



FINDING YOUR STRIDE

A JOURNEY THROUGH PRIVATE PRACTICE

JOANNE AULD IS THE DIRECTOR AND OWNER OF PAMPER CLINIC AND THE SKIN CARE COMPANY IN GEELONG, VICTORIA. HERE, SHE DISCUSSES THE CHALLENGES OF PRIVATE PRACTICE, SEEKING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT IN BUSINESS, AND IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY.

Q: JOANNE, AS AN ENTREPRENEUR IN THE MEDICAL AESTHETIC FIELD, CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR JOURNEY?

Cosmetic medicine always interested me – in particular, non-surgical facial cosmetic treatments. I studied nursing and pursued a career in the pharmaceutical industry for 10 years. After this, I focused on entering the growing world of cosmetics, where my passion for non-surgical cosmetic medicine quickly escalated into an obsession. I opened Pamper Clinic with plastic surgeon Peter Callan 12 years ago. We focused on non-surgical cosmetic treatments and later specialised in developing our own cosmeceutical skincare range, The Skincare Company.

Q: WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU FACE GOING INTO PRIVATE PRACTICE?

Private practice, like any practice, comes with challenges. We are a small business, but require the same resources of any big business. For example, human resources, accounting, insurance, payroll and finance all need to be considered. Sideline challenges included setting up policy and procedure manuals for all services and areas of the business and managing finance for large asset purchases, such as COGS and laser machines.

Fortunately I had contact with Hanya Oversby of Specialist Consulting and was able to seek guidance and find solutions to these initial challenges. Twelve years on, I still maintain regular contact with

Hanya as a consultant - to ensure I am constantly keeping up with running my practice to the industry's best standards possible.

Working with Specialist Consulting, I was able to enhance my own professional development and the clinic's organisation, growth, employee skills, systems and management. This consultancy was tailored specifically to our needs: setting up a new practice which was looking to provide superior services in the cosmetic industry.

Q: HOW DID YOU START OFF RUNNING A MEDICAL PRACTICE?

I had previously worked in the cosmetic industry and gained some industry knowledge from my time in private practice. I was then fortunate enough to work alongside Peter Callan, who is in private practice. Peter agreed to mentor me and support my vision of opening up a small cosmetic practice independent of his surgical practice.

Planning was key. Before we started the business I researched, researched, researched, then researched some more! My business partner's advice was invaluable. He was someone I had looked up to and admired in the industry for over 10 years. His many years of experience as a respected plastic surgeon was a crucial part of our business planning.

Our goal was to start small and build slowly. Together we established Pamper Clinic, where we specialised in non-surgical cosmetic procedures including Botox, fillers, laser for skin rejuvenation and hair removal, peels, skincare and makeup. Peter is a well known and highly respected plastic surgeon in Geelong and he also has a Master of Business Administration (MBA). I was fortunate enough to benefit from Peter's expertise in this

area. His guidance enabled us to set the clinic up efficiently, contributing to achieving a sustainable competitive position in a constantly changing business environment.

To this day, Peter continues to inspire me through his dedication to educate and mentor colleagues in our industry. As a key opinion leader in the plastic surgery arena, he often gives his time to educate others on safe practice and new operating techniques.

More recently, I have become the sole director of Pamper Clinic and now refer my patients to his private practice for all their surgical needs.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY ADVANTAGES IN WORKING WITH YOUR BUSINESS CONSULTANT?

I highly recommend using a business consultant as this enables you to get on with what you do best, while the consultant offers complete peace-of-mind by taking care of finding solutions to a variety of challenges which a small business faces. I worked with Specialist Consulting to find ways to implement new systems and practical ways to improve our service and profitability.

Q: WHAT WERE THE KEY CHALLENGES YOU FACED FROM A BUSINESS AND PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE AND WHAT STRATEGIES HELPED YOU THROUGH THIS?

Patience! Starting any business takes time, and mine was no exception. But patience isn't one of my strengths! To be successful, my business partner and I agreed that a 'slow and steady' approach was key. I really had to face the challenges one at a time – and ensure I worked through the challenges we faced in an organised manner.

Our key challenges were:

- Keeping staff motivated and up to date with safe practices;
- Managing finances;
- Finding balance between work and life; and
- Developing a program that allowed me to continue my income stream, while out-sourcing someone else to take care of the day-to-day running of the practice.

Strategies implemented through consulting services included:

- Setting up ongoing staff support and out-sourcing ongoing training to ensure safe practices were always followed; and
- Compiling a policy and procedures manual that all staff could refer to.

