

Samera Ltd

Practice Health Check Assessor

How well is your practice performing?

Samera Ltd

Dental Practice health check analysis

As you are aware many changes are taking place in UK dentistry including:

- Options for change
- Changes in the regulations, that will potentially allow dentists to form limited companies
- Increased specialism within dentistry
- A greater female workforce
- Growth in private and cosmetic dentistry

At Samera we believe these changes will have long term implications on your practice profitability. The deciding factor of your success or failure as a dentist in the 21st century will be determined by how well you are prepared to cope with these changes.

We have assessed and identified how these changes can affect you. We believe that dentists who'll be successful in the 21st century are those who run their practices with a greater commercial sense whilst maintaining high clinical and ethical standards.

Practice Health check tool

To ascertain how well you are fine tuned to face these changes, we have developed a practice health check tool.

This will help you to find where you are currently positioned in our “positioning map” – a matrix based on two key variables that are essential in ensuring your success in the 21st century as a dentist.

The two key variables are “**your strategic awareness**” and “**your practice management techniques**” assessed through two simple questionnaires.

We have structured the questions in such a way to cover four key aspects common to any business, namely, strategy, finance, marketing and operations.

How the Health Check tool works

Firstly you will need to answer the 12 questions under the **Strategic Awareness** and **Practice management** questionnaires respectively. Then you will need to calculate your score for each section. Then with these scores you will need to place them on the positioning map.

Section A – Strategic awareness

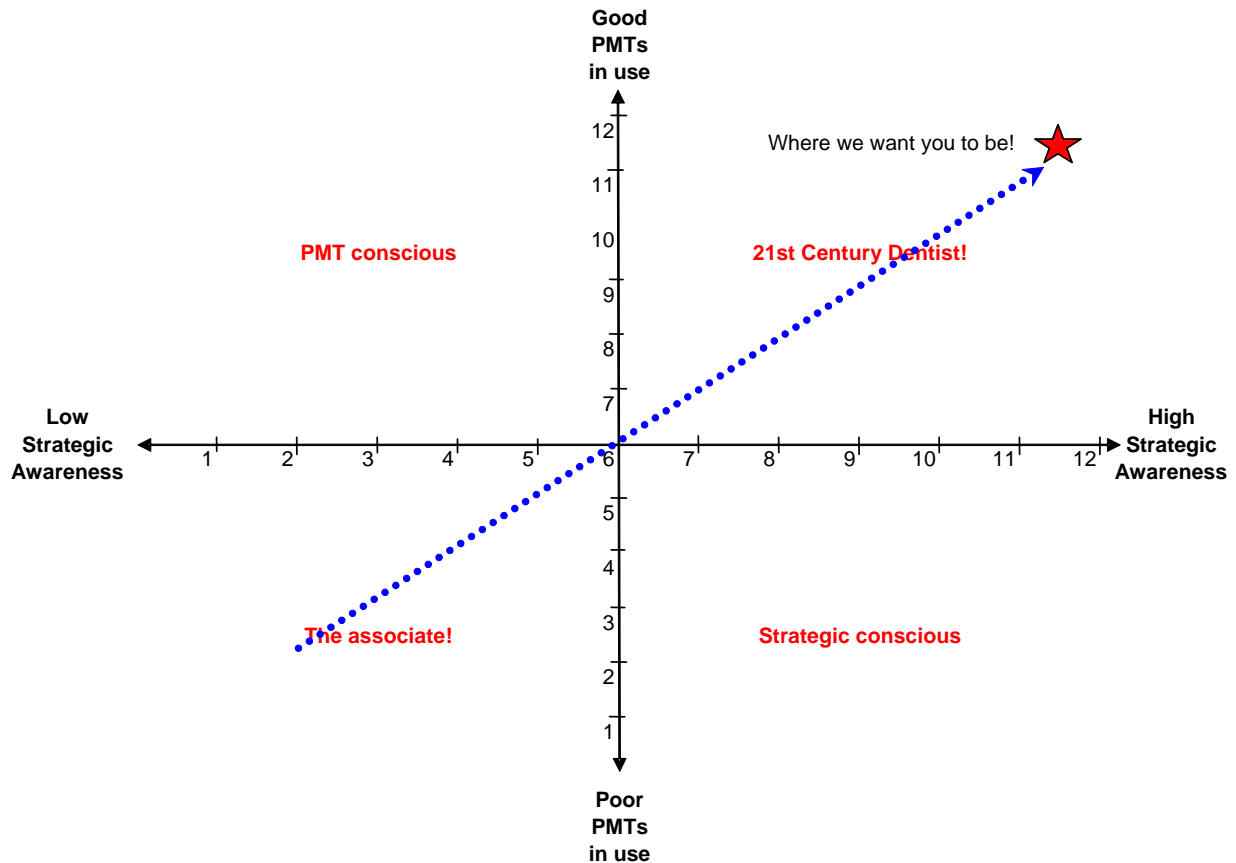
	Your level of agreement on a scale of 0-4				
	0	1	2	3	4
1) Your awareness on changes taking place in the UK dental industry is high					
2) We have a clear idea of our practice's position in 3 to 5 year's time					
3) We have a clear vision and a set of objectives for the practice					
4) We have a clear action plan to reach the above objectives					
5) In light of changes taking place in the industry, we have clearly identified our target patient group					
6) We consider marketing an important aspect for dentists/dental practices					
7) We consider patient relationship management is an important aspect					
8) We consider the ambience of our practice is an important aspect					
9) We are aware of our practice's market position relative to other practices in our local area					
10) We consider financial management a very important aspect in running a successful practice					
11) We are "up to date" with our practice's financial Performance					
12) We consider functioning as a closely knit team is really important for better practice performance					
Now, please add the number of ticks under each column					
Multiply the above totals by the number at the top of the column (e.g. column one's total multiplied by 0)					
Add sideways to find your total score for section A of the self assessment					
Divide the above total by 4, and use this answer to place yourself in the positioning map's X axis – "the level of strategic awareness"					

