



✓ Say This, Not That

Helping Dental Teams Speak the Language of Trust and Value

The words we choose shape the patient experience. This guide exists to help dental teams align on language that builds trust, elevates value, and differentiates your practice. Small shifts in how we communicate can transform the patient experience. *Say This, Not That* provides clear, value-building alternatives to common phrases, empowering every team member to communicate with confidence, consistency, and intention.

This guide offers examples of value-building language and walks your team through creating your own customized *Say This, Not That* playbook for your practice. Review each segment of the table below with your team. After reviewing the examples, agree on what elevated language choices your team will integrate into your practice.

EXAMPLES

✓ General Practice Communication

✓ Say This

This is the process that helps us provide the best care — here's what it means for you.

Thank you for your patience, we will be with you shortly. Would you like a water while you wait?

Your comfort is important to us, please let us know if you feel anything so we can adjust.

What additional information would be helpful?

Let's take a moment to make sure you're comfortable.

Before you head out, let's review your next steps.

✓ Not That

That's our policy.

Sorry, we're really behind.

Don't worry, this won't hurt.

Do you have any questions?

Just relax.

You're good to go.



Administrative

Say This

We have opportunities on _____ and _____, which do you prefer?

If you share your preferred days and times we can add you to our priority list.

An opportunity has come available...

What, if anything, would prevent us from scheduling now?

Your last preventative hygiene visit was _____ ...

Your estimated patient portion is...

Let me help you with today's investment, how will you be paying today?

Let's reserve a new time together now.

Reserve

Investment

What we can do is...

Not That

When can you come in?

I'll put you on the ASAP list.

We had a cancellation....

Do you want to schedule?

You're overdue for your cleaning...

You will owe...

Did you want to take care of the payment today?

Okay, give us a call back when you are ready to reschedule.

Book

Cost

No, we can't...

Insurance

Say This

Benefits

We are an unrestricted provider

We work with many insurance companies to maximize your benefits.

Your benefits contribute...

Your benefits won't apply here, so let's review your portion.

Not That

Insurance

We are out of network

We do not participate with any insurance.

Your insurance covers...

It's not covered by insurance.



▼ Clinical

▼ Say This

So that we can ensure health in the areas we can't see by eye, we will update your x-rays.

You have bleeding which indicates infection.

Periodontal therapy

Supportive periodontal therapy

Preventative care

Your tooth is decaying

Preventative varnish

This area is showing early breakdown, we can address it before it worsens.

The best next step is...

This procedure allows us to treat the issue comfortably and predictably.

The doctor will come in for a thorough evaluation.

▼ Not That

You are due for x-rays.

You have a little bit of bleeding.

Deep cleaning/SRP

Perio Maintenance

Cleaning

You have a cavity

Fluoride

This area is showing early breakdown, we should put a watch on it.

You really should...

It's an easy fix

The doctor will come for a quick look.

▼ Now it's your turn.

> STEP 1

Review the examples together and reflect on where your current language aligns or drifts from the patient experience you want to create.

> STEP 2

Discuss the high-impact moments in your practice where consistent, value-building language matters most.

> STEP 3

Use the table below to outline the specific Say This, Not That phrases your team commits to using as part of your shared communication standards.



▼ Say This

▼ Not That

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