

Professional Practice Checklist

We've identified the 100 key factors to building and maintaining a full, rewarding and profitable professional practice and have grouped these into 10 distinct areas:

1. Strong Client Relationship
2. Service, Value & Excellence
3. A Cost-Free Practice
4. Referral Generation
5. High Productivity
6. Practice Management
7. Empowered Clients
8. Personal Balance
9. Accounting & Profitability
10. Potpourri

This program works for all types of professionals and small business owners.

Instructions for this program are on the last page.

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PROGRESS CHART

Date	Points (+/-)	Score

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE CHECKLIST 100-POINT CHECKLIST

#	Sections									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
10										
9										
8										
7										
6										
5										
4										
3										
2										
1										

GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT AS YOU GET POINTS FROM THE 100-POINT PROGRAM. FILL IN COLUMNS FROM THE BOTTOM UP.

A. STRONG CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

Clients hire a Professional because of their reputation or availability; they stay with the Professional because of the service they receive and because of the relationship that both parties create. Here's how to do more of this.

- I am ahead of my clients: I know what is next for them and they know I know this.
- I tell my clients what I want for them.
- There is virtually complete trust between my clients and me. They tell me *everything* that I need to know to be able to help them professionally.
- I do extra things for my clients regularly.
- I am proud of my clients and enjoy their company.
- I don't put up with much from my clients.
- My clients bring out my best work, consistently.
- I work only with the clients who are right for me and who are ready for my services.
- I show the good client how to be a great client.
- My clients bring out my best and keep me developing myself.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

B. SERVICE, VALUE & EXCELLENCE

The Professional must continuously add value to the client and to the relationship in order to stay competitive. With the growing number of people entering your field, the Professional cannot afford not to be innovating and less than fully client-oriented. Here are benchmarks for providing value.

- I use an objective system to quantitatively assess my clients' satisfaction with my services and service.
- Quarterly meetings with key clients are conducted and changes are made to serve better.
- Moments of Truth for your organization are known and enhanced.
- I make 3 changes or upgrades each time I lose a client or make a mistake with a client.
- Service standards are written and are very high.
- I have and operate from a simple mission statement.
- Value is continuously being added to products and services, whether the client asks for it or not.
- Service and requests are fulfilled in record time, far faster than the clients expect.
- I have a strong reputation for being the best in delivering service in my field.
- I know what my clients want and need even before they do.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

C. A COST-FREE PRACTICE

Every practice has high hidden costs - emotional costs - which limit the quality of service provided and keep the practice at less than full. In fact, there is a direct relationship (inverse) between the size of the practice and the number of costs that are being experienced. Use this list to identify and eliminate all of these costs..

- My clients do not violate my personal and professional boundaries.
- I do not gossip about my clients, ever.
- My clients almost always do what they promise.
- My clients give me credit for the part I play in their success.
- My clients consistently keep their appointments.
- I don't work outside of my best daily schedule.
- My clients do not complain or blame; rather, they either create, request or solve problems and use me as a resource to accomplish this.
- I do not count on willpower to do the things I know I should do in my practice. I have a supportive coach or partner to help those items to not cost me.
- I have not overpromised results or hinted that I could accomplish more than I absolutely know I really can with one hand tied behind my back. In other words, I have underpromised.
- None of my clients dig, demean or fight me.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

D. REFERRAL GENERATION

The best clients often come from referrals. To generate a flow of these referrals requires a strategy and a plan. Here are 10 elements of most successful Referral Plans.

- My clients know that I want more business.
- I have strong relationships with at least 5-10 Centers of Influence who are currently sending me referrals.
- All of my clients know all of what I offer.
- All of my clients know the types of clients I am looking for.
- I call or thank the source of every single referral.
- I give my clients or COIs an incentive for sending me new business.
- I have some way for prospective clients to get to know me, try out my services or get started on a smaller scale.
- I send out a monthly or quarterly newsletter, brochure or announcement about my services.
- I have written material like a card or brochure that my clients or I can give to others.
- My clients know what happens when someone they refer calls or comes in so they feel more confident about sending referrals.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

E. HIGH PRODUCTIVITY

Billable time is the financial engine of any practice. Which means that anything that gets in the way of this is very, very expensive. Start increasing productivity by doing everything on the list below so you can bill more!

