



## Top Tips for a Successful Legal Nurse Consulting Business

What does it take to run a successful legal nurse consulting business? You have mastered the fundamentals of legal nurse consulting, and you have gotten some cases, but you know you could be doing more to build your business or improve cash flow. Successful LNCs pay attention to five pillars:

- expertise,
- marketing,
- client management,
- finance, and
- business development.

I call these pillars because they form the foundation of your business. They support you and allow you to grow.

I'm Pat Iyer, an LNC with 28 years of experience working with attorneys. I built and sold a large, successful LNC business.

### Expertise is a foundation of successful legal nurse consulting business

Attorneys understand that legal nurse consultants are usually needed for large damages cases involving a patient whose survival will depend on complex care. There is a lot at stake in such cases including factors that we may not see.

For example, plaintiff attorneys may have taken loans to finance a large case. Defense attorneys are concerned about large settlements or awards and how they might affect their relationship with the carrier. Everyone wants to know, "What are the issues?" Your expertise affects the answers to that question.

Your report must be well written, well researched and easy to follow. The people who will read your report are not healthcare providers and thus need adequate explanations and a medical summary written for lay people. Spell out abbreviations and define terms. Use a format with enough white space.

Although an attorney may attempt to apply pressure to influence your opinions, remember your role in being impartial. An LNC hired by the defense attorney may see items a plaintiff's LNC missed.

Whenever you prepare a report, envision yourself being questioned by your client. Your expertise is founded on your detail-oriented analysis of the patient's medical records and is rooted in your up-to-date knowledge of medical and nursing care.

Remember that your work product is of no value if you do not meet the attorney's deadlines. You can destroy your successful legal nurse consulting business by gaining a reputation of being undependable.

## **Marketing**

Just about every legal nurse consultant needs to market to start or maintain a business. This is the second pillar of a sound business. "Push" marketing involves reaching out to attorneys through networking, cold calls and cold visits. "Pull" marketing reverses the dynamics by using methods to attract clients. Both types of marketing have a role in building a business.

The goal of any marketing is to establish rapport with the prospect, to help that person know, like and trust you, as well as remember you when a case comes in that needs your help.

## **Your ideal client**

Knowing who you want to work with drives your marketing.

- Who do you want to work with? It is far easier to get cases when you have a clear picture of who needs your services.
- Who is your ideal client?
- What market do you best serve?
- What types of cases are the ones where you have the deepest knowledge?
- How can you get known as the go to LNC for that type of case?

Both attorneys and legal nurse consultants hire legal nurse consultants. They may find out about your services through list servs, networking, word of mouth referrals, your web site, publications, or a booth at a trade show.

Legal nurse consultants may hire you as a subcontractor or refer you to an attorney. This is often an ideal arrangement if subcontracting provides you with support such as organized medical records and report proofreading services.

***Marketing requires persistent, consistent effort.***

Consider your referral sources. Who else markets to the attorneys who have cases that require LNC reports? Get to know the engineering firms that handle accident investigations. Network with the vocational experts, demonstrative evidence firms, and economists who get involved in cases with medical damages. Request introductions to attorneys who may be able to use your services.

**Are you blogging?**

Analyze how you stay in touch with clients to remind them of your existence. Do you have a website with a blog? Blogging is a way for an expert witness or LNC to demonstrate expertise and get the attention of those who are in hiring positions. After doing the work to formulate a thoughtful, informative blog, don't stop there. Repurpose your blog posts in a newsletter that you send out a minimum of once a month. Provide helpful tips in a form that is quickly digestible.

Ask your own clients for referrals. Give them specific language to use in a phone call or email to a colleague to pave the way for your conversation with the prospect. For example, ask your client to say, "Bob, I want to introduce Grace Galley, an LNC who has been helpful to me in my personal injury cases. I know you handle similar cases and think it would be of value to have a conversation with her. She will be calling you. Please take a moment to talk to her."

Before we continue the show, let me focus on a problem some LNCs have. And this might be yours.

You're a legal nurse consultant who wants to build a strong business – and yet you've got a problem.

- You avoid networking
- You feel uncomfortable networking, or
- You'd love to network but you don't know where to meet attorneys.

- You feel stuck. You know that being able to speak with attorneys is essential for building your business and you want to know a process that is effective.

Yes, you can read networking books, but they are not tailored to helping legal nurse consultants.

They don't address the specifics of our industry.

Announcing my latest book: *Networking for LNCs: Meet Contacts, Build Relationships and Turn Your Connections into Profits*.

- Would you like to increase your client base and get more cases from existing clients?
- Would you like to know proven strategies that exponentially increase your success as a legal nurse consultant?
- Would it be helpful to find the types of offline and online venues that are great opportunities for you to meet attorneys?
- Would you be interested in knowing what blocks you have that might be sabotaging your networking efforts?

Get your copy of this brand-new book, released in March 2020, at this link: [LNC.tips/networkingbook](http://LNC.tips/networkingbook).

