

Rebuilding a Dental Practice Through Spear



Dr. Don Anderson

See how one dentist achieved a digital dentistry transformation through Spear's integrated practice growth framework for technology, airway care, and collaboration.

The Problem

After more than 30 years in dentistry, Dr. Don Anderson could feel the profession changing around him.

Digital workflows, airway-focused care, and interdisciplinary treatment planning were redefining modern dentistry. But despite decades of experience, his practice still felt stuck in an "analog-era" mindset.

"I could see the profession rapidly adopting digital technologies," he says. "My old team was determined to remain an analog-era team despite my best efforts to adapt."

Then the pressure intensified. Over seven months, Dr. Anderson lost six employees while simultaneously trying to modernize workflows, adopt digital dentistry, and rebuild a practice that no longer reflected the dentistry he wanted to do. Rather than scale back, he chose to rethink everything.

"I decided to rebuild my practice with the Spear philosophy in mind," he says.

He wasn't looking for another CE course. He wanted an integrated practice growth system that could reconnect clinical growth, team alignment, and meaningful patient care.

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The Solution: An integrated growth system with Spear All Access

Dr. Anderson first connected with [Spear All Access](#) after purchasing his first digital scanner, mill, and 3D printer in 2022. What began as an interest in digital dentistry quickly became a complete practice transformation.

With guidance from his Spear Practice Growth Partner, he rebuilt both his clinical philosophy and practice systems. "She helped guide me through my staff collapse," he says. "Despite the team attrition, I pushed on with even greater enthusiasm for pursuing advanced learning.

"For the first time in 30 years, I started linking together everything I had learned as a general dentist," he says. "I started the transformation of thinking like a prosthodontist."

The Results

Today, Dr. Anderson's practice looks completely different from it did just a few years ago.

His referral network has expanded through interdisciplinary collaboration, with specialists now referring airway-related patients directly to his practice. His team evolved alongside the transformation:

- His assistant returned to pursue expanded functions training
- His hygienist began exploring myofunctional therapy
- His scheduling and financial systems became more aligned with clinical goals

The practice also became more operationally efficient. Rather than rebuilding the team to its previous size after the period of attrition, Dr. Anderson redesigned workflows, technology systems, and team responsibilities to support continued growth with a leaner staffing model.

Through Spear's airway education pathway, Dr. Anderson also discovered a deeper passion for airway-focused dentistry and obstructive sleep apnea treatment. He implemented the Seattle Protocol in his practice and launched an interdisciplinary Spear Study Club centered on airway care.

Within months, the club grew to 14 members representing multiple specialties.

"When you have so many different specialties in one room, you get a lot of different viewpoints," Dr. Anderson says. "We're starting to learn what each other can do in ways that are different and unique."

Most importantly, Spear changed how dentistry feels again. "Spear rejuvenated me to the point where I don't want to retire anytime soon," he says.

Today, patient conversations extend far beyond restorative treatment alone. "Now I can have conversations that aren't just about a broken filling or a crown," he says. "It's about improving overall health and helping patients live life more fully."

For Dr. Anderson, the transformation wasn't just technological. It changed how he sees patients, leads his team, and thinks about the future of his practice.

[Explore how to modernize your dentistry, strengthen your team, and build a practice that feels as good as it performs.](#)