



# Tips from the **MASTERS**

## Three master dental technologists share their secret techniques

A profession, as defined by the dictionary, is “an occupation that requires considerable training and specialized study.” Master Dental Technologists have taken that extra step and personal sacrifice to obtain an advanced education, earning the elevated credentials of MDT. The same dedication that took them to

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acquire this specialized knowledge also leads these three technologists to give back to their profession

through teaching, lecturing, and here in this special section. Each of these three men agreed to take time away from their businesses to provide you with a special technique, tip, or philosophy that they have found most useful in their professional lives.

We hope you find this a useful addition to this issue.



pendicular to the buccal surface of the restoration and duplicate the line angle seen on the model (Figs. 3, 4). The red line represents where we want light to reflect off the tooth in order to change the perception of width and create a restoration that matches the width of the adjacent central.

Grind the blue mark off the restoration to create more symmetry and the illusion of similar width between tooth #8 and tooth #9 (Fig. 5).

Polish the line angles to a high luster after the glaze (Fig. 6) to ensure they reflect light. In this case, even if the shade had been perfect, the different contours of teeth #8 and #9 would have not been in harmony if the line angles of #8 had not been changed.

Fig. 7 shows a final restoration seated using this principle and technique. Controlling the light was essential for the success of this clinical case. Tooth #8 was restored with a PFM. The width of #8 was greater than that of tooth #9 but the result is very acceptable because the reflection of the light is identical to the adjacent tooth.

#### COLOR CONTROL

Color also is a method that can be used to control tooth width. Implant teeth are sometimes challenging because of their length and width. Creating a neck with stains could give us the illusion of the tooth having a narrower or shorter crown. Adding subtle stains at the neck of the crown creates a cemento enamel junction (CEJ) that looks as though the tooth were clinically shorter or narrower. Figs. 8 and 9 show two canines from the same patient. Tooth #11 is an implant supported crown (right) and #6 is a crown.



## The art of *contouring*

**Patient expectations** have never been higher than they are today. Our patients' concept of a beautiful smile is straight, white teeth, a concept initiated and perpetuated in large by the media. It is no wonder then that we as technicians find it increasingly difficult to distinguish our work from the work of others.

One area where we can set our work apart from others is in educating ourselves in the contours of natural dentition. First, we must learn what to look for when examining a case. Then, we need a method, or system, for the process.

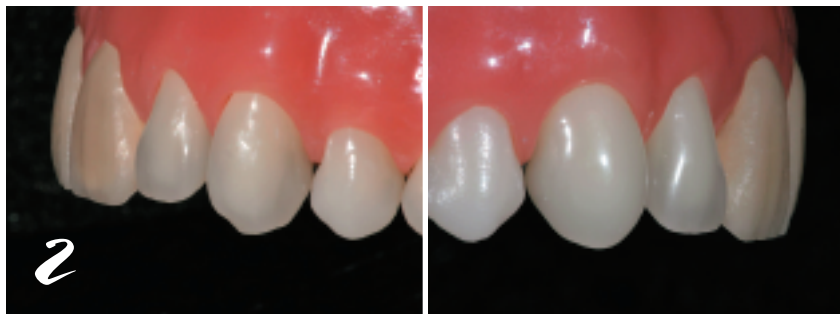
The Views to Success system I illustrate here can be applied, but does not replace studying with master technicians in an effort to learn how to examine a case when contouring or waxing teeth.

In the examples shown, two centrals are waxed to full contour. The views that follow can be used for **Continued on page 28**



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cases from single crowns to full mouth reconstructions.

**Fig. 1 Frontal View (previous page):**

This is the most common view that technicians utilize. In this view we see:

- Gingival architecture
- Incisal embrasures
- Mesial, distal, and gingival heights of contour (HOC)
- Optical share
- Surface morphology
- Position of contacts

**Fig. 2 Right and Left Lateral Views:**

These two views show:

- Profile relationship to the adjacent teeth
- Emergence profile, mid-facial, and incisal planes

**Fig. 3 Incisal View:** The incisal view shows:

- Arch form
- Labial/buccal and lingual embrasures
- Lingual concavity
- Width (mesial to distal)
- Incisal edge width (labial to lingual)
- Position of contacts

**Fig. 4 Lingual View:** The lingual view reveals:

- Gingival and incisal embrasures
- HOC (marginal ridges, and cingulums)
- Lingual concavity
- Lingual and gingival contours

**Fig. 5 Protrusive View:** The protrusive view dictates the incisal edge, length, and shape. The two most important

views are dynamic. They are achieved by checking contours while moving the casts in a slow and deliberate rolling motion.

**Figs. 6, 7, 8 Incisal Rolling View:** This view, which begins with the incisal edge and ends at the frontal view, is primarily used to check:

- Mesial and distal HOC
- Gingival width and symmetry
- Mid-facial width and symmetry

**Figs. 9, 10, 11 Gingival Rolling View:** This view begins at the gingival, looking from the base of the cast, and ends with the facial view. The technician can observe the same features as in the incisal view from the reverse perspective with exception of the incisal one-third symmetry. Rolling views are incredibly helpful in revealing flaws in one's work and in helping technicians become exceptional ceramists.

The "Views to Success," is only a small sampling of what one can study on the topic of contours. This system has proven useful to many who have utilized them over the years.

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