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## ***Common Sense and Human Factors Important Worldwide***

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Regarding Dr. Mauffrey's "What's Important" article, I agree with him that there have been great strides in the development and uptake of modern orthopaedic technology and concepts in China.

It reminds me of a time not so long ago when we saw X-rays of failing joint prostheses implanted in patients, primarily because the implants were copies of popular prostheses made by the local blacksmith. Certainly the understanding of prosthesis design and tribology (as well as acceptance of intellectual and commercial copyright) has come a long way in China.

While the overall quality of technical skill of Chinese orthopaedists is not in doubt, and will continue to improve, they, like surgeons in the rest of the world, will have to find a delicate balance between the adoption of the newest and the latest, and the application of common sense and human factors.

Sometimes the hardest thing for a surgeon to do is to recommend nonoperative treatment, even if for a short period.

While it is easy to be bowled over by the latest gadgets and techniques, every surgeon has to consider and adjust his or her practice to their locality, and that is equally true in China. Just as the patients put their trust and lives in the hands of surgeons in the US, the Chinese still bestow much respect (and even reverence) when they consult with their doctors, so much so that sometimes it may feel impolite or affronting to ask questions.

The two Chinese characters for doctor stand for “(medical) treatment” and “life”; doctors and surgeons are still much revered in these parts of the world. It is therefore important for orthopaedists in China not to take their role casually or lightly. When they recommend a treatment, they still have to consider what is right for the patient’s circumstances, rather than to demonstrate what abilities they have.

But then, isn’t this the same ethical standard for every orthopaedic surgeon in the world?

That’s what I hope you and I live by.

Conflict of Interest: None Declared