

# PRACTICELIFE

## Thinking outside the box

**Nilesh Parmar** explains how his MBA has taught him to expand his thoughts to help him succeed with the business side of dentistry

Business. We are either good at it or we're not. We either see the bigger picture or we don't. Business magnate, media personality and political adviser Alan Sugar seems to have it, investor and founder of Virgin Group, Richard Branson definitely has it and America's Donald Trump still

has it. So what is this vital missing ingredient, that X factor that truly sets them apart from others? What embodiment is required for that key ability, and what skill is necessary for people to be very successful and make lots of money, compared to those of us who seem to work our backsides off and earn very little?

These are some of the questions we have been tackling recently on the Masters of business administration (MBA) course I am currently undertaking. The answer, however, is much more complicated than the question.

### Hunger for success

First of all, these uber-successful people all have a 'hunger'. Their individual ambitions are matched only by their determination to wake up each morning and be successful. Some of them could be perceived as being ruthless with a Machiavellian approach, some are simply lucky, but they all have that primordial hunger to want more than what they currently have.

It's the ability to think outside of the box and see a business opportunity – regardless of what and where. Many business savvy dentists are now learning that income from just dentistry is dwindling and have come to the realisation that the real income is from teaching and training other dentists. This is why we now have a small encyclopedia of dental courses, which all dentists, regardless of what stage in their career, can do. Some courses are very good and are heavily over-prescribed, some perhaps do fall short of the ideals, but even these below-par courses are still very popular and still manage



to fill seats for each event every year. Indeed certain dentists have quit treating teeth altogether and concentrate primarily on the educational aspects of dentistry to and for fellow professionals, all for a well-earned income.

### The road to success

So what am I getting at? Well, having a dental degree is a license to do dentistry. Yes we know that. But it also gives you a progressive understanding of a multi-billion pound industry. You do not have to drill teeth when you qualify, you can put your dental skills to a complementary use. I know many of you who do not enjoy the day-to-day humdrum of fixing teeth, and if doing an MBA has taught me one thing, it's the ability to think outside the box. Expand your thoughts to the endless possibilities our industry provides. Then, hone in on the realistically accessible and achievable opportunities that can help you on the road to success in business within dentistry. **LD**



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2011 and received highly commended for Best Dentist South at the 2013 Dental Awards.

Currently studying for his MBA at Imperial College, London, Nilesh runs a successful seven-surgery practice close to London and is a visiting implant dentist to two central London practices.

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