



CREATING A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

What do school zone speed limits have in common with managing patient phone calls?

We've all seen school zone speed limit signs. Perhaps you dropped off your kids at school this morning or drove past a school on your way to the office. The unfortunate truth about these signs is they're viewed as an annoyance to most drivers who tend to speed right through school zones. It's a significant problem that cities have invested millions of dollars in trying to solve.

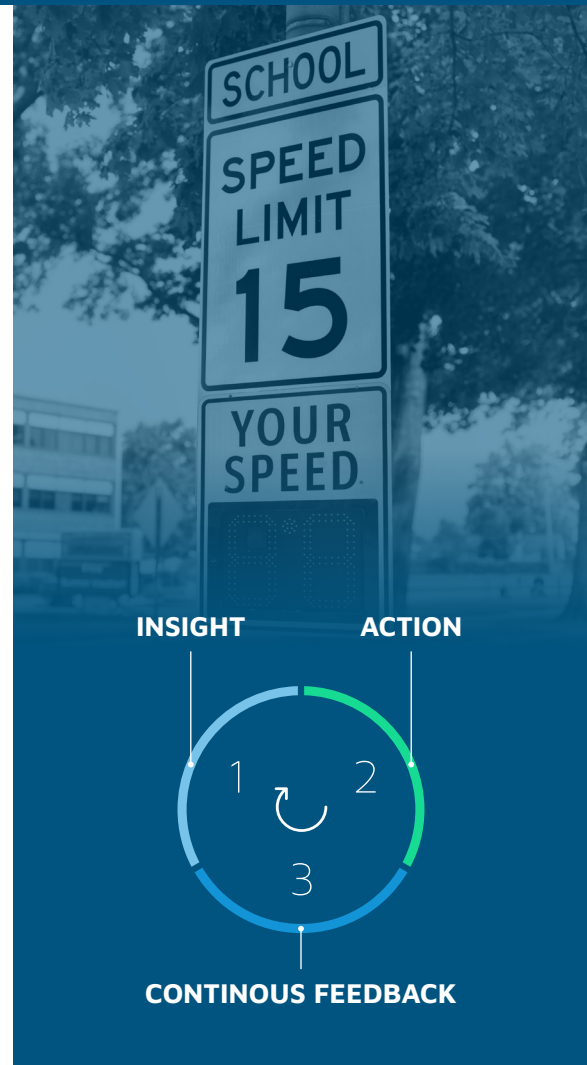
Cities have tried painting bright yellow stripes and adding flashing lights on the signs, but nothing seems to work. Even planting a cop with a radar gun next to a sign will only give drivers a scare as long as the city can afford to keep the cop there. The next morning when the cop is gone, drivers will continue to speed.



THE FEEDBACK LOOP

Cities have found the most effective way to get drivers to slow down in school zones is to add a digital “your speed” sign. This makes no practical sense – every driver already has a speedometer on his or her dashboard; there is no punitive action if a driver speeds through the digital sign. What’s more, the “your speed” signs don’t just get drivers to tap on their brakes, they actually condition permanent behavior adjustments. By receiving consistent external responses to behavior that is thereby used as input to elicit positive change, it becomes a feedback loop that works.

In a similar way, most practices currently do not review and listen to patient phone calls that come into their office to gauge phone handling performance and ensure patients are being helped. The offices that do review calls tend to act like the school zone cop; they listen to a few calls and advise their schedulers on minor adjustments, but they have no way of ensuring the poor habits don’t continue and no way of enforcing improved behaviors. Just like a city can’t afford to have a cop at every school zone sign, office managers can’t be expected to sit next to and listen to every phone call schedulers handle. Most offices lack a consistent method to track phone performance and provide the ongoing improvement that a digital “your speed” sign comparatively provides.



YOUR PRACTICE'S FRONT LINE

Phone calls are a patient's first impression of your office. Often, they are the sole determining factor if a new patient will ever visit your practice. If the call is mishandled, you not only lose a patient, but you also set a negative tone for what type of experience the patient can expect upon office arrival. What top practices have found is that a comprehensive call review software is the most effective solution when cultivating optimal staff performance and creating a culture of accountability and continuous feedback.

Offices that leverage and prioritize the phone by ensuring every call is reviewed see immediate lifts in connected phone calls, appointments booked, and scheduler performance. As a result, the culture shifts to focus on the metrics that matter most on patient calls. Patients receive a more immediate, efficient experience and are more likely to be invited into the practice and booked for an appointment.

CRISP

FOCUS ON THE METRICS THAT MATTER

A simple acronym, CRISP, helps remind schedulers of the key phone metrics that drive an improved patient experience and ensure every appointment opportunity gets booked. The metrics also assist office managers in call coaching efforts with their teams. C.R.I.S.P stands for Connect, Request and Invite, Schedule, and Pursue.

