READY, SET, GO!

Taking the big leap toward starting a new practice

Identify key decisions and techniques needed to begin a new practice

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- ALLEN IVERSON
FORMING YOUR VISION

philosophy
qualities
planning
KEY DECISIONS

naming the practice
becoming a legal entity
office space
LEVERAGE EVERYTHING
Be nice, please.
"READY, SET, GO: Taking the big leap toward starting a new practice."
Objective: This course will identify key decisions and techniques needed to begin a new practice.

1. BIO

2. PRACTICE
   a. “...we're talking about practice, man. What are we talking about? Practice? We're talking about practice, man! We're talking about practice! We're talking about practice... We ain't talking about the game! We're talking about practice, man!” - Allen Iverson

3. FORMING YOUR VISION / FINDING YOUR POSITION
   a. PHILOSOPHY
      i. How do you see architecture? And how do you talk to others about it?
   b. UNIQUE QUALITIES – what sets you apart?
      i. This can be design, method of service, ingenuity, project delivery
   c. BUSINESS PLAN
      i. Marketing outline
      ii. Set goals for a few years out, with incremental steps along the way. Keep it short, allow for flexibility
      iii. Prioritize – what needs to be done now, vs. what is a luxury item that can be addressed later? (see below for “don’t reinvent the wheel”)

4. KEY DECISIONS
   a. GIVE YOUR PRACTICE A NAME
      i. Naming – very important and can be very aggravating
      ii. Google your name, business name, use the internet, use common sense
   b. SET UP A LEGAL ENTITY – speak with lawyer, accountant, etc.
      i. S-Corp vs. LLP vs. Sole Proprietor – fees, responsibilities, state laws, filing with Secretary of State, preparing legal paperwork, agreements between partners, shares, etc.
   c. OFFICE SPACE
      i. Office space – location, affordability, expandability
ii. Furniture, computers, printers, software, IKEA

5. LEVERAGE
   a. EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS
      i. Seek advice from others
      ii. Seek mentorship from those with more experience
      iii. Peer advice
      iv. Ask for help
      v. Leveraging those relationships to forge new relationships
         1. referrals
         2. references
   b. BE AN EXPERT
      i. In something specific
   c. LEVERAGE YOUR TIME and others’ expertise – don’t feel the need to do everything
      i. Bookkeeping, drafting, IT, business development
      ii. Marketing: social media, web, blogging
      iii. If something works, let it be – don’t reinvent the wheel when it comes to tasks such as production work. If there is a software or a process that is an industry standard, and does not affect your vision, don’t take the time to try something else. That’s for later.

6. FINDING WORK
   a. PUT OUT (YOUR NAME!)
      i. Research projects
      ii. Competitions
      iii. Online publication
      iv. Teaching
      v. Volunteering
      vi. Speak, write, make noise, be a squeaky wheel
   b. GET OUT THERE
      i. Alumni groups
      ii. Networking, socializing, being active in a community (real neighborhood or specific groups)
      iii. If you’re not comfortable, find someone who is
   c. NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS: clients, consultants, contractors, realtors, landlords
   d. EXPERIENCE: Different manners of gaining experience in the architectural field
i. Design
ii. Process
iii. Real World process (plan check and permitting)
   1. Plan check
   2. Construction and on-site work
   3. Collaboration
      a. Architect of record / Design Architect / Concept Design
      b. Consulting – branding, concept formation
      c. Client advisor
      d. Project manager
iv. Continuing education, working methods and project delivery

7. BE NICE
   a. Don’t burn bridges
   b. Realize that a good professional relationship can translate into future work
   c. Share ideas, share experience, share knowledge
   d. Simple dialogue can lead to great educational moments