



What Next: Creating a Successful Practice

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Beyond getting your practice up and running and establishing your client base, have you ever stopped to think about how success looks? If you believe current media, it is having lots of money, big houses, fancy cars, beautiful clothes, a stay at the Ritz, a swanky vacation, etc. However, that does not have to be *your* idea of success. What does success look like to *you*?

My bet is that you did not get into energy work to get rich. My bet is that you had more personal reasons—perhaps to find and engage in fulfilling work, to bring forth your talent or expression of self, to help others, or to heal the planet in some way. Even so, you probably have an idea of how a successful practice looks. So what is that? Is it covering your monthly office expenses, meeting your monthly living expenses, saving for your children's education, or creating a stash of mad money for a splurge down the road? Maybe it has nothing to do with money but more to do with bringing your creative expression to light and creating a practice with such a stellar reputation that your appointment book is bursting at the seams with people who want to see you. Maybe it is completely altruistic and springs from a passion for helping and serving others and creating a practice that has a reputation for deep energetic healing. Maybe it has nothing to



do with either of those things, maybe you envision healing an ailing planet and creating a better world.

As the late, great Stephen Covey (author of **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**) said, "*Begin with the end in mind.*" When we know where we are going, it is easier to know when we have arrived versus an "*I will know it when I see it*" mentality. I can not tell you how many folks with whom I have worked have the "*I will know it when I see it*" attitude, and, guess what, they seldom recognize success because it is always a moving target. Take the time to identify what success looks like to you. It gives you a goal to work toward.

5 Steps to Success

If you talk to successful people, they will attribute their success to a myriad of things from being at the right place at the right time to having knowledgeable mentors and advisors - to sticking to it through thick and thin, and more. There are five things every successful person does—whether they realize it or not—that ensure their success and that is -- **FOCUS**. Not only is focus important, but it is a little acronym I made up to illustrate the success process—Foundation, Objectives, Clients, Understanding cash flow, and Strategy.



Think about the last time you successfully accomplished a goal or dream—your energy training, for example. You had an interest, desire, or dream to learn your specific energy modality—maybe someone said that you would be really good at this and it piqued your curiosity. Then you probably thought about how being able to practice this modality would positively impact your life and allow you to reach the people you want to help. Once that idea became the goal, you probably started thinking in terms of logistics. How much time will it take? How much money will

whom. What does your service offer clients? Why should they care? What results do you want them to experience? What experience do you want your clients to have when working with you?

2. Determine Objectives

Objectives translate into the outcomes you want to realize within a time period. They can be financial goals and/or the number of active clients you want on your contact list. Either way, they are measurable goals.

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it cost? Does it require any prerequisite work? Do I need to go back to school? How do I schedule all of this into my life? How do I pay for it? Once you had a good grasp of all the details, you began to formulate a strategy to meet your goal.

A successful business works the same way. Interestingly enough, many people jump in with both feet without a plan and then they wonder why it is not working the way they imagined. It starts looking like they have a tiger by the tail and the business starts running them. So much for all the reasons you wanted to start your own business—freedom, flexibility, being your own boss, etc.!

1. Create a Strong Foundation

Once you have the proper background and training in the modality you plan to offer, it is important that you have a clear understanding of why you have decided to engage in that practice. The “why” is your big picture vision of what you hope to accomplish by investing your time, energy, and money. So why have you decided to practice this modality? Why this one and not another? What does it allow you to do that other options do not? Does it allow you to work with a specific client base that other modalities do not? Once you really understand why you are doing it, think about what you are going to deliver and to

One financial goal may be to break even each month. That means that you have enough paying clients to cover the expenses of your practice (office rental, marketing expenses, etc.). So the question is, how many clients do you need each month to cover those expenses?

Let us say the cost of your space is \$350 per month and you charge \$60 per session. That means you will need to book six paying sessions per month to cover your costs. Anything over six sessions per month will be a bonus! That extra money can go into your business bank account to create a buffer for subsequent months or it can go toward paying you.

