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SEVEN SECRETS TO
STARTING OUT

Nicki Williams

*The seven things
I wish I'd known
when starting out*

NTBA
NT Business Academy



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Hello and welcome to my short reflection on the seven things I wish I'd known when I was starting out!

Ah, the gift of hindsight, it's a wonderful thing...

When I left college in 2014, I was excited (and a bit apprehensive!) about getting started as a Nutritional Therapist. I couldn't wait to work with clients and practice what I had learnt at college.

I didn't have much of a clue about marketing, sales, business in general. I muddled along with a trickle of clients (mostly friends of friends) but I wasn't making enough money to resemble any kind of 'income'. Not making money wasn't an option (we needed a second income), so I was faced with a choice. Give up and get a 'proper' job. Or get some help. For me, not going back to a corporate role was motivation enough! I hired a business coach for £3k, which I put on a credit card. If I was going to do this, I had to go all in. It was the best decision I've made.

Five years on and I've built a thriving practice, helping women all over the world to feel better. I've got a team of NT's, all busy working with clients. I've published a book, set up a successful online course, launched a digital magazine and get well paid for speaking in corporate. And the business is turning over a healthy six-figure sum.

I look around though and I see many NT's struggling to make money, which frustrates me. I want us all to be out there using our talents and skills to help as many people as possible.

So I want to help if I can. I hope this short guide will give you some valuable insights, and save you some time, money, energy and sanity!

1. Focus on one goal at a time

Now that sounds blimmin' obvious doesn't it? But it's really not. We are told that multi-tasking is a much-needed skill in business. But actually it's a bit of a hindrance. Doing too many things at once makes you not very good at any of them, right?

This is exactly what I did when I started out. I was trying to get clients (with 5 different packages), create an online course (that I wasn't ready to do!), AND write a book (definitely wasn't ready for that!).

By focussing JUST on getting clients, with one high value package, it made things so much easier.

Focus on one main goal, and make sure you take steps towards that goal every day. If you get time left over, then of course you can do other things, but if you do the important stuff first, you'll get to your goal a lot quicker. Then you can make another big goal!

A great book to read more on this is 'The One Thing' by Gary Keller

2. Get in front of the camera NOW!

Video is the most important marketing medium now, whether you like it or not! You're going to have to use it to reach your potential clients.

I didn't want to use video initially, I decided to blog instead. The trouble was, that writing a blog for me was a bit like writing an assignment! It took me so long to do, and I procrastinated like crazy (even cleaned the house rather than write it, which if you know me, is the last thing I'd do!).

I managed to push one blog a month out and it was painful. But video scared me. I was worried that I would be too exposed, and what if people didn't like me?

***If you're thinking that, you're not alone.
But you're not going to help people if they can't find you.***

So you need to get over your fear of 'being seen' and just embrace it. Find your voice, and relax. And then practice, practice, practice. Harder to say than do, I know! But you've just got to dive in - the water's actually lovely, I promise! After a couple of Facebook Lives, I got into the swing of it and now love doing one each week.

3. Consistency is the secret to success

Blogging whenever I felt like it (not very often!) was not going to grow my business very fast. Once I found video, I started doing them each week, and converting them into a blog. Not only was this WAY easier (it didn't feel like an assignment!) but it's made a HUGE difference to the speed at which we've grown.

Getting your message out consistently is the key to getting regular clients. They need to see you regularly or you won't be front of mind when they need you.

Keep going. You won't get much traction when you start out, it will feel like tumbleweed some weeks, but you only need one ideal client to see you at a time, so keep going! Please be patient, trust the process and you'll reap the rewards.

4. Don't think or play small

This is a tricky one, I know. When you start out or when you don't have many clients, you are naturally going to think small. But I really recommend you think big from the start. Imagine your business the way you would like it (however big that is), then double it! Always double the numbers or vision, because we naturally think smaller than we can imagine.

I started out thinking small. I didn't ever imagine I'd have employees (are you crazy??) or a published book, or digital magazine, or even be seeing clients online all over the world. This was well outside my imagination back then. But if I had dared to imagine it, I would have made better decisions and sped up my progress.

A great book that really helped me think bigger is 'Playing Big' by Tara Mohr.

5. Speak as much as you can

Get in front of people as much as you can right from the start. It doesn't matter if it's the wrong audience (although it's great if you can get in front of YOUR ideal market), or if you're speaking for free.

Here's what speaking can do for you:

- Practice and hone your speaking skills (this can take YEARS, so start early)
- Build your list – ask your audience if they'd like to get updates from you (make sure it's GDPR compliant)
- Get clients – if your message resonates with the audience, you may pick up a few clients
- Get film or photos – examples of your talks will help to get you more talks!

And if you keep going, you'll be able to charge very nice fees for your speaking, especially in corporate.

I wasn't as proactive as I could have been, I waited to be asked to speak. Looking back, I would be approaching anyone with a platform!

6. Network like crazy

Now this is something I did do at the beginning, but I could have done more. I joined several networking groups, some of which I loved, others not so much! What it did was help me hone my pitch (answer the question "what do you do?") and build a support network. I still have business relationships with some of the people I met at these events.

Don't go there expecting to pick up clients, it's much more about connecting and building relationships.

And FOLLOW UP, don't just collect business cards, start friendships!

7. Get the right mentor

It's so important to have a mentor or coach. But I didn't know what I was looking for, and how to find the right coach for me.

There are a huge number of business coaches out there. All making various promises. And some will be right for you, some won't.

I've been through my share of coaches, so I'll share with you what I have learned to look for.

Coaching style - I look for someone who will get the best from me and keep me accountable. For me, that involves a bit of tough love as that's what I respond to best. Get a feel for how they will coach you.

Experience - I would always look for someone who has had real experience in what they're teaching. Have they done it themselves? Do they know the reality of what they're teaching? For me, my coach must have walked the walk.

Role model - I want to learn from someone I admire. Someone I would like to emulate or model. That's why I've always chosen coaches who are successful in their field.

Purpose - I like my coaches to be passionate about why they're coaching! If they're just in it to make money, I'm not interested. Find out what they're 'why' is. If you have a shared vision, you'll get much better results.

Recommendations - I will always seek out testimonials of any coach I hire. It's the quickest way to know if they are likely to get me results.

Do they have a coach? - I always want to know if they have their own coach. I like to know that they are still investing in themselves and continually improving, as I'm only going to benefit from that.

Choose someone who you'd like to model, or someone you know has done it all already. There are so many coaches out there who haven't even built a successful business of their own!

I did seek out mentors, but looking back I would have chosen someone who was closer to my industry. My first coach was a guy, great at business, but he was very Alpha-male in his approach. I think I would have responded better to some more feminine energy!

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