## **Client Management**

Maintaining sound relationships with clients is the third pillar of a sound business. It costs five times more to market to a new prospect than it does to retain satisfied clients. Your reputation and ability to establish strong relationships with attorneys will make or break your business.

In general, attorneys are quick, intelligent, and great negotiators. They are trained to win. They need your help to do so. They like stability. When they find a great LNC, they prefer to stay with that person. Encourage client loyalty by taking a hard look at how you care for customers.

Everyone is increasingly aware of the power of social media to spread both complaints and compliments about your services. Attorneys are networked in ways

that may be invisible to you. They participate on list serves and share recommendations with each other.

Look at each step of your process of handling your clients. What can you do to make them feel even more cared for, respected, and valued? Do you acknowledge receipt of records? Do you ask for feedback on your report? Do you ask your clients what you should stop doing, start doing, or continue doing? We are often surprised by the answers we get when we ask our clients these questions.

You've heard that 80% of your work comes from 20% of your clients. Who are your best clients? What do you do to make them feel even more special? People love to be appreciated and acknowledged. How often do you connect with them or send them a small gift to show appreciation?

## **Finance in a Successful Legal Nurse Consulting Business**

Creation of reports can consume dozens of hours of your time; some attorneys are surprised by the size of the invoice. Head off collection problems by following some best practices. First, set the expectations at the beginning of the case regarding the sizes of invoices. Although it is never possible to make precise predictions of how many hours it will take to prepare your report, you should, with experience, be able to give a range of hours.

Secondly, obtain a retainer of at least 10 hours. You can double that amount for most involved reports. I also recommend you ask the attorney to replenish the retainer before you exhaust it. Asking for another retainer when you have used 75% of the existing one is a great plan that keeps cash flowing.

A practice of asking for replenishing retainers demands that you keep on top of the total number of hours you have spent on the case and anticipate when you will be depleting the retainer. You have the option of stopping work while waiting for the new retainer. Being proactive in requesting additional money is essential when the client is new or has an uneven payment history.

There are several opportunities in the life of a case when you can use leverage. You have leverage when the attorney needs the report submitted by a certain date. If you are an expert witness, you have leverage when you are noticed about a

deposition or asked to analyze opposing counsel's report or to appear at trial. Use leverage to obtain payment.

If you are not working from retainer to retainer, don't allow large numbers of hours to accumulate without payment. EDIT NEEDED HERE **And don't avoid or delay collection efforts.** Sometimes it is easy to put off collection efforts in the hopes the check will appear in the mail or because you are distracted by cases.

Your bills won't wait. The most important financial best practice is to know your profit and loss, your expenses, and your accounts receivable. Know your numbers.

## **Business Development**

Business development is the last pillar. It encompasses examining your operations and looking for opportunities to add new services or improve your efficiency.

*Are there aspects of your business that pose roadblocks?*

*Are there services your clients are asking for that you should add?*

*Are you listening to what your clients are saying and open to ways to expand?*

Some legal nurse consultants grow by adding assistants, who may be effective in improving your efficiency. Subcontractors expand your capability to respond to new cases.

Although there is a degree of training and supervision needed to work with another person, the rewards are great. Subcontractors enable you to accept the case you might have had to turn away because you were already committed to another case. Without subcontractors, your ability to generate income is limited to the number of hours you can work.

## **Conclusions about a successful legal nurse consulting business**

The five pillars work together to grow your business. You show your expertise in your work product and use it to attract clients and cases. You manage your clients to satisfy their requirements and generate repeat business. You handle your invoicing and retainer requirements so that you maintain a healthy cash flow. And

you use business practices that enable you to leverage your time and expand your capabilities.

I'd love for you to be among the first to get my newest book, *Networking for LNCs*. Get your copy by going to [LNC.tips/networkingbook](http://LNC.tips/networkingbook).

Do you have lots of questions about being a legal nurse consultant? Are you wondering how to get clients, grow and manage a business, and dig into medical records? Do you feel a bit lost?

I've got a phenomenal resource for you just waiting on [LegalNurseBusiness.com](http://LegalNurseBusiness.com). My online training and books are designed to help you discover ways to strengthen your skills and businesses. Check them out at [legalnursebusiness.com](http://legalnursebusiness.com).

Could you use a monthly boost of knowledge to keep your skills sharp? Are you a lifelong learner who enjoys the chance to keep expanding your knowledge? [LNCEU.com](http://LNCEU.com) gives you two online trainings every month to build your LNC business. Look at the options at [LNCEU.com](http://LNCEU.com) and start right away in the comfort of your home.

Are you interested in building your LNC business by getting more clients, making more money and avoiding expensive mistakes? The [LNCAcademy.com](http://LNCAcademy.com) is the coaching program I offer to a select number of LNCs. You get my personal attention and mentorship so that you can excel and build a solid foundation for your LNC practice. Get all the details at [LNCAcademy.com](http://LNCAcademy.com).