

TRANSFORMING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

A multisite clinic implemented the PX Ninety program.



BY ALOYSIUS JOSEPH LOW, MBBS, FRCS; BOON SIONG LIM; AND BERNARD KWOK LONG CHAN

Health care is not just about medical expertise. It is also about creating meaningful, life-enhancing experiences for patients while empowering providers and their staff. This article summarizes Vista Eye Specialist's collaboration with PX Ninety to improve the patient experience across our 18 clinics. PX Ninety is a structured, 12-workout program developed by Shareef Mahdavi—author of *Beyond Bedside Manner: Insights on Perfecting the Patient Experience*¹—that blends behavioral science with customer experience strategy to enhance every stage of the patient journey.

THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE: MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Founded in 1999, Vista specializes in cataract and refractive surgery. Over the years, these fields have shifted from offering basic medical procedures to delivering a premium lifestyle experience. Patients no longer seek only a functional solution to their vision problems; they desire a holistic, high-touch experience that aligns with their aspirations and lifestyle choices (Table).

Advances in health care and lifestyle have increased life expectancy in developed countries. Today, patients seek to live well, not merely longer.

This concept is reflected in *ikigai*, the Japanese philosophy of finding purpose and fulfillment. Key principles of *ikigai* include the following:

- **Health and longevity.** Scientific research has shown that having a sense of purpose is associated with better mental and physical health, reduced stress, and a longer life expectancy.
- **A life of fulfillment.** Individuals are increasingly prioritizing well-being, personal growth, and meaningful relationships over material success.
- **A focus on prevention.** Maintaining health involves proactive measures such as regular exercise, a balanced diet, routine medical checkups, and wellness practices.

TRANSFORMING OUR PRACTICE

To differentiate Vista from other providers, we connected the principles of *ikigai* with the structured framework of PX Ninety. This program consists of 12 targeted workouts (a combination of individual and group exercises) and addresses every facet of the patient experience (see *Common Sources of Frustration for Patients*). Using PX Ninety, we developed a multistep strategy to transform our practice and elevate patient care.

Step No. 1: Playbook Development

Vista’s core team developed a comprehensive playbook outlining standard operating procedures, best practices, and practical tips to enhance the patient experience.

Step No. 2: Customization for Each Clinic

The playbook was tailored to the unique needs of each clinic location to ensure every patient receives consistently high-quality care across all 18 sites.

Step No. 3: Team Training and Cultural Shift

All staff members participated in training sessions focused on fostering empathy, active listening and personalized care. The goal was to help employees anticipate patients’ needs and proactively address concerns. Case studies, film clips, role-playing exercises, and group discussions were strategically incorporated to encourage innovative thinking and reinforce Vista’s patient-first culture.

Step No. 4: Redesigned Patient Interactions

Each patient touchpoint was reexamined and refined to foster more positive, engaging experiences. Consultations were redesigned to emphasize clear, compassionate

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communication. For example, after undergoing LASIK, patients receive an ikigai journey box containing meaningful mementos: a key chain crafted from a surgical disposable (such as the LASIK cone) used during their procedure, a photo with their surgeon in the OR, the glasses worn on the day of treatment, and a handwritten thank-you note.

Step No. 5: Operational Improvements

Administrative workflows were streamlined to reduce wait times and improve efficiency. Key initiatives included optimizing appointment scheduling and follow-up systems to keep patients informed. Additionally, we began tracking check-in, procedural, and wait times at every station to identify and resolve

bottlenecks.

Step No. 6: Trust Built Through Transparency

Recognizing that uncertainty can lead patients to delay care, we placed a greater emphasis on transparent communication regarding treatment options, pricing, and expected outcomes. Staff training focused on addressing patients’ concerns with empathy and clarity to foster trust and confidence in their decision-making process.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Our practice’s integration of PX Ninety required overcoming several key challenges.

Commitment From Top Management



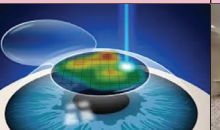

Implementing a cultural shift demanded increased resource investment, staff training, and operational adjustments. Leadership had to balance financial and logistical considerations while ensuring the initiative aligned with Vista’s long-term business goals.

