

TEACH YOUR DOCTORS HOW TO TREAT YOU

PROVEN SALES EFFICACY FOR 35 YEARS

Pharmaceutical 35TH ANNIVERSARY REPRESENTATIVE[®]

Essential Skills for Pharmaceutical Selling

November 2006

**LISTEN TO
THE BEST**

BECOME A
SPECIALTY REP

E-SAMPLING

SOLUTION OR ACCESS BARRIER?

**FROM RISK
TO REWARD**

TAKING THE RIGHT
CHANCES

**JITTER
BUSTERS**

SCARING AWAY
PRESENTATION NERVES



DOWNLOADING SAMPLE...

PLUS:

THE LATEST
MEDICALLY
RELEVANT GIFTS

A LOOK AT
OFF-LABEL
PRESCRIBING



Diagnosis

You're a primary care rep looking to break into specialty sales.

Prescription

Listen to the advice of some outstanding specialty reps.

Why they switch

The following are some of the main reasons primary care representatives seek specialty opportunities:

- Desire to make more money.
- Boredom in their current role.
- Personal interest in a specific disease state.
- Desire for longer, more meaningful interactions.
- Desire for greater clinical knowledge.
- More confidence in biotech pipelines.

Read more ... a lot more. Expand your knowledge well beyond what you need to sell on a day-to-day basis. Read the same journals your doctors do and discuss important issues with your customers.

Ask more questions ... of everyone. Every week you talk with people who collectively possess hundreds of years of postgraduate medical education. You will get a lot smarter if you tap into what they know.

Network and collaborate as much as you can ... especially with high-level physicians. You may not call on the editor of a major medical journal, but you certainly call on physicians who play a leadership role in your local medical community. Get involved with their efforts and you will gain valuable influencing and negotiation skills.

"Primary care selling can be a perfect launching pad to get into specialty sales," adds Barnett. In her opinion, primary care representatives can use their current role to prepare for specialty opportunities by:

- Taking advantage of the training programs and resources (workshops, books, DVDs and tape libraries) their companies offer.
- Polishing their communication skills.
- Gaining skill and experience in building strong relationships with physicians and office staff.
- Demonstrating business acumen and creativ-

Listen to the best

Successful specialty reps offer great advice on joining their profession by Rick Rosenthal

In a previous issue of **Pharmaceutical Representative**, my colleague Rayna Herman and I offered guidance to primary care representatives seeking to prepare themselves for a transition to specialty sales ("The scoop on specialty sales," December 2005). The article also described approaches current specialty representatives could adopt to excel in their roles. Research by the Lambertville, NJ-based Health Strategies Group on specialty representatives and their customers formed the foundation for the advice presented in the piece.

This month's follow-up article expands on previous themes by drawing on the insights of

two outstanding specialty representatives: Kelly Barnett of Cambridge, MA-based Millennium Pharmaceuticals Inc. and Debby Fleuridas of South San Francisco-based Genentech Inc.

Getting into specialty sales

If you are a primary care representative who wants to get into specialty sales, you will eventually need to impress a specialty district manager. You will have to stand out as the best candidate, even compared with people who already work as specialty representatives. How can you use your current role to prepare for success? I recommend the following three steps:

ity in the way they organize and run a territory.

Fleuridas offers the following advice for those attempting to transition to specialty sales:

- Document your successes: "You do need a brag book for that interview!"
- Do your homework: Look up company Web sites and talk to their representatives. Figure out what the company looks for and prepare to prove that you have it.
- Line up support: Ask for a written recommendation from an appropriate physician. "When you show up at the interview and the DM says, 'You don't call on our specialists,' you can say, 'I sure do and here's an endorsement from one of them!'" says Fleuridas.

Both Barnett and Fleuridas agree that future customers represent an important networking source, and they recommend several ways to engage these physicians' help. For example, ask them to describe the best specialty representative they know, and listen for the attributes customers want. Ask for that representative's voice mail number or for an introduction at his next appointment. To prepare for an interview in a new therapeutic

• Think and act like someone who wants to help a patient. Think about treatment like your customer does – not as choosing medicines, but as caring for a patient.

• Understand the needs of every member of the office staff, and serve them. Physicians notice representatives who respect and service their staff – and those who ignore them.

• Understand the healthcare business. Specialty physicians' economic concerns extend beyond product copays and prior authorization requirements. Stay current on changes in Medicare, Medicaid and local health plans.

With over a decade of industry experience each and multiple national sales awards between them, Barnett and Fleuridas know what it takes to succeed. They echo several of the themes above and offer suggestions for new specialty representatives, those seeking a competitive advantage and those with an established track record of success.

Fleuridas advises new specialty representatives: "Focus on building relationships with the entire office staff and the physician, and get your education. If you are not an expert in your

Talking points

Topics to discuss with specialty reps you meet and good questions to ask:

Culture and morale

- What is it like to work there?
- Do most representatives like it?
- Are people excited about the pipeline?
- How do they describe the organization's culture and leadership?

