

## YOU LOOK AT IT SO OFTEN, YOU FORGET IT'S THERE



I am talking about your office and about clutter.

Clutter is everywhere – reception areas, storage rooms, our homes, cars, garages, basements.

Don't get me started about some of the doctors' private offices I have seen!

We accumulate things because they are useful at the time.

When we put an item down, we silently think, "I am going to need that again someday." And that is when it begins - often to do nothing but collect dust.

In your office, right now, the clutter lives.

Hand tools, gadgets, post it notes, patient files!

If they are needed occasionally, do they really need to be visible to your patients?

I was in a phenomenally successful practice last year. There was clutter everywhere.

Useless things taking up precious space creating nothing but visual noise.

Some were pure junk begging for the circular filing bin!

When the filmmaker arrived, I asked the owner, "Can we put some things away for the film?"

He agreed but said, "I will put it all back out – I do not want my staff to think I am up to something."

When leaving I saw him re-cluttering!

### Challenge Yourself

Open a cupboard or a drawer. Do not close it. Pick up each item and ask yourself, ***"Do I really need this, and when will I need it again?"***

Wardrobe consultants say if you have not worn it in a year, it should be donated. The same logic applies to your office.



In another office, I opened a cupboard in the staff room designed specifically for uniforms. There was no room for another hanger. “We do not wear those anymore, but they are still good” she admitted.

Oh dear. Another cupboard filled with redundant items in a small office already challenged for storage space.

I also saw paper products stacked to the ceiling. In space that all patients pass on their way to the operatories. Full sweeping view!

I asked, “Why so many paper towels and toilet paper cases?” He claimed they were on sale.

He must have read my article about running out of toilet paper: [A funny Toilet Paper story](#)

### **Always Be Ready**

Life happens. Your practice may come up for sale on very short notice.

Buyers, their advisors, and a banker may need to enter your office on short notice.

They will not be impressed by your clutter collection. They want to see space, not a treasure hunt!

The Appraiser must take pictures for the legal records.

When we are impressed, it reflects in the appraisal. Yes, we have a secret score for clean vs untidy!

If we are not impressed, it will decrease value – sometimes substantially.

Do not wait for spring to clean. Pick one room, or just one drawer or cupboard and start now. You know where to go first.

### **My wife always says, “Break down the elephant Timothy.”**

It’s OK to start small. And then, you have begun.

The reward is awaiting.

Your staff will notice and they may step up and promise to keep their work areas uncluttered moving forward.

Remember, the tops of cabinetry & cupboards - and countertops - are not for storage!

Patients will comment when your space is tidier and less cluttered. It speaks to the clinical environment and can impact their perception of the quality of your dentistry.

This is simple advice, and easy for me to impart.

But I also practice what I preach – and I know exactly which cupboard I am heading for right now.

TEXT me if you want to see the Before and After pics – my assistant will be enormously proud of me!

**I’m serious about this, folks. If I can do it, so can you! And here’s a little fun challenge: Text me your before and after pictures, and the best de-clutterer will win a special prize! Go on, get those muscles working and show clutter who’s boss! 🛠️🌟**

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