



Hot Tips for Starting a Legal Nurse Consulting Business

Recently I asked legal nurse consultants what questions they wanted me to answer. One of the top questions was how to get clients.

This is Pat Iyer with *Iyer's Insights*. In LNP 270, Jill Merriman shared some hot tips about networking. Be sure to listen to that show.

I asked Linda Husted, who is an experienced life care planner, for her thoughts on how to get a business started. She said networking is essential for any nurse entrepreneur. To me, networking is important in order to meet professionals with similar interests, develop relationships that are not only important and fulfilling in their own right but can be helpful when advice is needed and, of course, for referrals.

Be diversified as a legal nurse consultant

Be willing to work on a variety of cases and perform a variety of services.

Take subcontracting jobs as a legal nurse consultant

Subcontracting is a good way to strengthen your referral sources. Some companies may refer several types of work, while others may have only one kind of assignment.

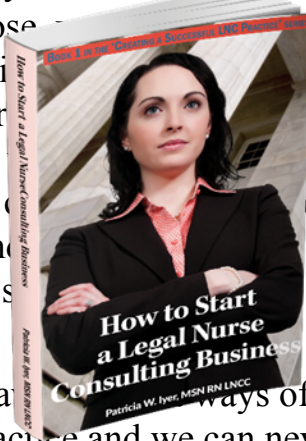
Another advantage of subcontracting is that you have another set of eyes on your work product, a peer review of sorts.

Linda was one of my subcontractors when I ran my LNC business. She said, “For many years, I have had the incredible opportunity to subcontract for **Pat Iyer, MSN, RN, LNCC** in her previous business, Med League Support Services. I learned a great deal and know that the quality of my work has improved under her and her staff’s guidance. I learned Pat Iyer’s unique method of organizing and tabbing records which is helpful not only initially working with case records but during testimony as an expert witness. I definitely improved my writing skills, learned better ways of expressing my opinion, and decreased the use of the passive

voice in my reports. I also learned how to sharpen my technique in critiquing an opposing life care plan.”

Improve your legal nurse consulting skills when starting a legal nurse consulting business

Improve your communication skills. No matter what area of legal nurse consulting you choose, you will need to put too much emphasis on developing your communication skills, both verbal and written. If you are interested in expert witness work, for example, you will need to be able to defend your opinion, both within the courtroom and in written reports. Take one-on-one testimony training, get a business card, and attend conferences for experts, read books on becoming an expert and a witness, and join the American Society of Legal Nurse Consultants to sharpen your speaking, listening, and thinking skills.



We all have many ways of developing our skills, but we can never have too much practice and we can never learn too much in order to become an effective expert witness.

Continuously improve your legal nurse consultant skills

Continuous improvement is required if we are going to evolve in our field and improve our work product. Be open to adapting, taking suggestions, and never stop learning. Attend meetings, conferences, and webinars. Volunteer in professional organizations. Stay connected to learn the latest information.

This is Pat Iyer. Before I continue, listen to what I have for you. I’ve gotten so many questions on how to start an LNC business, so I wrote a book on the topic. It is called, not surprisingly, **How to Start an LNC Business**.

This book is for you if you are in the early stages of your business or want to move to a higher level of success. You will gain the principles for building a strong LNC business.

I will show you how to set **SMART goals** to which you can hold yourself accountable and **how to track and measure your results**.

Get concrete information about having a sound operating plan and mastery over your finances. This book shares tips on how to organize your finances, track income and expenses using calendars, budgets, logs and accounting software.

- This book is geared to the legal nurse consultant who is **searching for tips to jumpstart** a consulting business.
- The principles and tips in this book will help you gain **success in starting or growing** your legal nurse consulting practice.

Order the book using the link in the show notes for podcasts 270 and 271 at podcast.legalnursebusiness.com and use the code listened to get a 25% discount on your order.

What advice would an experienced legal nurse consultant give a person starting up a business? Here's another perspective, this time from Suzanne Rector.

Set up your legal nurse consulting business hours

Set your schedule. What hours you will work? Make sure your family (whether residing with you or not) is aware. Be accountable to your "job". Would you take every morning off from your employer to run errands, play with kids, have appointments?

Linda said, "Personally, my goal is to work ten hours a day. Why? Because I know I will likely take a long lunch one day, have unscheduled interruptions, and I love it when all my "work" is done by Friday morning! The point here is to know your habits and tendencies and then schedule your days to fulfill the hours a week that you need to be productive. Home offices make you accessible to family and friends; this is a positive for me, but it does require adaptations."

If possible, have your office (even if it's just a desk) away from the family/TV room unless your children are all grown, and the family/TV room is now the office.

Software for legal nurse consultants who are setting up their business

For software, I use Microsoft Office Suite for my businesses. Between Word, Excel, and Gmail (email) most of my needs are met. If you are a quick typist and get paper records this may be all you need besides your PC. I like a second screen or one large one that you can split into two, even with paper records, because I can have my email or research up on one side and my Word document on the other.

If you are getting mainly electronic records, a second screen (or split) is an invaluable time saver with the records on one and the summary/chronology on the other. If you primarily receive electronic records, consider purchasing a subscription for Abode Acrobat (not the Reader version you have that is free). It allows you to convert pdf file extensions to readable text so that you can cut and paste from long records.

Optional software would include Dragon Naturally Speaking which allows you to dictate to your PC (I am a slow typist, so it is worth it for me) and CaseMap which helps create summaries. Both are expensive and have typical new software learning curves but are something to consider as your volume of cases increases.

The final essential LNC office tool would be a smart phone. Whether you are working at this part-time or full-time, you need to be able to stay in touch. It pays to stay connected as you build a business.

Pearls of wisdom for legal nurse consultants start up

Speaking of business, here are few things I would do differently given the opportunity and a few pearls to hopefully ease your journey. What would I do differently? Learn more in the beginning about writing reports focused on how attorneys look at a case. Their argument/merit-based focus is very different from the persuasive style taught in educational programs. I would market more consistently with the intent of building relationships, not just connecting to sell

services. Finally, I might have kept an income source before jumping into small business ownership.

What would be my building business pearls? If you are still working full time, consider subcontracting or working for a company that does data extraction to gain experience if you have never done chart review. That way, when you market to attorneys, you are confident in your skills for chart review.

Learn, learn and learn some more; take classes on marketing, effective writing and legal nurse consulting.

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I mentioned working with a coach in this podcast. The LNC Academy.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 sturdy foundation for your LNC practice. Get all the details at LNC Academy.com.