- All paperwork is touched only once.
- Operations are fully computerized.
- Very, very few problems occur anywhere. If they do, they are handled immediately and the source is eliminated. Practice is a "problem-free zone."
- A single individual has responsibility for the day-to-day operating decisions.
- My staff and I do very accurate work; nothing is thrown together or substandard.
- There is no part of my client procedures or process that I am doing that I shouldn't be doing for my physical or emotional wellness. I have found some way to effectively delegate.
- I do no paperwork/procedures, which is unbillable.
- Every meeting accomplishes something specific.
- Staff communicates everything that is getting in the way of their being productive and knows how to make request vs. complaints.
- Staff has the equipment and training they need to *double* their productivity.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

F. PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

The Professional must operate in a supportive, cost-free environment, which means that every staff person is an integral part of a winning team. Here's what to do.

- Staff accountabilities are written and clear.
- I conduct quarterly employee reviews.
- Staff lives to support me and they go out of their way to make my job easier - even effortless.
- I have the right accountant, banker, attorney, coach and other advisers who add to my profitability.
- Each employee is in the job, which uses his/her strengths; there is no suffering or mismatches.
- Consequences are imposed for non-performance.
- Every employee is fully competent and skilled and is qualified by experience, education, loyalty, motivation and competence. No weak links or drag-me downs.
- I have a business plan, which I refer to monthly.
- Everything has a deadline or promised completion date and the employee and manager manage this.
- Staff wants to come to work and is well taken care of at work.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

G. EMPOWERED CLIENTS

Clients need empowerment to be their best - for themselves and to be with you powerfully. You can show them how by raising your standards and establishing extensive boundaries and by showing them how to get the most from your services and the relationship. Here are 10 ways.

- My clients know the benefits they are receiving from the services they are getting.
- My clients add to my reputation. I work with no one who will make me look bad or damage my reputation.
- My clients send me referrals for more business.
- My clients will be able to pay increasing fees.
- My clients are responsible for their own needs, business, life and results and use me appropriately, yet not too much, like blindly following my advice.
- My clients use me as a partner and not just as a technician to fix or handle something. We have a healthy relationship.
- My clients have a recurring need for my services.
- My clients always pay their bill on time. Money is rarely an issue between us.
- Every client respects my advice, expertise and gives me the room I need to do an extraordinary job.
- My clients look for ways to help me because they care.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

H. PERSONAL BALANCE

The quality of the Professional's work and the success of the practice depend heavily on how high the Professional maintains his/her wellness - physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

- I have more time than I need because everything is so well done or delegated.
- I have a right-hand person/executive assistant who handles every detail so I have space.
- I have a strong, happy and healthy personal life with lots of physical activity and pleasure so work is work and not my life.
- I am adrenaline-free.
- I put aside plenty of funds with which to become financially independent early.
- The practice is in good enough shape to sell.
- I have a very strong Personal Foundation.
- I enjoy creating blockbuster results for clients.
- I consistently do my 10 daily personal habits.
- I am proud of myself as a human and as a Professional.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

I. ACCOUNTING & PROFITABILITY

Part of having a practice is running a successful business. Accounting, taxes and profitability are necessary for the Professional to be his/her best, have a future and enjoy the present.

- Bank reconciliation's are complete and up-to-date.
- All income, sales and property taxes are filed, paid and current.
- All bills are routinely paid on time.
- Accounts payable ledger is current and includes all bills and purchase orders.
- Accounting department is well run and/or I use a superb bookkeeping service and CPA.
- I have a budget that I compare with my monthly financial statements, which are done by 5-15th of month.
- All accounts receivable are being collected per standards (average collection period is less than 150% of customer payment policy).
- The firm's profits are very, very high at a very conservative level of revenue.
- No single customer accounts for more than 25% of total sales or receivables.
- Services/products are packaged so that they produce a stream of income, not just a one-time sale.

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

J. WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED?

Every practice is unique. What else do you need to be able to have a full, successful practice? Write these on the lines provided below and then check each item off as you complete it.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

_____ Number of boxes checked (10 max)

INSTRUCTIONS

There are 4 steps to completing the Professional Practice Checklist.™

Step 1: Answer each question. If the statement is true, check the boxes. If not, leave it blank until you've done what it takes for it to be a full YES. Be rigorous; be a hard grader. If the statement does not apply or will never be true for you, check it and give yourself credit.

Step 2: Summarize each section. Add up the number of boxes for each of the 10 sections and write those amounts where indicated. Then add up all 10 sections and write the current total in the box on the front of this form.

Step 3: Color in the Progress Chart on the front page. If you have 5 checks in the Referrals section, color in the bottom 5 boxes, and so on. Always start from the bottom up. The goal is to have the entire chart filled in. This will indicate that you are managing your company well. In the meantime, you have a current picture of how you are doing in each of the 10 areas.

Step 4: Keep playing until all boxes are filled in. This process may take 30 or 360 days, but you can do it! Use your coach or advisor to assist you. And check back quarterly for maintenance.