

# Leadership in Professional Practice

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# Disclaimer

Statements of fact and opinions expressed are those of the presenter, individually and, unless expressly stated to the contrary, are not the opinion or position of any other represented entities. There are no conflicts of interest to disclose.

# Objectives

Describe strategies to empower psychologists and first-generation professionals in new leadership roles within private practice settings.

Identify interpersonal, intrapersonal, and systemic challenges psychologists may face when transitioning into private practice leadership roles.

List practical strategies to thrive as a leader, inspiring a team, and propelling organizational growth.

# What Will NOT Be Covered

How to begin a private practice

Business and legal advice

Psychologists in leadership roles outside of private practice

Clinical practice guidelines

Insurance and billing

Licensure-related questions



# Private Practice in Psychology Defined

Pertains to licensed psychologists providing mental health services on fee-for-service terms in their own clinics or businesses.

# Private Practice Demographics

- Around 30,000 psychologists are currently in private practice in the U.S.
- 59.3% of all psychologists in private practice are women, 40.7% are men.
- The average psychologist in private practice age is 42 years old.
- 76.4% identify as White, 10.4% identify as Hispanic or Latino, 6.2% identify as Black or African American, and 3.4% are Unknown
- 12% of all psychologists in private practice identify as LGBTQI+.

Source: Zippia (2022). Demographics of Psychologist Private Practice Jobs. Zippia.  
<https://www.zippia.com/psychologist-private-practice-jobs/demographics/>

# **What is Leadership Anyway?**

"They don't make plans; they don't solve problems; they don't even organize people. What leaders really do is prepare organizations for change and help them cope as they struggle through it."

-John Kotter



# Story Time







## **Can I Become a Private Practice Leader?**

- Do you have a clear vision and mission?
- Are you resilient and adaptable?
- Are you comfortable making decisions?
- Can I build and nurture relationships?
- Do you embrace innovation and change?
- Are you ready to influence and inspire others?

# Are You Ready to Develop?

Research shows that the focus of leadership development should be on **behaviors and self-growth and a belief that leadership skills and behaviors are developable.**

Source: Nathan J. Hiller, Ph.D.; A Practical Overview of Leadership: Research-Based Principles and Tools for Action

# Key Task/Behavioral Clusters of Leadership



# Key Behavioral Categories in Interpersonal Leadership Literature

(Lamm, Carter, & Lamm, 2016)

Understanding

Caring and consideration for others

Communication competence

Fostering good relations

Managing conflict

Delegating and empowering

Fostering happiness

Promoting collective decision making

Personal attributes

# Interpersonal Leadership Challenges

- Balancing clinical and administrative roles
- Managing/operating within a team
- Isolation and lack of support
- Balancing client relations and business operations

# Addressing these Challenges

- Delegate administrative tasks
- Set boundaries (we should be good at this right??)
- Time management
- Set clear expectations
- Promote workplace inclusivity
- Seek peer support groups (e.g., via APA)
- Outsource non-clinical tasks



# Leadership Development and Intrapersonal Growth

Leadership development involves intrapersonal growth in knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies relevant to performing as a leader, whether informally or formally (Hezlett, 2016).

# Intrapersonal Leadership Challenges

- Self-limiting beliefs
- Feeling like an “imposture”
- Unconscious bias
- Stress and burnout
- Work-life harmony
- Loneliness and isolation
- Dealing with failure and setbacks

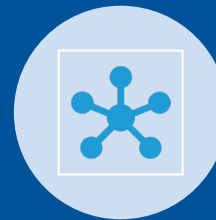
# Addressing these Challenges

- Self-reflection and challenge maladaptive thought patterns
- Intentionally seek diverse perspectives
- Acknowledge and challenge implicit biases
- Recognize that you are both business leader and clinician
- Identify action plan for success to promote resilience

# Systems Leadership in Private Practice



Holistic Patient-Centered  
Care



Interconnected  
Systems



Adaptation to Changing  
Healthcare Landscape



Feedback and Quality  
Improvement

# Systemic Leadership Challenges

- Marketing your practice
- Workforce management
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Mental health stigma
- Financial sustainability
- Evolving healthcare regulations

# Addressing these Challenges

- Develop a strong online presence
- Conduct regular performance reviews and bi-directional feedback
- Prioritize employee well-being
- Partner with the community
- Build a strong professional team around you (e.g., CPA, attorney, financial advisor, etc.)



# From Surviving to Thriving as a Private Practice Leader



# Leadership Development Model for Psychologists in Private Practice

## Stage 1: Self-Assessment and Awareness

- Clinical vs. Leadership Skills Assessment
- Identifying Personal Values

## Stage 2: Goal Setting

- Defining Leadership Goals
- Prioritizing Business Skills

## Stage 3: Learning and Development

- Business Management Training/Coaching
- Peer Mentorship

# Leadership Development Model for Psychologists in Private Practice Continued...

## Stage 4: Practice and Implementation

- Leadership in Client Relations
- Business Strategy Application

## Stage 5: Reflection and Adaptation

- Regular Private Practice Reflection
- Adapting to Evolving Roles

## Stage 6: Evaluation and Feedback

- Periodic Practice Assessment
- Adjusting Leadership Goals

# Immediate Action Steps

## Interpersonal

Join private practice network

Continue/begin networking

Seek professional coaching

Delegate responsibilities appropriately

## Intrapersonal

Anchor yourself in purpose

Trust that the right future will emerge

Challenge self-limiting beliefs

Engage in self-affirmations

## Systemic

Prioritize system enhancements

Re-evaluate and/or establish equitable policies and procedures

Invest in technology and automated processes

# Book Resources

## ***The Truth About Leadership: The No-fads, Heart-of-the-Matter Facts You Need to Know***

This book by James Kouzes and Barry Posner addresses the hard work it takes to develop oneself as a leader.

## ***Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don't***

Jim Collins used interviews with over 100 leaders to determine what sets great companies apart from all the rest.

## ***Leadership In Private Practice: How To Become A World Class Leader And CEO Of A Successful Private Practice***

This book by Paul Gough redefines success in healthcare by emphasizing the acquisition of essential business leadership skills to create a profitable private practice.



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# Business Resources

Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)  
Women's Business Centers (WBCs)  
Veteran Business Outreach Centers (VBOCs)  
Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)  
Local Chamber of Commerce  
SCORE Mentoring



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# Questions?

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