3. Engage with Potential Clients

In last month's issue of *Energy Magazine* we talked about finding your ideal clients. Did you do your homework? Have you identified your ideal client? Do you know where to find them?

Clients are the key to every practice or business. You can provide the very best service in the world, but if you do not have clients you do not have a practice! You need someone to receive your service in order to change the world and/or generate an income.



So get out and connect with potential clients! You can find them in all sorts of places—the bank, the grocery store, a birthday party, a networking event, a dinner with friends, etc. I realize this pushes many of you beyond your comfort zone. Some of you are just waiting for clients to magically drop out of the sky and onto your table. How much success are you having with that? Personally, I find that when I make the effort circumstances align to reward my forward movement. The process seems a lot slower when I sit around and wait for something to happen.

Be bold! Realize that what you have to offer is a huge gift to this world. (Keep in mind that your gift does not mean you are giving it away for free!) If you believe strongly in what you are doing, you will want to share it with the world. So get out there and tell people about what you do. As they say, the magic lies beyond your comfort zone!

4. Understand Cash Flow

This is where my FOCUS acronym gets a little sketchy because the “U” does not quite work, but bear with me. Cash flow is really important, and I needed to find a way to fit it in. Cash flow is different than a budget. You have probably operated on a budget most of your life. You have a set amount of money per month and you manage to run your life based on that. But when you operate your practice, you will not really know how much you will be making each month—especially in the early months. That’s where cash flow is really helpful.

In a budget, we assume we will have a set amount of money to work with each month. Some months you have money left over and some months you have overspent. Cash flow takes that into consideration. It accounts for the monthly variations of cash in and out of your practice. Done correctly, it will help you see what months will require more cash so you will be prepared and not surprised.

The way a cash flow spreadsheet works is that all of your income is listed at the top and all of your expenses are listed below for each month. At the end

of a given month, expenses are subtracted from the income and what is left is your starting cash for the following month. If that amount is a positive number, you are in good shape. If it is a negative number, you are starting the next month in “catch up” mode, which can be very stressful, and means that you will need to put some of your own money into your business account to keep your practice afloat. If you have to do that for several consecutive months, you will not have a practice for long and you will need to start thinking of other revenue generating strategies that will keep you in business. That is the good thing about a cash flow spreadsheet, you can see such things coming down the pike.

You can find a cash flow templates online. Just search the term “cash flow statement template.” The templates already include the necessary formulas, so even if you are not an Excel wiz you can still work your way through it. If you need help populating the worksheet, talk to your accountant, if you have one, or make an appointment at your local Small Business Development Center (SBDC). SBDC appointments are often free or very low cost.

5. Develop a Strategy

A strategy is based and developed on the result of all the information that you have collected in the previous steps. It always speaks to the objectives we are trying to meet.

So what objectives are you trying to meet? If they are financial, what are they? Say you want to double your income this year so that you get paid a little more and you create a bigger buffer in your bank account. You might set making \$6000 more a year (\$500 more a month) as your objective. A strategy for that may be finding new clients, offering a new service, restructuring pricing, cutting expenses, etc. Once you determine the strategy (the what), you will need to nail down the tactics (the how). For example, if your strategy is to increase revenue by getting more clients you may want to look at:



- adding more session hours to your weekly schedule;
- increasing your practice exposure;
- bringing in another practitioner with complementary skills to expand services; and so on.

The tactics are the specific things you are going to do to make the strategy happen. Tactics ensure accountability. You should always have a date on the calendar for when you will execute the tactic and who is responsible for making it happen. (That someone is probably you, if you are in a solo practice.) When are you going to start scheduling more sessions and how many more per week will that be? When are you going to have the new practitioner begin? When are you

going to start offering expanded services and what will those be? How will you notify existing clients about the new services? How and when will you notify potential clients about the services? Will you have a referral program? How will it work? When will you launch it? Put it on the calendar and then do it.

All of these details may seem a little scary but when you think about them, but it is exactly how you accomplish any other goal in life. Remember how you got here—your education, your training, etc. So just apply what you already know to your practice. It is the same thing. So here's to your success, whatever it means to you! €