

ROMAN MUSIC THERAPY SERVICES

Using the Power of Music to Facilitate Growth

Making it Work: MT-BC and Small Business Owner

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I. Introduction

II. Small Business Know How

- A. If you are in private practice, you are a small business owner.
 - a. If you want to make self employment as a music therapist your livelihood, you must work on your business!
 - b. Embrace your role – the more you are able to embrace this role the more success you will have
 - c. Learn about your role as a business owner
 - d. Grow as a business owner
 - Or Else, your business won't grow, you won't make any money, you will burn out, and you will eventually have to go to work for someone else, either doing music therapy or you'll be so burned out you'll end up doing something else
- B. If you can learn from books – READ
 - a. Go the library and look for marketing books
 - b. Look for small business books
 - c. Ask for recommendations – from all of your professional advisors. One of the best business books I've ever read was recommended to me by my accountant
- C. Find communities – locally and online for small business owners
 - a. Make Mine a Million
 - b. SCORE
 - c. SBA
 - d. There are great resources online and I've compiled a list on the AMTA.Pro resource list.
- D. Build your team of Professional Resources
 - a. We can't know everything – we need to learn about the areas of business that will have a direct impact on our work and we need to seek out others with the training, talent and experience to help us! Ask for help! People are more than willing to give it!
 - b. Who is on your team?
 - Accountant
 - Bookkeeper
 - Clinical Mentors and Supervisors
 - Professional Mentors and Advisors
 - Other MT's
 - Realize that the pool of resources is National!
 - AMTA is a great resource and can often connect you to other mt's around the country doing similar work
 - Marketing Advisors
 - Small Business Advisors
 - Graphic Designers
 - Web Designers
 - Virtual Assistants

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c. Paid or Free?

- Sometimes you have to pay your team members and sometimes they are free!
 - If you have to pay...
 - It's worth your money
 - It will help you in the long run
 - You have to spend money to earn money
 - You may be able to withdraw the paid supports over time.
 - I started out paying a marketing - Enewsletter consultant to help me get my newsletters started. Now that I have a better handle on how it works, I do it by myself and no longer use her help.
 - Some are short term – Graphic Designers and Web Designers and they have the skills and time to put into these things. Your time is better spent in other areas!
 - If it's free....
 - Find folks with experience and a good spirit – Positive attitude backed by knowledge
 - SCORE
 - My free CFO!
 - If your assigned adviser isn't a good match, meet with someone else until you find the right match
 - Local Chamber of Commerce
 - My free marketing consultant who knows the local community and opportunities that are out there
 - Accountants
 - Bankers
 - Show your appreciation!!! With emails, cards, thank you's!
 - People in your network are more than willing to share their knowledge of other areas.
 - Daycare providers
 - Teachers
 - Parents

III. Importance of Professional Communication

- A. You must be an advocate
 - a. For your clients
 - b. For your services
 - c. For your profession
- B. You must educate your clients and their families to be advocates
 - a. In all of your communications with a client, their families, staff and administrators, you need to be able to communicate with them what you are doing and why and how it will improve your client's life and clinical situation.
 - b. If you can't articulate it, you won't have any paying clients!
 - c. If this doesn't come naturally to you, you need to find someone who can help you develop those skills, a mt or another administrator who seems to have this strength

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- C. Build Partnerships with local community resources your clients and their families rely on.
 - D. Importance of Printed/Online Materials to communicate who you are and what you do
 - a. Website
 - b. E-Newsletter
 - c. Postcards
 - d. Flyers
 - e. Brochures
 - f. Business Cards
- IV. Diversify Services and Income Streams
- A. Don't put all your eggs in one basket – It's the greatest asset to being self-employed in all economies
 - B. As MT's we have a great skill set to draw from
 - C. Who can pay me?
 - a. Birthday Parties
 - b. Mother's group/playdates
 - c. Parents groups
 - d. Coffee Shops
 - e. Children's Museums
 - f. Libraries – programs for kids, presentations for parents/teachers, concerts for large groups, great for the library, exposure for mt and great for my clients
 - g. Parent Teacher organizations – events and presentations, afterschool groups
 - h. Associations for folks with disabilities – therapeutically appropriate entertainment
 - i. Community Open Houses, family events
 - D. Group Services
 - E. Retail Sales
 - F. Know your funding sources
 - a. Grants
 - b. Community Partnerships
 - c. Scholarships
 - d. You don't have to get the funding, but you have to know where to direct others to find it!
 - G. Look for a need and for an opportunity
 - a. Library
 - b. Coffee shops
 - H. Be Persistent in developing new leads! Not every lead will come through
- V. Looking ahead
- A. What does a growing practice look like?
 - a. Center based vs. out of your home/car
 - b. Employees/subcontractors
 - B. What does your growing practice look like?
 - C. You need to think about what you want to get out of it and then put it into action.
 - a. Are you looking for a flexible schedule? Define the hours you want to work and then find clients who are available during that time.