



## Starting A Private Practice

1. Gather Information. It is really important when starting out that you spend time learning everything you can from billing, marketing, evaluations, and have developed good communication skills.
2. A mentor can be valuable. If you can find a mentor to help steer you away from bad decisions that is a huge plus.
3. Know it often takes 6 months to start turning a profit, so have cash reserves in hand. Initially you may have to pay your employees and will not have enough to pay yourself.
4. Examine your budget and allow for unanticipated expenses.
5. You should have lots of energy, attention to details, and good ethics. Bad practicing will eventually come back to haunt you, and details can make or break your, and it will take long hours, not just a 40 hour week to be successful.
6. Know some of your referral sources ahead of time.
7. When doing a private pay practice have at least 10 clients in the works to ensure a strong start. This can be done with what I call "pounding the pavement".
8. Do not be surprised if physicians want compensation for referrals. Over prepare for meetings with them.
9. Remember you are making an umbilical cord tie to your business that you can never cut. Even when you take time off, you will worry about staff issues, client issues, and money issues. This is not for the over anxious.
10. You will work longer hours than ever, but you will have more fun and stress. Your ship can sink with your bad judgement.
11. Vacations usually have to fit into your staff's schedule. Sounds tough, but often I had to work the days nobody else wanted to this included, Christmas, Thanksgiving, and other holidays.
12. Staff turnover is a nightmare. They are not vested into your success, and they do not have your commitment to the practice. They have no life savings tied up in your venture and their family is more important than your business.
13. The staff want list can be a tall order. They often want insurance benefits, certain hours, vacation time, etcetera and it is difficult to provide all of these starting out.
14. Negotiating your lease is very important. If rent is too high, it can eat up all of your profit. Location is also important.
15. Devotion and determination are important. Once committed, do not give up and remember why you wanted to help the community in this way.
16. Do a good objective market analysis. Most practitioners used well over \$50,000 to get started, if leasing space & taking insurance.