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Chairman and CEO of Levin Group, Inc.



### Building TOTAL PRACTICE Success™

Our commitment is to help every orthodontist grow regardless of the economy. Every orthodontic practice has the potential to transform into A Levin Practice™ and anticipate these results:

- Continually increasing production
- Continually increasing profit
- Continually increasing referrals
- A low stress practice environment
- High levels of professional satisfaction
- Reaching financial independence sooner

Our consulting programs are based on proven systems and strategies that have delivered successful results to thousands of practices for more than 24 years. Levin Group Consulting Programs are the established benchmark for practice management excellence in our profession.

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# What is a Level IV Orthodontist?

## A Monthly Article on Practice Management

*Presented by Dr. Roger P. Levin and Ortho Technology, Inc.*

Level IV Leadership™ is a life-changing concept, and one that should be understood by an orthodontist as early in a career as possible. There are four levels that an orthodontist can achieve as an owner and leader of an orthodontic practice. Bear in mind that the level achieved will have a direct effect on the financial success and personal enjoyment reached by the orthodontist.



These are the four levels of orthodontic leadership Levin Group identified based on more than 25 years of consulting to orthodontists

- Level I — Start
- Level II — Competence
- Level III — Maximum Work
- Level IV — Work Through Others

### Level I — Start

Level I orthodontists are in a start-up phase and learning the ropes of managing the practice. Some offices grow quickly, some grow slowly and unfortunately, today some do not grow at all. The key to a start-up practice is to understand the practice's business plan prior to opening. Evaluating situations such as demographics, competition, affluence of the community, future growth plans, referral patterns and referral trends, and a host of other factors are all critical to the long-term success of the orthodontic practice.

### Level II — Competence

Level II orthodontists are those who have become comfortable at handling a range of orthodontic cases. In the early years, a lot of energy is expended by thinking through case design and case planning. Once the orthodontist becomes competent

after approximately three to four years, it simply means that he or she can work easily, expending less energy on each case. In essence, competence goes along with becoming experienced and that is exactly what happens.

### Level III — Maximum Work

Level III orthodontist is the level to pay the most attention to. This level is defined as maximum work, which means that the orthodontist is going to work every day, seeing patients, probably has an average or above average practice, and things are going reasonably well. The vast majority of orthodontists are Level III orthodontists.

Let me be very clear. Every orthodontist wants to achieve Level III. But you don't want to stay here too long! The reason is that despite making a living and having an above average practice, this level does begin to get more challenging every few years. The orthodontist reaches a point where he or she doesn't want to put in extra time, resents performing any marketing, finds patient and staff problems more irritating, and experiences increased fatigue.

I can tell you from extensive personal experience that orthodontic practices can grow at every level if the right strategies and tactics are followed. The key is to recognize early on that the orthodontist has become a Level III doctor and to develop a plan to reach Level IV.

### Level IV — Work Through Others

Level IV orthodontists are the most financially successful and professionally satisfied orthodontists in the profession. These are the doctors who have outstanding practices, excellent incomes, more income than they need to fund their lifestyle and retirement, and truly enjoy going to work every day. These orthodontists have more energy than many orthodontists far younger and are always focused on how they can improve or expand the practice because they are not frustrated, overworked or even tired. They have energy to burn!

Level IV orthodontists are what I refer to as individuals who *work through others*. While orthodontics presents numerous opportunities for delegation, many orthodontists do not handle this properly and take on more responsibilities than necessary, resulting in increased dissatisfaction and stress. In a top orthodontic practice, the doctor will be what Levin Group refers to as a Level IV leader. This means that the orthodontist only concentrates on two things and only two things. These are:

#### Focusing On What You Do Well

There are orthodontists who go to the practice, see patients all day and leave at the end of the day

energized, excited and fresh. The reason is that they are not wasting time on activities in which they do not excel. At what activities do you excel?

This is the question that often paralyzes orthodontists. The answer is typically only one thing—orthodontics. What this means is that most highly successful people, including orthodontists, are excellent at one thing only and very rarely two.

Unfortunately, orthodontists, like many professionals, think they have to excel at everything. Their view is that they are better than their staff at handling almost every activity in the office, so they will handle many of them themselves. Or at the very least they will attempt to micromanage the entire practice. That would be a Level III orthodontist.

*The level achieved will have a direct effect on the financial success and personal enjoyment reached by the orthodontist.*

As an orthodontist matures in his or her career, it gradually becomes evident that spending time on the activity in which one excels is the most productive, financially rewarding and enjoyable use of his or her time. Orthodontists love performing orthodontics. Very few walk in the office in the morning hoping for no-shows so that they can hang out at the front desk.

Level IV orthodontists work to delegate responsibilities that others can perform just as well.

#### Spending Time On What You Enjoy

To reach Level IV leadership, the orthodontist must give away certain activities. In a special seminar I teach known as the Total Life Success, participants create lists of their daily, weekly, monthly and annual activities and then begin to determine which ones they can delegate to others. This leaves more time for orthodontists to focus directly on patient care and activities that they enjoy in their lives.

Without question, Level IV leadership is not only financially rewarding, but creates the finest opportunity to realize the true professional and personal potential of each doctor.

#### Conclusion

Are you a Level III or a Level IV leader? To achieve your practice potential, Level IV is where you need to be. This is the place where your practice is the most successful, and where you are getting the most enjoyment out of what you do.

Visit [www.levingrouportho.com](http://www.levingrouportho.com) for more information on Level IV Leadership, and view a 2-Minute Seminar on this topic under the Resource Center tab.