Q: HOW DID YOU ADAPT TO YOUR LEADERSHIP ROLE?

Leadership for a care-giver is difficult. You want to help people and do what you love; in my case, that was cosmetic injecting and running lasers. As a leader I needed to be a listener, a therapist and a reassuring professional. Leadership requires different skills: delegation, problem solving and tackling complex issues from a business perspective and coming up with solutions.

Q: EMPLOYING A NEW AND GROWING TEAM FOR PAMPER CLINIC AND THE SKIN CARE COMPANY WAS A BIG STEP. WHAT DO YOU FEEL HAVE BEEN THE TRIUMPHS AND CHALLENGES IN THIS PROCESS?

Triumphs:
I really feel confident we have employed the best team. We always look for motivated individuals with a passion for what they do. Attitude is everything – and our team all share the same goal, which is working to achieve a 'results driven' outcome



BEST PRACTICE

for the client. High achievers expect big things from themselves – which brings a high level of job satisfaction and positive results for clients.

Challenges:

Managing a team of individuals is never easy. It is important to remain positive throughout difficult situations, that can often be emotionally charged. Building a team that supports one another needs to be a priority – and leading by example is key.

Q: HOW DID YOU CREATE SUCH AN AMAZING TEAM?

Positivity and motivation need to be modelled from the top. I always speak to my staff with a positive attitude and work on a resolution to problems or conflicts collaboratively.

As the saying goes: 'There's no I in team'.

We will often have an informal staff debrief on a Friday evening at 5pm over drinks, to wind down from the 'busy week that has been' in a

social setting. Regular staff meetings every Thursday morning ensure we are all on the same page and give the staff an opportunity to raise any areas of concern. We encourage ideas from staff on ways to improve our clinic and the services we offer.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR VISION MOVING FORWARD AS A PRACTICE?

Our vision is to 'stick to the knitting', as they say. Stick with what we do best and leave the rest for someone else to specialise in. Our key focus is cosmetic injectables for anti-wrinkle treatments and lasers for skin rejuvenation coupled with skincare and medi-facials. We're not interested in competing with chain clinics who offer a cheaper service for lesser quality.

Q: ARE YOU SEEKING TO EXPAND OR HAVE OTHER ASSOCIATES JOIN YOU?

No. We have expanded over the years and have arrived at the place that is perfect for us right now. There are always new inventions in the cosmetic arena, but we prefer to stick with what is tried and true. Our customers don't want to be guinea pigs – they want results and trust us to deliver them in a safe and confidential environment.

‘AS A WOMAN IN BUSINESS, IT HAS BEEN VERY EXCITING TO WORK WITH JOANNE – A HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL, WHOSE GOALS ARE TO ACHIEVE THE VERY BEST CLINICAL OUTCOMES FOR HER PATIENTS AND TO GROW HER THRIVING BEAUTY AND SKINCARE BUSINESS’ – HANYA OVERSBY

Q: AS A WOMAN IN BUSINESS, WHAT DO YOU FIND YOU STAND FOR AND HOW IS THIS REFLECTED IN YOUR BRAND?

I am such an advocate for only offering products or services that actually work! For example, over the years I've been sold machinery claiming to 'dissolve fat'. It didn't take long for me to realise this was a short term fix that was really only 50 per cent efficacious at best! In the past I have stocked skincare products that claimed extraordinary anti-ageing results, only to be disappointed that I'd invested in a very expensive moisturising agent!

As a result, I like to believe I stand for authenticity. If a product or service doesn't live up to its claims, then then I'm not interested in it. My clients tell me they attend my clinic

because they trust me and know I will be honest with them and provide a high standard of care. Our loyal skincare followers buy our products because they know they are getting what they pay for: a cosmeceutical grade product that delivers results, while mimimising sensitivity.

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING THE DIRECTOR OF PAMPER CLINIC AND THE SKIN CARE COMPANY?

I get to do what I love. It may sound like a cliché, but how lucky am I to work in an industry I am so passionate about and help change peoples' lives? I still get a thrill from seeing results achieved in our clinic and from the testimonials we receive, from both customers and stockists of our skincare.

IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO 'JOANNE AULD, RECENT GRADUATE' WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF?

Go for it. Take calculated

risks and follow your passion. Out-source what you can and stay true to your brand. Develop your business model based on what you enjoy doing and play to your strengths. Surround yourself with the best people you know and give them the opportunity to shine too. **AMP**

Joanne Auld used the services of Hanya Oversby (B.Ed, Dip. Practice Management) founder of Specialist Consulting, a company to advise and guide specialists on medical business development and strategies. www.specialistconsulting.com.au