation, another option, or another open-ended question unless it changes the decision.

WHEN YOU ARE MAKING A TREATMENT RECOMMENDATION

Treatment-planning conversations need a different kind of efficiency. Explain the relevant choices, then state your clinical recommendation clearly: **"I recommend ____."**

Then pause. More words do not always create more clarity. If the patient has a question, answer it. If not, move the conversation to the next decision.

The goal is not to rush the decision. It is to avoid burying your recommendation under unnecessary options or explanation.

A clear transition closes one part of the appointment before another conversation has a chance to reopen it.

REVIEW ONE APPOINTMENT FOR FRICTION

Do not ask whether the whole day was efficient. Pick one appointment and look only for the small patterns you can repeat or remove.

1

DID THE OPENING INVITE A DETOUR?

If the first question opened ten minutes of unrelated conversation, change the opening next time.

2

DID THE CONVERSATION NEED REDIRECTING?

Notice where you knew it needed direction but waited because you did not want to sound abrupt.

3

DID A TRANSITION STALL?

Look for moments where everyone was ready, but nobody clearly moved the appointment to the next step.

4

WERE YOU COMPENSATING FOR POSITIONING?

Notice repeated chair, headrest, pillow, or body adjustments that could have been solved earlier.

5

DID EXPLANATION CREATE INDECISION?

If the patient received more detail or more options than the decision required, tighten the explanation next time.

Do not try to be faster everywhere. Tighten one repeatable leak first.

REMOVE WASTE. KEEP WHAT MATTERS.

The goal is not to move faster through patients. It is to stop spending time on patterns that add neither care nor clarity.

1

KEEP THE WARMTH. REMOVE THE DRIFT.

Rapport does not require surrendering control of the appointment.

2

GIVE DIRECTION WITHOUT SOUNDING IMPATIENT

Patients usually feel safer when they know what the visit is for and where the appointment is going.

3

MAKE A RECOMMENDATION

When treatment choices are being discussed, explain what matters and say what you recommend.

4

FIX ONE REPEATED FRICTION POINT

A small change repeated all day can matter more than trying to move faster everywhere.

Remove waste. Keep what matters.

A short guide can give you language and a place to start. It cannot see your schedule, hear your conversations, or weigh the trade-offs in your position. Without context, even good advice stays generic.

For a deeper dive, explore the New DDS Unfiltered Digital Library or work directly with Dr. K.

NewDDSUnfiltered.com

Professional note: This guide is for general education and workflow reflection. It does not replace individualized clinical, ergonomic, employment, safety, or practice-management guidance.