

# Before-the-Examination Questions

Use the information gained on the first phone call to have a “small talk” conversation at the beginning of the visit. Then, preview the conversation to follow by saying, “Maria, we want to provide personalized care for all our patients. We want to learn your concerns and desires so we can help you have the dental health and appearance that you want. In order for us to give you that kind of care, I’d like to ask you a few questions and write down the answers. Would that be okay?” Record their answers on paper in a nice leather portfolio.

1. **“We like to get to know our patients. Tell me about your family.”** Listen and ask follow-up questions. Then ask, **“Tell me about your work.”** Listen and ask follow-up questions. Then ask, **“Tell about what you do in your spare time.”** Listen and ask follow-up questions. Learn at least ten personal facts about the patients. Don’t discuss anything dental-related for the first five minutes of your conversation.
2. **“In addition to (information you’ve learned so far), how can we help you today?”** Always start where they are, not where you think they should be.
3. **“What kinds of dental treatment have you had in the past?”** If appropriate, follow-up with **“Why was that done?”** Now ask, **“What other kinds of dental treatment have you had in the past?”**
4. **“Have you ever had a negative experience in a dental office?”**
5. **“Have you ever had any gum problems or gum surgery?” “Do your gums ever bleed when you brush your teeth?”**
6. **“Have you ever lost any teeth?”** If they answer, “Yes, ask **“Have you replaced the missing teeth with anything?”**
7. Give patients a hand mirror and ask them, **“What improvements would you make in the appearance of your teeth if we could easily change anything?”** If you see, metal restorations in their mouths ask, **“What do you think of the appearance of those metal fillings on your back teeth?”**
8. **“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being extremely important, how important is it for you to keep all your teeth for a lifetime?”**
9. **“I’m curious. What do you look for in a dentist and his/her team?”**
10. **“Is there anything that would stand in your way of getting the proper dentistry you need?”**
11. **“Do you have any time deadlines for the completion of your dentistry?”**
12. **“Do you have any questions for me?”**