Health Practitioner Today

Running Your Practice More Effectively

Quick Practice Checklist

Based on conversations with over 3-dozen Nutritionists and Dieticians this Quick Checklist distils over 30 hours of research down to the key activities that top practitioners are doing to make their practice successful.

Marketing – I know that this could be tempting to skip but Marketing is like an annuity- if you put the effort in now, it pays off later and there's no bad time to get started.

- One thing to consider at the outset when looking at your practice is what makes you different than other practitioners? Why would you be the first choice of your ideal client? One way to approach this is to get deep understanding of a niche. One practitioner I spoke to was specializing in women over 40 who want to lose weight. Her focus in this area gave her a way to shape all her marketing from her print collateral to social media conversations, which built a consistent message for her clients and prospects.
- Top performers spend a consistent amount of time on marketing each week and have a system in place that amplifies what they are doing. Whether its building referral partners, speaking at conferences or seminars, or social media they book the time in their calendar and focus on the tasks that will provide the greatest long term results.
- And don't forget – it costs approximately 5 times as much to get a new client as it does to retain an existing one, so think about programs and reminders that can bring some of your lapsed clients back if they need your help.

Practice – How you choose to run your practice can determine how effective you are for your clients your overall success.

- Are there different ways to connect with your clients 1:1 – like telephone or Skype calls? You might be thinking about broadening your reach with a program delivered online. Content development can take many forms. Whether its program development for a group coaching program, website content that can attract new potential clients or seminar materials it another investment that can pay off big time long term. Even creating a simple checklist that your target client would love to get can help you build your list of prospects in your sales funnel.
- Is there a way you might streamline and automate repetitive tasks? Ask what takes the most time during the day? What is the breakdown of time during your day? What amounts of time are you spending on content creation; 1:1 (or live) consultations; admin (includes booking and rebooking)? This gives you a sense of your paid vs. 'unpaid' time.

Metrics- For many practitioners, it is a challenge to understand which clients contribute the most revenue and are the most profitable on the basis of time.

- Even though it can be difficult to get a clear picture of your business its also important to understand where your most valuable clients come from. What's the best referral source for you? How do you track this now? All of this helps you figure out how to adjust what you are doing to give you better results in the future and a more enjoyable, profitable practice.
- As in this post, it's a good idea to understand all the time required in each type of consultation. For example there can be up to 2-3 times the length of the appointment to prepare for and follow up the Initial Consultation. Which is 'unpaid' time. If you find there is less 'unpaid' time involved the most valuable consultation **might** be your 30-minute follow-up even though you make more gross revenue on the initial.
- But you also need to balance that against other factors such as 'switching' – if you have many appointments through the day, there is more chance of clients wanting to switch appointments. Just have a system that can deal with this. And understand where you spend a lot of unpaid time with clients. Unpaid time fine if it helps you build engagement (and leads to positive outcomes and referrals), but just recognize that your time is valuable!
- Can you outsource or use a system to automate some tasks that you're doing manually? Things like booking and rebooking clients; reminders; following up with lapsed clients to get them to come back. Some practitioners don't realize it but they spend hours per month on these tasks costing them over $2000 PER MONTH in lost time and productivity, not to mention the new clients that they could get if they devoted this time to marketing and building referral partnerships
- And it's fundamental in any discussion on measurement to have a clear picture of what you want to achieve in the short, medium and long-term and how you can measure it. Do you want to have a practice that allows you to do more 1:1 consultations? Or would you like to expand your programs to be available to clients online? Whatever your objective, think about the ways you can measure over a regular time horizon to see if you are getting closer or farther from your goal.
- For instance, you might decide that you want to have a group coaching program, so you'd obviously want to know how much of your sales are coming from this program. You might be selling it through PayPal so seeing what your PayPal balance is doing from month to month (and also measuring what other things you are doing to influence it, like Facebook Ads or other social media) will show you what's working and what could be tweaked.
- What is your % no shows on a monthly basis? (This will likely rise as your practice expands). No-shows can siphon valuable revenue from your practice, which is hard to replace. As you know if someone doesn't show up, that time (and revenue) is lost forever. Keeping your clients engaged and aware of their appointments is key to minimizing this situation.