Job demands

- What does their DM expect?
- What does a "week in the life" look like?
- How large are the territories?
- How many evening and weekend programs do representatives do?

Company support

- How good are the sales materials and clinical studies they receive?
- Do they get enough materials and adequate budgets?
- How proactive has their company been in securing adequate product reimbursement?
- What kinds of sales data do they get?

Training and development

- How would they rate the quality of the training they receive?
- What support does the company offer for representatives who want to pursue management, training or marketing roles?

Compensation

- What is the salary range for representatives?
- What does an average bonus look like? A top bonus?
- What long-term benefits are offered – life/health/disability insurance, 401(k), stock, options, pension?

Myths (and truths) about specialty sales

Myth	Truth
You're going to get rich!	Higher specialty representative compensation reflects their greater experience and proven performance. Most don't get rich.
Specialty selling is easier.	Specialty representatives see their job as <i>more</i> challenging than primary care sales – but often more rewarding, too.
Access is better in specialty sales.	Access restrictions are increasing in specialty offices, so strong relationships throughout the office are your best strategy.

area, ask a specialist to educate you on the condition and the challenges clinicians face.

"Even if you don't call on a certain specialty, you probably walk by their office or know the doctors they know," says Fleuridas. "If you want to succeed, you have to take the initiative and make it happen. There's no better time to start than right now."

Succeeding as a specialty rep

Specialists expect a lot more from their representatives. These expectations include product and disease state expertise, detailed reimbursement knowledge, and rapid response to requests for company resources and services. For specialty representatives seeking a competitive edge, I have three recommendations:

product and everything that comes into play with it, you won't be of any use to your customers." Barnett supports this view and adds, "There's so much to know in the beginning, and the more you learn, the more you realize how much there is to learn! In the beginning you need to establish credibility – not just on product features and benefits, but on things like managing adverse events, reimbursement and expediting medical information."

For specialty representatives looking to gain a competitive advantage, these veterans suggest three strategies:

Assess your relationships. If you need to improve access or uncover sensitive information during calls, start the process by investing in your relationships. Introduce yourself to

new staff members you may have overlooked, ask for honest feedback from key customers and solicit suggestions for improvement.

Assess your business. Unlike those in the world of primary care, where sales information is widely available, specialty representatives need to develop their own business data. This information comes from the people who buy your product, prescribe it, mix it, inject or infuse it, and bill for it. Each person can contribute an important piece of information such as patient volumes, purchasing trends, prescriber preferences, dosing regimens, reimbursement issues or adverse events.

Get into "the system." Whether by participating in medical society meetings or attending educational conferences, both Barnett and Fleuridas reap significant benefits from learning to see their customers' roles in the context of the broader healthcare system. "It gives you so much more confidence with your customer when you know how the system works and how they fit into it," says Barnett.

After establishing a record of professional success, some specialty representatives wonder, "What next?" For representatives at this

stage of their career, Fleuridas recommends taking on new challenges wherever possible – and this doesn't mean changing jobs. Great ways to keep the job interesting include training new representatives, taking on a project for the district or region, and helping the marketing teams on a task force or inviting them to ride with you. Beyond company projects, she suggests getting involved with nonprofits that work with your specialty or your patients, which "gets you to a different level of interaction with your doctors."

Barnett keeps her motivation high by getting involved with patients. She acknowledges that the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act defines clear boundaries regarding patient information, but "there are still organizations we can work with and events we can attend. Sometimes I hear from a patient that my product made a difference in how they're feeling or even got them to a complete remission. That helps me stay focused."

Whether you currently work as a specialty representative or plan to transition to specialty sales in the future, you can seize the

opportunities all around you and create the rewarding career you desire. Representatives who succeed in their efforts receive substantial rewards, even beyond recognition and compensation. Fleuridas offers: "This has never been about money for me. I like the recognition, but what I really like is knowing I make a difference." Barnett captures what success means to her when she says, "The right treatment can extend someone's life or even save it. I know that my conversations have impact every day." For these outstanding professionals, and perhaps for you too, specialty selling represents a rewarding and fulfilling way to further one's career.

Rick Rosenthal is director of sales force effectiveness for Health Strategies Group and directs the firm's specialty sales force effectiveness work, including analyses of representative, district manager and regional manager effectiveness. Prior to joining Health Strategies Group, he spent 12 years at Raritan, NJ-based Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceuticals Inc. in territory and institutional sales, sales training, district and regional sales management, and brand marketing.



You just picked up your last lunch order.



Delivery finally makes sense. Put an end to the last-minute lunch crunch with Vmeals.

Vmeals features a wide variety of best-in-class restaurants and caterers. We promise quality meals, on-time delivery and great customer service. All with just a few clicks of your mouse.

Welcome to Vmeals.
May we take your order?

Vmeals
Point. Click. Eat.

Order at vmeals.com today.

Enter Promo Code PR0610 on your first order, and we'll send you a \$20 Amazon gift card!

Can't get online to place your order? Call our toll-free pharma order line: 1-866-871-1451