Staff Resistance

At first, some staff members expressed concern that focusing on the patient experience might slow workflow or compromise clinical accuracy. Overcoming this hesitation required structured training and clear demonstrations of how PX Ninety would enhance—rather than hinder—clinical efficiency.

Sustained Change

Shifting to a patient-first culture is not a one-time effort. Sustaining momentum has required ongoing

TABLE. THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY MODEL OF LASIK			
COMMODITY	GOODS	SERVICE	EXPERIENCE
			
Unaided vision (what you were born with)	Basic Vision Correction (eyeglasses, contact lenses)	LASIK as a Service (customized LASIK, patient-centered care, financing options)	LASIK as a Lifestyle Experience (premium vision, luxury clinics, concierge care, lifetime vision solutions)
Cost: none	Cost: lower up front but higher over time	Cost: higher up front with long-term ROI, personalized treatment plans	Cost: premium pricing for high-tech, comfortable, and all-inclusive experiences

Abbreviations: ROI, return on investment

COMMON SOURCES OF FRUSTRATION FOR PATIENTS

For too long, patients' health care experiences have felt impersonal and transactional, leaving them disconnected and unsupported. Following are four common sources of frustration for patients in medical practices.

▶ NO. 1: A LACK OF PERSONALIZATION

Patients often feel like just another case rather than individuals with unique lifestyles, concerns, and goals. They want to be seen, heard, and acknowledged for who they are.

▶ NO. 2: UNCLEAR COMMUNICATION

Medical jargon and complex explanations can leave patients confused about their treatment plans. Without clear, plain-language communication, patients struggle to make informed decisions and may feel overwhelmed.

▶ NO. 3: COLD, UNEMPATHETIC INTERACTIONS

Rushed consultations or disengaged staff can make patients feel unheard and disregarded. Team members' inability to answer common questions or display empathy erodes patients' trust in the practice and provider.

▶ NO. 4: LONG WAIT TIMES AND ADMINISTRATIVE HASSLES

Inefficient scheduling systems, extended wait times, and administrative complexities can frustrate patients and detract from their overall experience at the practice.

training, continuous leadership reinforcement, and regular measurement of patient feedback. Employees are consistently reminded of their higher purpose—why they do what they do and how it affects patients' lives.

A Balance of Efficiency and Empathy

We had to balance maintaining a fast-paced clinical workflow with dedicating time to personalized patient interactions. The key was refining our processes without compromising the quality of care.

Return on Investment

To gain and maintain buy-in from all stakeholders, we needed to demonstrate tangible benefits. These have included stronger patient loyalty, increased

referrals, and higher satisfaction scores.

MEASURABLE SUCCESS

Patients

Our patients report feeling empowered, supported, and emotionally connected—and they are increasingly willing to share their positive experiences on social media. As a result, we have seen a double-digit increase in the percentage of 5-star reviews on Google and Facebook. The practice has also experienced a significant rise in both patient referrals and satisfaction scores. Additionally, Vista was named to *Newsweek Asia's* Top Private Hospitals 2025 list.

Staff

Staff morale and engagement have

improved dramatically. Team members report a deep sense of fulfillment from making a meaningful difference in patients' lives. Vista's commitment to purpose-driven work continues to foster a positive and collaborative workplace culture.

HEALTH CARE REIMAGINED

Just as surgeons rely on advanced tools to ensure precision and safety, forward-thinking practices are implementing structured frameworks to enhance the patient experience. Vista Eye Specialist's use of the PX Ninety program, informed by the principles of *ikigai*, illustrates how aligning clinical operations with a purpose-driven approach can positively influence patient satisfaction and staff engagement. Such models offer a practical foundation for cultivating a sustainable, patient-centered care environment in today's evolving ophthalmic landscape. ■

1. Mahdavi S. *Beyond Bedside Manner: Insights on Perfecting the Patient Experience*. Story Seven; 2020.

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