Ten Great Steps for Photo Color Correction

1. **Obtain a "key" image** for comparison. This means find a well-corrected photo similar to the one you are currently using. You may need to look at stock companies to find something that matches your needs.

2. **Decide on the file format** that eventually will result from your efforts: Print (CMYK) versus web (RGB) images will have decidedly different attributes. TIF, PSD, JPG, GIF, and EPS are the most frequently used formats.

3. **Determine the proper resolution** of your image BEFORE you scan. All web images need to be 72 PPI while print images need to be based on a formula of the halftone line screen. This formula is:

   LPI (Lines per inch) x 2 x % of scale = PPI (Pixels per inch) resolution

   Call the printer and find out what line screen is being used for the film output, let's say it's 133 LPI. 133 x 2 = 266. Multiply 266 by whatever is to be your enlargement or reduction based upon the original dimensions of the scan (let's reduce it by 87%, for example). 266 x .87 = 231.42 PPI or rounded off to 232 PPI.

4. **Use your scanning software** (sometimes this is simply a Photoshop plug-in) to make sharpness, value and color corrections before you use Photoshop. Since your scanning software can compare the original image on the scanning bed with the scanned image (on your monitor), it is best to make adjustments here, if possible.

5. Once the image has been scanned and saved as a Photoshop image, **crop it down to the best visual dimensions**. This will also result in a smaller file size.

6. **Adjust the values**. Duplicate the Background Layer to insure the original is preserved and then apply a Curves or Levels Adjustment Layer to make the range of values from black to white appear better.

7. **Adjust for color casts**. Use another Adjustment Layer (Color Balance, Hue/Saturation) to take out anything that skews the balance of color.

8. Now **work on individual parts** of the photo to adjust, value, color, sharpness or any unneeded anomalies.

9. **Use the Unsharp Mask Filter** (Filter/Sharpen/Unsharp Mask) to bring up the edge sharpness, just a bit.

10. **Save your image in the appropriate file format**.
    This needs to be a separate format from your Photoshop (PSD) format.