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CONNECT

The first phone metric a practice should evaluate is whether calls are being connected to someone who can help the patient. This goes much further than simply answering the phone call. While *answering* a call can result in the patient hanging up while on hold or leaving a message, *connecting* a call ensures the patient's purpose for calling is met. Connection is the crucial first step to providing patients with a top-notch experience in a timely manner.

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REQUEST & INVITE

Once the patient's call is determined to be an opportunity to book an appointment, the scheduler must sell the practice and the appointment by inviting the patient into the office. Often times, schedulers are friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable on a call, but they simply act like "Ask Jeeves" – they answer the patient's questions and hang up the phone thinking they provided an excellent experience. In hindsight, they never offered the patient an appointment and therefore didn't provide the help the patient needed.

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SCHEDULE

Scheduling the appointment is the next obvious step to ensure a patient receives an optimal experience. Phone handlers should start by asking what time of day works best for the patient, then whittle it down to a particular time of day. For example, "What time of day works best for you, mornings or afternoons? Great, do Tuesdays or Thursdays work better for you?" Finally, offer two times for an appointment. Once a time is decided upon, repeat the time back to the patient and have him or her confirm it while on the phone.

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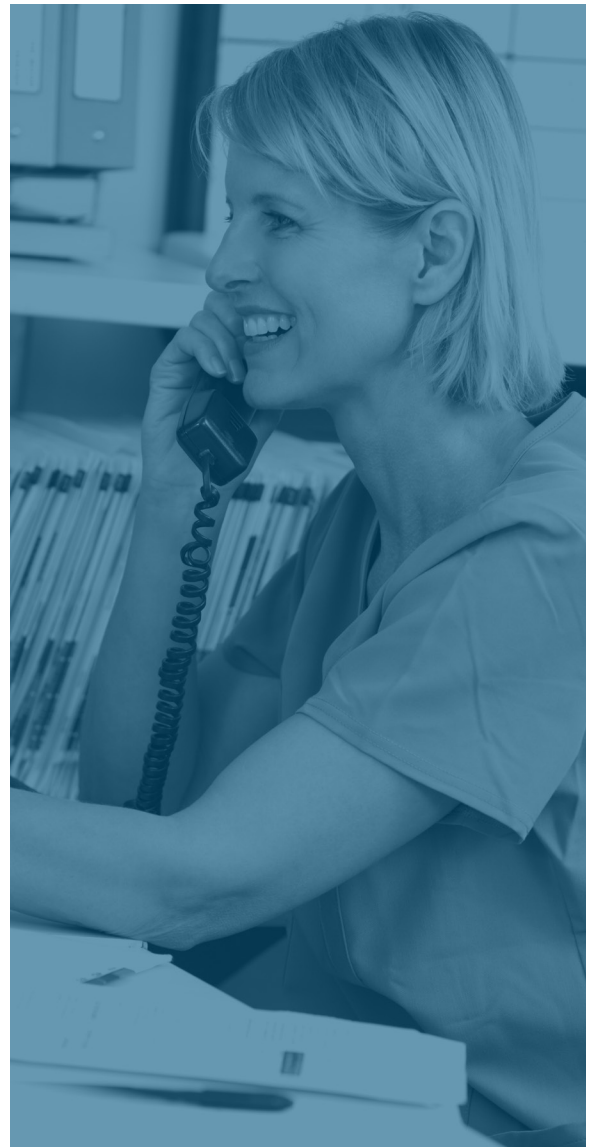
PURSUE

No matter how great schedulers are on the phone, calls will slip through the cracks; there will be patients who aren't connected to someone who can help them and appointment opportunities that are mishandled. These calls present an opportunity to proactively reach out to patients to pursue appointments and resolve any concerns from mishandled calls. Having a structured outbound calling process in place sets an office apart from the competition and provides an additional opportunity to capture the booked appointment.

By focusing on the metrics that matter on phone calls, CRISP allows office managers to elevate phone performance and clearly convey what's expected of schedulers. Patients are able to trust that their calling experience will be consistently top-notch and set the tone for the exceptional experience they'll receive in the office. In effect, holding schedulers to high performance on each CRISP metric creates the same level of accountability that the digital "your speed" sign provides.

“WHAT GETS MEASURED GETS MANAGED” — PETER DRUCKER

There's a well-known saying by management expert Peter Drucker that states "what gets measured gets managed." Practices that invest in a comprehensive call review solution establish the same continuous feedback loop that works so well in school zones. Schedulers receive constant feedback and are held accountable for providing patients with an excellent first impression and continuous paramount service. These offices are able to get ahead of the competition – and prevent hypothetical "speeding" when it comes to their patients' needs.



ABOUT US

Call Box is a comprehensive phone handling solution trusted by more than 5,000 healthcare practices. Call Box leverages a unique combination of human reviewers and artificial intelligence that listens to every

patient call to improve phone handling processes, schedule more appointments, enhance patient experience, and optimize marketing spend. To learn more, visit www.callbox.com or call 833-253-2980.