

FULL CONTROL OF THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE: FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE



Success requires a specialized focus on patient needs, rather than what everyone else is doing.

BY DAVID ROSENBERG, MD

Having nearly completed my nineteenth year in practice, it is compelling to reflect on these past two decades of work. For this article, I will describe the process with which I developed from the ground up, a flourishing Facial Plastic Surgery enterprise in possibly the most competitive of locations: Manhattan.

Dialing back the clock to 1999, the year of my AAFPRS fellowship with Drs. Alvin and Mark Glasgold, I encounter numerous predictors of my future success, but two principles stand out: my unrelenting focus on learning how to perform the deep-plane facelift and an irrepressible drive to figure out the early steps required to build the foundation for a premier Facial Plastic Surgery practice. Back then, despite my inexperience, I saw an opportunity to “raise the bar” in New York, not only for surgical results but also for the way in which patients experienced their caregiving.

OUTCOMES: PRIORITY ONE

Priority one in aesthetic surgery is the outcome. I have taken this principle a step further, and recognized the only way to thrive in this business is to deliver a result that excels beyond all others. With this in mind, I will describe my obsession in 1999 with learning the deep-plane facelift. At the time, the most revered surgeons in New York all performed one or another version of a SMAS facelift. In my mind every renowned surgeon delivered essentially the same product. The technique was the gold standard, the work horse, the approach of the prolific celebrity surgeons and the one nearly all students dreamed of mastering. Yet, I could not find a SMAS facelift outcome I wished to call my own. I assessed the results as tight, severe, and unbalanced. However, I was alone with these ideas, and to think this way was heresy. To speak it would have been career suicide. I remained silent but listened carefully during consultations as patients described with panic their fear of looking “overdone.” Endless women

told me they would rather have loose necks and jowls than have the appearance of looking operated upon.

Unknowingly, these terrified patients were responding to SMAS facelift outcomes, and their commentaries crystallized my decision to follow my intuition. I was convinced the deep-plane facelift was not only a superior procedure but also the future gold standard approach for the next famous Manhattan facelift surgeon. This operation had been generously introduced to me by Dr. Norman Pastorek in my residency. During fellowship I became convinced I could master the approach and intended to build an aging face surgery practice in New York, based on this operation. In a city that did not need another SMAS surgeon, but where residents craved a result that appeared more natural and understated, I began filling this niche.

While young, I had correctly assessed the Manhattan aesthetic surgery market place. In 2000, I performed 13 facelifts, 50 in 2005, 140 in 2009, and 270 per annum since 2014. The deep plane facelift was the key that opened the lock to excelling in the New York arena.

Remarkably, if you ask me today, 20 years later, where I direct the majority of my aging face surgical efforts, I’d answer that my attentions have not dramatically changed, my approach has just evolved. Incrementally, I have improved upon the deep plane operation and created a customized facelift technique, an operation that in comparison to the one I performed 20 years ago, provides substantially more extensive sub-platysma dissection and support. The aesthetic benefits that coincide with these advances are more elegant, age appropriate, and long lasting. My approach also comes with a rapid recovery and never requires drain placement. Today, I deliver what my patients and I consider to be one of the most exceptional facelifts in the world.

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PATIENT SATISFACTION

Beyond delivering unsurpassed surgical outcomes, my team members and I focus on developing growth from inside the practice and use social media only as a secondary tool. My wife, Dr. Jessica Lattman, an exceptional oculoplastic surgeon, my associate Dr. Benjamin Paul, a facial plastic surgeon with a booming hair transplantation practice, and I all strive to deliver care in a manner without compare. It is our philosophy that if we can make our patients feel more beautiful, in a magnificent setting that minimizes anxiety, with a process that speeds recovery and avoids pain, then our satisfied patients will lead to business expansion through word of mouth referrals. Our plan has proven extraordinarily successful. The opening of our private and upscale outpatient surgery center, Manhattan Facial Surgery Suites, PLLC six years ago, allowed us to obtain the

utmost control of the patient experience, and without a doubt has become another essential component of how we distinguish our practices from others in the region.

A FOCUS ON HAPPY PATIENTS

To this day I believe my first few cases in private practice, which fortunately had superb outcomes, were the foundation for all my future success. Back then and still today, the common thread is that happy patients are the best tools for marketing and their support is essential to the growth of any aesthetic surgical practice. This is the tried and true path to my success. ■

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