Section B – Practice Management

	Your level of agreement on a scale of 0-4				
	0	1	2	3	4
1. We assess overall performance of our practice regularly against the pre-set objectives					
2. We have some form of marketing activities or campaigns in place					
3. We measure patient satisfaction levels in terms of compliments, feedback and complaints etc					
4. We do get additional inputs from our Accountant on how to improve our practice's performance & profitability					
5. We carry out some form of cash flow planning, budgeting and forecasting, at least on a quarterly basis					
6. We measure our actual financial performance of the practice against such forecasts and results of the previous year					
7. We assess the performance of our practice against the industry standards in terms of simple benchmarking exercises etc					
8. We always maintain similar standards of service					
9. There's adequate staff training at all levels within our practice					
10. We carry out regular staff briefings and reviews					
11. We have standard work practices for patient bookings, scheduling, treatment and billing systems					
12. We have a set of key performance indicators to measure the financial and non-financial performance of the practice at regular intervals					
Now, please add the number of ticks under each column					
Multiply the above totals by the number at the top of the column (e.g. column one's total multiplied by 0)					
Add sideways to find your total score for section B of the self assessment					
Divide the above total by 4, and use this answer to place yourself in the positioning map's Y axis – "the state of practice management tools in use"					

Your Positioning Map

Strategic Positioning Map forDental Practice



Your score

Once you complete the answers to each questionnaire, total the number of ticks that you have placed in each column. Then multiply these totals with the respective number at the top of the column. Once you do this, add up these subtotals to find your final score for each section of the health check.

Then divide each total score by 4 and use that answer to place your positioning on the axes of the positioning map.

Interpreting your position

Now you know where your practice is positioned in our Health Check positioning map.

The implications of being positioned in the different quadrants are discussed below highlighting any actions that you must take.

1. “The associate”

Your strategic awareness of issues affecting your practice is low. Further, with poor practice management techniques in place, your profitability can be no better than the income you generated as an associate!

You are probably not generating a return that compensates all your efforts and trouble of becoming principal!

With the emerging trends that we have highlighted, you will find it extremely difficult to retain your customers and to attract new customers.

Practice profitability will be seriously affected, forcing you to cut expenses drastically. This will have cascading effects such as staff morale etc. You might start thinking of working for another practice, freeing yourself from the added responsibility of managing a practice, with a similar earnings potential.

The picture is gloomier, if you are placed at the bottom left hand corner of the quadrant!

Tips – stop.....and assess what has gone wrong and how you could address these aspects without compromising your daily routine...you have to do something sooner than later!

2. “Strategic conscious”

Your strategic awareness is relatively high; nevertheless you are not equipped with the right practice management tools to take the practice to where you want to. Your practice profitability may not be adequate to compensate your efforts.

If you do not act fast to identify the key practice management techniques for your practice, competition will take over and your profitability will be affected adversely.

We would like to emphasize the fact that the winners at the end of the day are the dentists who focus not only on strategic aspects of running a dental practice in the 21st century, but who also implement and maintain sound practice management techniques!

Tips – True you are aware of strategic issues, but you have to identify the relevant practice management techniques that you need to adopt. These will ensure the

efficiency and effectiveness of various key functions of your practice whilst providing you with vital feedback.

3. “Practice Management Technique (PMT) conscious”

You have relatively good practice management techniques in use; nevertheless your strategic awareness is low. Your profitability must be above average at present. However, if you do not focus on strategic aspects such as identifying the right customer group that you want to serve in the long run or introducing new services in light of increased emphasis on specialisation within dentistry etc, your practice profitability will suffer in the long run.

Tips – There are lots of scope for you to improve your practice profitability by focusing on strategic aspects and become a “21st century dentist”! To do this you should identify the threats and opportunities in the external environment. If you fail to do so, your long term profitability would suffer.

4. “21st Century dentist”

This is the vision of Samera Limited! – To create business skilled dentists with a good level of strategic awareness and keen to use good practice management techniques.

If you are positioned in this quadrant your profitability should be above average and you are well positioned to face the changes that are taking place in the industry. If you are positioned at the top right hand corner of the quadrant, the future is even more promising!

Tips – To maintain and improve your profitability conduct regular reviews of the strategic aspects and operational aspects of your practice. This will assure you that you stay ahead of the competition in a rapidly changing environment.

Your next steps

Through this simple yet powerful analysis I hope you have identified where your practice areas of development are. The next step is to return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed self addressed envelope back to Samera or faxback on 0208 870 6004.

We will then review the results and design a tailored programme for you in order to ensure your practice is improving, growing and developing in the right direction.

Alternatively, if you wish to discuss this further with us in person please do not hesitate to contact us on 0870 446 0620.